

CONNECTICUT TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOL SYSTEM BOARD

**Minutes of Meeting
May 16, 2017**

Pursuant to notice filed with the Secretary of State, the Connecticut Technical High School System Board (hereafter "Board") met on May 16, 2017 at Emmett O'Brien Technical High School, 141 Prindle Avenue, Ansonia, CT.

I. Call to Order

Chairperson Trefry called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m.

Present: Mr. Robert Trefry, Chairperson
Mrs. Patricia Keavney-Maruca, Vice Chairperson
Ms. Gina Chiarella
Ms. Karen Eichstaedt
Commissioner Scott Jackson
Commissioner Catherine Smith
Dr. Daisy Cocco De Filippis

Absent: Mr. Chris DiPentima
Mr. Fitz Walker
Mr. Peter Hoecklin

II. Public Participation

Ms. Kathy Radin, an Emmett O'Brien Parent, addressed the board and spoke in advocacy of O'Brien Tech's administration, teachers, faculty and programs offered. Ms. Radin shared her positive experience as a parent with the Board members and thanked the Board for building such a wonderful school.

Mr. Paul Angelucci, Vice President of the State Vocational Federation of Teacher's (SVFT) Union thanked Mr. Wihbey for the relationship he has built with the SVFT in the short time he has been serving as Interim Superintendent.

III. Welcome

A. Emmett O'Brien THS Principal and Students

Mr. Trefry thanked Ms. Laurie LeBouthillier, Principal of Emmett O'Brien Technical High School for her hospitality and complemented the chef and the students for the wonderful lunch and dessert. Ms. LeBouthillier thanked the Board members for allowing her to host today's meeting and for the opportunity to showcase her newly renovated school. Ms. LeBouthillier also shared some great accomplishments of Emmett O'Brien.

Ms. LeBouthillier introduced two seniors: Rachael Krystopowicz, Health Technology major and Eric Miner, Precision Machining Technology major who shared their experiences at Emmett O'Brien Technical High School and their post-secondary plans with the Board members.

B. Platt THS NASA HUNCH Program Presentation

Interim Superintendent Wihbey introduced Mr. David Tuttle, Platt Technical High School Manufacturing Department Head to the Board members who was invited today along with three of his twelfth grade students: Anthony DeFelice – Precision Manufacturing Technology, Avianna Lopez, Precision Manufacturing Technology and Brianne McCrystal, Mechanical Design and Engineering Technology) to present on Platt Tech’s NASA HUNCH Program. The HUNCH program was formed by an Engineer at NASA to open an opportunity for high school students to become an active part of the international space station. High School Students united with NASA to Create Hardware.

Each of the students walked the Board members through a specific project they worked on.

Platt Tech’s Precision Machining will initiate production of multiple components for the NASA and the International Space Station. The project is expected to involve approximately 100 components that will be sent into orbit and used in the ISS. The program includes machining, aircraft style assembly, processing and even electronics. Platt offers NASA a unique capacity with its inventory of 16 CNC machines for machining thin walled, light weight and complex aerospace components. This program will offer Platt’s students a real world experience and insight into aerospace manufacturing and the typical difficulties that come with it. They will be required to work from NASA provided engineering specifications and follow detailed directives and details. The students from Computer Aided Drafting and Design will recreate the 1999/2000 NASA designs into the Solidworks platform, provide Solids designs and 3D print scaled models of the components for use in team discussions.

The Precision Machining students will complete a full library of CNC programs for each component, develop process plans, setup the CNC equipment, develop work holding applications and machine all of the components. After all processes are complete, the students will be required to perform full inspections and submit reports to NASA.

Board members congratulated Mr. Tuttle and his students on their partnership with NASA and commented on how impressed they were with their designs.

A copy of their presentation is included in the official file of this meeting.

IV. Consent Agenda

A. Consideration of Minutes

The board voted unanimously that the minutes of the April 18, 2017 CTHSS Board meeting be approved.

Vote: In Favor: Trefry, Keavney, Chiarella, De Filippis, Eichstaedt, Jackson, Smith
Opposed: 0
Abstained: 0
Absent: Hoecklin, DiPentima, Walker

Motion carried unanimously.

V. Executive Session

The Board did not go into executive session.

VI. Report of the Interim Superintendent of Schools

Items Requiring Action

A. 2017-18 – 2018-19 Proposed Tuition and Fees

At the May 16, 2017 Subcommittee Meeting on Outreach and Finance, Mr. Chasse presented the Tuition and Fees Schedule for Fiscal Years 2018 and 2019 for the following programs: Aviation, Bristol Post Graduates, Apprentice, Extension, Credit Recovery, School Lunch and Breakfast, and Education Production Rates. At that meeting the committee recommended approval to the CTHSS Board.

