

# CONNECTICUT TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOL SYSTEM BOARD

## Draft Minutes of Meeting May 20, 2014

Pursuant to notice filed with the Secretary of State, the Connecticut Technical High School System Board (hereafter "Board") met on May 20, 2014, at Ella T. Grasso Southeastern Technical High School, Groton, CT.

### **I. Call to Order**

Chairperson Trefry called the meeting to order at 1:40 p.m.

Present: Mr. Robert Trefry, Chairperson  
Mr. Joseph J. Vrabely, Jr., Vice Chairperson  
Mr. John Barrasso  
Ms. Karen Eichstaedt  
Mrs. Patricia Keavney-Maruca  
Commissioner Sharon Palmer  
Commissioner Catherine Smith  
Mr. Fitz Walker

Absent: Mr. Stephan Bundschu  
Mr. Matthew Nemerson

Mr. Trefry thanked Ms. Feeney, Principal of Ella T. Grasso Southeastern Technical High School, for hosting the Board Meeting. Ms. Feeney thanked the Board members for their support and introduced two students, Tristen Pepin and Kianna Guzman who shared their experience at Grasso Tech and their post-secondary plans with the board. Ms. Feeney shared with the Board members community projects and organizations Grasso Tech is involved with as well as work based learning success stories. Superintendent Torres added that the Grasso THS Music Department competed at the Festivals of Music in Boston in late April and the band won first place in their division and the choir won second place in their division.

### **II. Public Participation**

There was no public participation.

### **III. Consent Agenda**

There were no items on the consent agenda.

### **IV. Executive Session**

There was no executive session.

## **V. Consideration of Minutes**

The board voted unanimously that the minutes of the April 15, 2014 meeting be approved.

Vote: In Favor: Barrasso, Eichstaedt, Keavney-Maruca, Palmer, Smith, Trefry,  
Vrabely, Walker  
Opposed: 0  
Abstained: 0  
Absent: Bundschu, Nemerson

## **VI. Report of the Superintendent of Schools**

### **Strategic Plan Update**

Superintendent Torres and her staff are in the process of developing the strategies and outcome measures of the strategic plan and are holding a second strategic planning meeting on May 21, 2014 with stakeholders to gain feedback on the imperatives. The strategic plan will be brought to the CTHSS Board at their July 15, 2014 meeting. Mr. Trefry requested the board meeting start at 12:00 PM on July 15<sup>th</sup> rather than 1:30 PM. Mr. Trefry also requested the strategic plan's mission statement and imperatives be presented at the next State Board of Education meeting for discussion and feedback.

### **Admissions Study**

Superintendent Torres reported on the progress of the Admissions Study. Education Connection is in the process of gathering data from board members, the school community, and central office staff. Superintendent Torres is hoping to have the study complete by the end of the school year and be in unison with the strategic plan.

### **2014 Legislation Summaries**

Superintendent Torres shared with the Board members two pieces of legislation passed that will directly impact the CTHSS. They are: HB 5434: An Act Requiring a Technical High School and Community-Technical College Cooperative (Effective July 1, 2014) and PA 14-59: An Act Implementing the Recommendations of the Legislative Program Review and Investigations Committee on the Reemployment of Older Workers Concerning the Technical High School System (Effective July 1, 2014).

Superintendent Torres reported that the reports required by state statute proposal did not go through and legislative reports will continue to go through our State Board of Education. She also reported that the request to apply for competitive grants did not get approved.

### **Kaynor and Vinal THS Recognized as Schools of Distinction by the State Department of Education**

On May 13, 2014, Kaynor THS and Vinal THS were honored by the Connecticut State Department of Education as "Schools of Distinction" at a recognition breakfast in Cromwell, CT.

### **The Grainger Foundation Supports SkillsUSA**

The Grainger Foundation has donated \$40,000 to SkillsUSA in support of its mission to help student members become world-class workers and responsible American Citizens. This grant will

be used to reduce expenses associated with sending 100 students and teachers from 13 Connecticut Technical High Schools to the National Competition in Kansas City.

### **Three CTHSS Instructors Selected to be Part of the “Connecticut Dream Team”**

Susan Coyle and Brian Moore, Instructors at Bullard-Havens THS and Tina Manus, Instructor at Platt Technical High School have been chosen to take part in TeachFest Connecticut, an intensive professional learning session on the Common Core State Standards, where they will develop high-quality resources to be shared with fellow teachers.

### **CTHSS Students Visit DEEP as Part of Project Learning Tree**

On May 6, 2014, as part of the Project Learning Tree program, students from Henry Abbott Tech, E.C. Goodwin Tech, Platt Tech, and Norwich Tech visited the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) in Hartford, Connecticut. DEEP Commissioner Rob Klee spoke to the students about the agency which is in charge of conserving, improving and protecting the natural resources and the environment of the state of Connecticut as well as making cheaper, cleaner and more reliable energy available for the people and businesses of the state. Commissioner Klee also spoke about how the agency is committed to playing a positive role in rebuilding Connecticut’s economy and creating jobs – and to fostering a sustainable and prosperous economic future for the state. The curriculum is provided by the Project Learning Tree, a program of the American Forest Foundation.

