

CONNECTICUT TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOL SYSTEM BOARD

Minutes of Meeting
August 24, 2016

Pursuant to notice filed with the Secretary of State, the Connecticut Technical High School System Board (hereafter "Board") met on August 24, 2016 at 25 Industrial Park Road, Middletown, CT.

I. Call to Order

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

Present: Mr. Robert Trefry, Chairperson
Ms. Patricia Keavney-Maruca, Vice Chairperson
Mr. John Barrasso
Mr. Chris DiPentima
Ms. Karen Eichstaedt
Mr. Peter Hoecklin
Commissioner Scott D. Jackson
Commissioner Catherine Smith
Mr. Fitz Walker

Absent: Dr. Daisy Cocco De Filippis

II. Item for Action

A. FY 2017 Budget

At the July 8, 2016 meeting of the CTHSS Board, Superintendent Torres reported the district's operating budget for fiscal year 2016-17 is subject to a holdback of approximately \$4.9M in response to a continued decline in state revenues. After that meeting, the next steps were to draft a proposal for the Board's review.

Superintendent Torres walked the Board members through the three budget reduction options and the impact they will have on the district's operating budget for fiscal year 2016-17.

Option 1 - Delayed Refill of Full and Part-time Positions

Superintendent Torres reminded the Board members that at the June 21, 2016 CTHSS Board meeting, action was taken to freeze 33 positions for school year 2016-17. After this meeting, there were a number conversations with Principals on their enrollment needs. At this time action has been taken to further increase the number of full-time positions to 53 positions saving approximately \$2.48 MM. Superintendent Torres reminded Board members that the recruiting and hiring process is very fluid and the information on the vacancy count changes on a daily basis.

Option 2 - Continued Reductions in Overtime Usage

The CTHSS is proposing a ten percent (10%) reduction in overtime resulting in savings of approximately \$120,000 subject to refilling 18 existing maintenance positions. we presently have.

Option 3 - Suspension or closure of the Licensed Practical Nurse Program (January 2017)

Superintendent Torres reminded the Board members that at the June 21, 2016 CTHSS Board meeting, action was taken to suspend operations of the LPN Program at Vinal Technical High School in Middletown because of the passing rate on the NCLEX Exam. The district continues to operate a Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) program at

five locations – A.I. Prince THS (Hartford), Bullard Havens THS (Bridgeport), Eli Whitney THS (Hamden), Norwich THS (Norwich) and W.F. Kaynor THS (Waterbury).

The current cohort of students should complete the LPN program in January 2017 and based on current budget projections, the district will lack sufficient funding to support the commencement of a new class of the LPN students. The CTHSS is recommending the closing of the LPN program. The existing instructional staff members (24) would be reassigned to other positions in the district or other state agencies – subject to certification and hiring requirements - or be separated from state service. The part-time support staff currently assigned exclusively to the LPN program would be reassigned to other programs and/or schools to fill critical shortage areas.

Superintendent Torres responded to questions the Board members raised which included: Concern about the LPN program no longer being an option for inner-city folks, active waiting lists, review of the LPN tuition and the number needed be for the program to be self-sufficient.

Superintendent Torres provided an update regarding the Pell Grant Status for the LPN Program. Presently, the CTHSS is not authorized as a post-secondary institution that can issue Pell Grants under the new regulations the US Department of Education has set forth. The CTHSS has been working with the US Department of Education and SDE Colleagues to ensure that Pell Grants are an option for existing students. The district is awaiting a response from the USDE after submitting formal documents that had been requested.

Superintendent Torres also reassured Board members the CTHSS has been working very closely with the Board of Regents for Higher Education (BOR). The BOR has expressed an interest in the CTHSS adult health programs and in providing these services across the state.

It was suggested that at the September 20, 2016 CTHSS Board Meeting an opportunity is provided for public participation regarding the future of the LPN programs.

In summary, contingent on the timely refill of existing vacancies, these actions will result in net savings of approximately \$3.2M. The district remains \$1.7M short of closing the budget deficit for fiscal year 2016-17, but continues to review all options to further reduce operating costs. In addition, the State Department of Education (SDE) has entered into discussions with OPM regarding a possible transfer of funds from another line item budget that would potentially eliminate the remaining deficit.

Further rescission actions that might be taken during the 2016-17 fiscal year will greatly impact strategic planning efforts and require further programmatic reductions.

The Outreach and Finance Subcommittee was asked to develop a “return on investment type of presentation” to show the return the State receives when they invest in the CTHSS.

The Board members thanked Superintendent Torres and Mr. Chasse for all of their hard work.

B. Fall Semester Schools for Aviation

Superintendent Torres reported that at the August 2, 2016 CTHSS Board meeting, the Board members agreed on a tuition increase for the Schools of Aviation. The decision to have a Fall 2016 class was to be determined.

At this time, the CTHSS is recommending a fall class. Principals have reached out informally to see if there is interest from previously admitted students to start on Monday, August 29, 2016. The CTHSS is confident a number of ten students can be reached at each site. It is also recommended that the students are charged the present tuition rate of \$6,576 because they were recruited and admitted under the premise that this is the amount they would pay. The increase in tuition hereby applies to any new class. Mr. Barrasso and Commissioner

Jackson are currently working on funding relief to help offset the cost through a scholarship from the DOL (Department of Labor).

Mr. Barrasso, Ms. Eichstaedt seconded that the CTHSS Board approves a fall 2016 class for the schools of aviation with a tuition rate of \$6,576,

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

and directs the Superintendent of Schools to take the necessary action.

Motion carried unanimously.

VIII. Adjourn

The CTHSS Board adjourned its meeting at 2:15 PM.

Diane Curtis

Prepared by:

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Connecticut Technical High School System