Mr. Chasse reported that the State of Connecticut continues to face significant financial challenges that may lead to fewer resources for state agencies. School districts – including the CTHSS must continue to explore all options to reduce costs while generating additional revenues to support the operating costs.

As costs continue to increase and operating budgets are subject to further reductions, the ability to generate additional revenue in support of educational programs is necessary. It is recommended that the Connecticut Technical High School System Board approve this proposed tuition and fee schedule which will enable the district to continue to provide affordable educational opportunities to adults in need of additional training and school lunches and breakfasts to our secondary population. In the event that the district is subject to significant state budget reductions over the next 24 months that impact any of these programs, the CTHSS reserves the right to revisit the tuition and fee schedule and propose increases to the Board.

As the operations for most of the full-time adult programs have been suspended – including licensed practical nurse (LPN), surgical technology, medical assisting and dental assisting – what remains is the aviation maintenance program and a post-graduate program (including Automotive, Culinary Arts, Electronics, HVAC, Precision Machining and Welding) at Bristol Technical Education Center.

Presently, the district enrolls approximately 86 adult students in the two (2) aviation programs and 68 adult post-graduate students at Bristol. More than 2,000 adult students are enrolled in part-time adult apprentice and extension programs. Course examples include electrical, plumbing, basic telecommunications, and motor controls.

A motion was called at this time.

Ms. Keavney moved, Commissioner Jackson seconded that the CTHSS Board approve the Proposed Tuition and Fee Schedule for fiscal years 2017 and 2019.

Vote: In Favor:	Trefry, Keavney, Chiarella, De Filippis Eichstaedt, Jackson, Smith
Opposed:	0
Abstained:	0
Absent:	Hoecklin, DiPentima, Walker

and directs the Interim Superintendent to take the necessary action.

Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Wihbey thanked Mr. Chasse for all of his hard work and dedication during this difficult fiscal situation.

A copy of the Tuition and Fees for Fiscal Years 2018 and 2019 Executive Summary and the CTHSS Tuition and Fee Schedule for Fiscal Years 2018 and 2019 is included in the official file of this meeting.

B. New Proposed Criminal Justice Program at Vinal Technical High School

Goal Number One of the CTHSS Strategic Action Plan (Enhanced Employer Engagement and Alignment with Industry Needs) is to partner with business and industry to develop career technical education programs that provide CTHSS students with the skills and work habits to be successful in a dynamic 21st Century work environment. The Framework for Success 1.3 and 1.4 is to develop a clearly articulated trade/technology review process (1.3) and respond to the changing needs of business/industry (1.4).

At the May 12, 2017 Quality and Policy Subcommittee Meeting, Interim Superintendent Jeffrey Wihbey shared with the Committee members that the CTHSS is considering the addition of a newly proposed Criminal Justice Program at Vinal Technical High School effective September 2017. It was recommended by the Committee members that a proposal be brought to the full Board for consideration.

Interim Superintendent Wihbey introduced Dr. Nikitoula Menounos, Principal and Mr. John Woodmansee, CTHSS Education Consultant, to the Board members who provided a PowerPoint presentation on a proposal for a new program including an overview of the trade, estimated annual openings, Department of Labor growth/employment demand statistics including occupational titles, career pathways, curriculum content, certifications students will receive, facility and staffing. They explained how this program will service the needs of Middletown and its surrounding communities in multiple ways and how it will meet the needs of the Criminal Justice industry and create a pathway to continue education at the college level (Middlesex CC) and how it will provide students experiences in an industry that has significant job growth. There are currently approximately 1,000 jobs a year annually.

In accordance with statutory requirements, CGS Section 10-95i(c), the Board shall consider new trade programs for the Connecticut Technical High School System (CTHSS) and authorize new programs for a period of not more than five years; therefore, the CTHSS is requesting the Board's approval authorizes of the establishment of a Criminal Justice trade for the period September 2017 through June 2022.

Each of the Board members had an opportunity to share their thoughts and ask questions about this program. Although the Board members liked the idea of the program and the Quality and Policy Committee

felt this program would be a good fit to boost enrollment for Vinal, the Board members, the CTHSS Board recommended this this program not move forward for the fall, 2017 in light of the current budget situation. All current vacant positions have been put on hold due to the state's hiring freeze. Commissioner Wentzell indicated that it will be very hard for the SDE to assist to seek permission to hire if the CTHSS is not fully enrolled and that enrollment should be a critical area of focus from an administrative and the board's point of view.