### **Community Service at Eli Whitney THS**

The Eli Whitney THS Manufacturing Technology Department helped a local veteran by building him a weight bench. This veteran uses lifting as a way to deal with the ups and downs of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).

### **Recruitment Materials**

Superintendent Torres provided the Board members the newly branded CTHSS teacher recruitment packets and encouraged them to share with any prospective applicants.

### **Graduation**

Superintendent Torres shared the CTHSS graduation schedule and invited the Board members to attend a graduation.

## **VII. Items Requiring Action**

There were no items requiring action.

## **VIII. Items for Discussion**

### **Strategic Plan**

Mr. Trefry welcomed comments from the Board members about Thomas P. Miller (TPM) and Associates and the strategic planning process. Comments included: TPM were great facilitators, very responsible and supportive and how they were able to involve the Board members and staff to talk in differing opinions which gave stakeholders a voice. Superintendent Torres reported that the feedback at the schools has been positive and there is momentum and excitement about how the proposed changes will transform the CTHSS at the state and national level. There was also a brief

discussion on work based learning and Mr. Vrabely requested work based learning be added to the agenda of the next meeting of the Outreach, Stakeholder Partnerships, Finance and Facilities Subcommittee Meeting.

#### **A. Update on Wright Tech Recruitment Efforts and Instructional Model**

Superintendent Torres introduced Mr. Joseph Tripodi, Principal of J.M. Wright Technical High School to the Board members. Mr. Tripodi presented a PowerPoint presentation of the recruitment efforts and instructional model at Wright Tech.

Superintendent Torres shared with the Board members the J.M. Wright THS recruitment website and vision of 21<sup>st</sup> century learning for the district and the school. She presented a PowerPoint update on J.M. Wright which included *CTHSS Ubiquitous Learning Model Progression*, redefining the roles in a blended learning model, schedule aligned with blended learning model, 16 Career and Technical Career Clusters, CTE Clusters represented at J.M. Wright THS, a sample student schedule, a 21<sup>st</sup> STEM school, professional development, college and career pathways, Wright Tech's recruitment as of today, business/industry/college relationships including multiple players with diverse perspectives

Superintendent Torres and Mr. Tripodi responded to questions the board members raised about the J.M. Wright recruitment efforts and the instructional model which included: the latest technology in the field, what drove the models, and next steps for a second recruitment wave.

Superintendent Torres invited the Board members to attend the legislative breakfast to be held on June 3, 2014 from 9:00 AM – 11:00 AM at Wright Tech and to lend their support and tour the trade technology areas.

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

#### **B. Presentation on Facilities Management as a new trade for the District/International Partnerships**

Superintendent Torres introduced Mr. Ray Mencio and Mr. Pat Ciarleglio, CTHSS Education Consultants, and Mr. Jay Drew, Vice President of the International Facilities Management Association, Connecticut Chapter and Member of the Foundation Academic Special Interest Group. They presented to the board members Facilities Management as a new trade for the district at J.M. Wright THS and international partnerships. This program is the first in the nation to be taught in a high school. Their presentation included: Stamford's population growth, real estate trends and pipelines; CT Department of Labor (DOL) stats, local market needs, state needs and national needs; CT DOL facility manager employment data, CT DOL hourly and annual facility manager wage data; facility managers national job outlook; program requirements and facilities program structure; components of a HVAC, welding and fabricating, electrical, plumbing, carpentry, general trades and theory lab; partnerships including business and industry and articulated agreements; national/international and regional partners.

Mr. Mencio, Mr. Ciarleglio and Mr. Drew responded to questions the board members raised about the new facilities management trade including: square footage of the program, grant funding, threshold numbers, alignment of businesses, partnership with the Department of Economic and Community Development and an accredited post-secondary program (Florida).

Superintendent Torres reminded everyone to save the date of August 27<sup>th</sup> for the ribbon cutting and announced the Governor will be attending.

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

**IX. Report of the Chair**

Mr. Trefry reported that the Finance and Facilities and the Outreach and Stakeholder Partnership Subcommittees are being consolidated into one subcommittee and Mr. Vrabely will be chairing the committee.

Mr. Trefry also commented that the work we are doing at Wright Tech will align with the Early College initiative.

**X. Committee Reports**

**A. Quality and Policy**

Ms. Keavney-Maruca reported that the committee met on May 9, 2014. The committee had a discussion on program expansions through 2016, program phase outs and capacity projections. The committee also had a discussion on the CT Voices for Children Report. Emmett O'Brien and Howell Cheney underwent their NEASC visit evaluations in April/May. The Committee directed the Superintendent to take action on the understaffed human resources office.

**B. Finance and Facilities**

There was no report on Finance and Facilities

**C. Outreach & Stakeholder Partnerships**

There was no meeting of the Outreach and Stakeholder Partnerships committee.

**XI. Public Participation**

There was no public participation.

**XII. Adjourn**

The CTHSS Board adjourned its meeting at 3:55 p.m.

Prepared by: *Diane Curtis*  
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Connecticut Technical High School System