In the meantime, the CTHSS was encouraged to continue explore the feasibility of a new criminal justice program.

It was suggested by the Board members the district do a better job describing what their wait list is. There was also discussion about the concern to recruit sufficient numbers given the decline in enrollment in other communities.

A copy of the executive summary and PowerPoint presentation is included in the official file of this meeting.

C. Information Systems Technology (IST) at Windham, Eli Whitney, and Emmett O'Brien Technical High Schools

Goal Number One of the CTHSS Strategic Action Plan (Enhanced Employer Engagement and Alignment with Industry Needs) is to partner with business and industry to develop career technical education programs that provide CTHSS students with the skills and work habits to be successful in a dynamic 21st Century work environment. The Framework for Success 1.3 and 1.4 is to develop a clearly articulated trade/technology review process (1.3) and respond to the changing needs of business/industry (1.4).

At the May 12, 2017 CTHSS Subcommittee Meeting on Quality and Policy Interim Superintendent Jeffrey Wihbey shared with the Committee members that the CTHSS is considering the addition of Information Systems Technology (IST) areas at three technical high schools in the district due to the need for expanding the Tech Talent Pipeline in Connecticut to support the changing employment needs of current and future employers. He cautioned; however, there is may be some fiscal constraints. The Committee members felt that the CTHSS should move forward with the IST expansion but also be contingent upon the constraints of the budget. It was recommended that a proposal be brought to the full Board at their May 16, 2017 meeting for consideration providing four option scenarios including costs for each option.

Interim Superintendent Wihbey introduced Mr. Don Mason, CTHSS Education Consultant to the Board members who provided the rationale behind this expansion which included Department of Labor statistics, careers and opportunities. Mr. Mason walked the Board members through each of the schools under consideration for expansion as follows:

Windham Tech: The recommendation for IST at Windham stems from the ongoing closure of the Electronics CTE area, currently in its second year of phase-out. As a result, there are no Information Cluster CTE areas offered at Windham, and the only other IST program in all of Region 4 is at Grasso Tech. Creation of the IST shop is to be done by student workforce production work, particularly by students in the Architecture, Electrical and Carpentry departments. Furniture is on-site from a previous location in the school. The primary cost for IST program would be in equipment.

Emmett O'Brien: The recommendation for IST at Emmett O'Brien, comes from the DOL labor projections and the DECD Tech Talent pipeline initiatives in Connecticut and Fairfield County. Ansonia is on the edge of Fairfield County, where growth in IT hiring is expected to expand as major Tech firms compete for the limited number of Computer Science graduates from Colleges and Universities in Connecticut. By expanding the number of IST programs in the CTHSS, coupled with our increased number of articulated agreements with Connecticut State University System and Community Colleges, we hope to expand the number of qualified people ready to fill positions in this area.

Eli Whitney: The recommendation for IST at Eli Whitney is driven by the diverse student population at Whitney and need for growing diversity in the Tech field. Median income for and IT worker is more than double the household income for African Americans and almost double the household income for Hispanics. Latinos and African-Americans. Per the USEEOC report on Diversity in Tech, white males make up 64% of the High Tech workforce in the USA. Adding IST to Eli Whitney provides an opportunity to engage students who are traditionally under-represented in the Tech field.

Questions/Discussion included: Each of the Board members had an opportunity to share their thoughts and ask questions about this program. In light of the current budget situation compounded by the fact that all current vacant positions have been put on hold due to the state's hiring freeze, it was suggested that the board amend the resolution as follows: That the Connecticut Technical High School System Board, approves **Option # 4** of the proposed expansion of the Information Systems Career Technology Education Programs effective August 2017, within available appropriations and subject obtaining the authorizations necessary for filling the positions needed for implementation, and directs the Interim Superintendent to take the necessary action.

Given the IST program is already an existing program within the CTHSS and not a new trade, a motion was called at this time to amend the resolution as follows:

Commissioner Smith moved Ms. Keavney seconded that the Connecticut Technical High School System Board, approves **Option # 4** of the proposed expansion of the Information Systems Career Technology Education Programs effective August 2017, within available appropriations and subject to obtaining the authorizations necessary for filling the positions needed for implementation, and directs the Interim Superintendent to take the necessary action.

Vote: In Favor:	Trefry, Keavney, Chiarella, De Filippis, Eichstaedt, Jackson, Smith
Opposed:	0
Abstained:	0
Absent:	Hoecklin, DiPentima, Walker

Commissioner Smith thanked the staff and Board members for hearing her plea for IST.

Motion carried unanimously.

A copy of the resolution and executive summary are included in the official file of this meeting

VII. Items for Discussion

A. Budget Update

Mr. Chasse provided an update on the latest information impacting the district's operating budget for fiscal year 2016-17 Budget. On May 10, 2017, due to a projected shortfall in revenue collections, the Honorable Governor Dannel P. Malloy issued a Deficit Mitigation Plan to ensure the state's current year budget ends in balance. Included in the Deficit Mitigation Plan is a reduction of \$2 million to the district's operating budget. Mr. Chasse shared a chart that provided a comparison of the revised budgets to the latest cost projections.

At the May 12, 2017 State Bond Commission meeting an allocation of \$1,285,188 was approved that will enable the district to complete several critical infrastructure repair projects during the summer. The CTHSS is still awaiting consideration of a bond allocation of \$2.5M for the replacement of classroom and network equipment.

Questions/discussion included: Chrome books will be purchased from general operating funding and will be in place for the start of the school year. Also discussed were the implications of the one line item budget versus a two line item budget and if there is a process for the CTHSS to move funding.

A discussion ensued about the latest available information regarding a proposed operating budget for fiscal year 2018 and fiscal year 2019. It was noted that Commissioner Jackson's comments bared repeating that a \$5 million budget reduction is something one would never see at local education agencies (LEAs).

The CTHSS staff will be working in conjunction with agency staff to develop a contingency plan in response to the latest budget proposal. When the plan is completed, it will be sent to the Board for its information. If sensitive alternatives need to be considered, a special meeting of the Board will be called.

Given the continued financial constraints that can be expected, the board indicated that it needed to work with system leadership to develop a longer term vision for the CTHSS.

A copy of the Budget report is included in the official file of this meeting.

VIII. Report of the Chair

Mr. Trefry announced the appointment of Mr. Wihbey as Interim Superintendent of the Connecticut Technical High School System. The Board members thanked Mr. Wihbey for undertaking this assignment up during a very difficult time and commended Mr. Wihbey for his performance and is appreciative of all of the work he is doing and expressed how pleased they are on his appointment as Interim Superintendent. Commissioner Wentzell thanked Mr. Wihbey for all of his hard work and dedication and commented on how pleased she is with his appointment as acting Interim Superintendent.

Mr. Trefry thanked the Commissioner and his Board colleagues for their support, especially Vice Chair Patricia Keavney.

Mr. Trefry indicated that the Board is going to wait until after June to begin the search for a Superintendent. The Board would like to wait to see if the Bill passes in the legislature making the CTHSS a separate stand-alone agency. The change to a separate agency could impact the decision of a potential candidate accepting the position or not.

Mr. Trefry announced that Mr. Barrasso has resigned from the Board and commended him on his hard work and dedication and for serving on the Board and chairing the subcommittee. Mr. Trefry announced that for the time being, Outreach and Finance Sub-committee meetings will blend into the full CTHSS Board meetings in an effort to improve on efficiency and the Quality and Policy Subcommittee meetings will be the same day of the CTHSS Board meetings (meeting just prior). This idea was discussed at the Subcommittee meeting that met just prior to this meeting and committee members were in favor of the idea.

Mr. Trefry indicated that the bill to recognize the CTHSS as a post-secondary education institution is still awaiting legislative consideration.

He also thanked all of the Board members who signed up for graduations.

IX. Committee Reports

A. Quality and Policy

The Quality and Policy subcommittee met on May 12, 2017. The Committee members had a discussion on the possible expansion of the IST programs at Windham, Eli Whitney and Emmett O'Brien Technical High Schools. The Committee also received a presentation on the new Vinal Technical High School proposed programs and reviewed a proposal for a new criminal justice program at Vinal Technical High School.

Outreach and Finance

The Outreach and Finance Subcommittee met on May 16, 2017 just prior to today's CTHSS Board meeting. The Committee members had a discussion on the budget and voted to recommend to the CTHSS Board the approval of the 2017-18 – 2018-19 proposed tuition and fees. The committee also had a discussion about the latest available information regarding a proposed operating budget for fiscal year 2018 and fiscal year 2019. The CTHSS staff will be working in conjunction with agency staff to develop a contingency plan in response to the latest budget proposal. Upon completion, the proposal will be sent to the board for their consideration. The board expressed interest in creating a longer term vision for the CTHSS.

X. Public Participation

There was no public participation.

XI. Adjourn

The CTHSS Board adjourned its meeting at 3:40 PM

Prepared by:

Diane Curtis

Diane M. Curtis, Administrative Assistant
Connecticut Technical High School System