

CONNECTICUT TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOL SYSTEM BOARD

**Minutes of Meeting
March 15, 2016**

Pursuant to notice filed with the Secretary of State, the Connecticut Technical High School System Board (hereafter "Board") met on March 15, 2016 at 165 Capitol Avenue, Hartford, CT.

I. Oath of Office

Mr. Trefry welcomed new CTHSS Board member Mr. Scott D. Jackson and thanked him for his willingness to serve. Attorney Beatrice Tinty administered the Oath of Office to Mr. Jackson.

II. 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
Dr. Daisy Cocco De Filippis
Ms. Karen Eichstaedt
Commissioner Scott D. Jackson
Commissioner Catherine Smith

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

Chairperson Trefry asked the Board members to introduce themselves.

III. Public Participation

There was no public participation.

IV. Consent Agenda

There were no items on the consent agenda.

V. Executive Session

There was no executive session.

VI. Consideration of Minutes

The board voted unanimously that the minutes of the February 16, 2016 meeting be approved.

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

VII. Report of the Superintendent of Schools

District-Wide Career Advisory Committee Meeting

On February 19, 2016 the CTHSS held their first district-wide career advisory committee meeting, a commitment made in the CTHSS Strategic Action Plan to establish coherence with the formally know TTAC and now CTAC for all of our technologies. E.C. Goodwin THS in New Britain hosted the meeting.

Roundtable Luncheon with Industry Partners

On February 24, 2016, the CTHSS held a round table luncheon with industry and business partners at Henry Abbott THS in Danbury where they heard from local manufacturers, business owners regarding workforce training. A commitment was made to continue conversations across the state and circle back to the Danbury area in order to meet the demands of health technology and manufacturing.

Information Session on Adult Health Programs

On February 25, 2016 Superintendent Torres held a meeting with CTHSS teachers from the adult programs. At the meeting, teachers were reassured that no decisions have been made about the future of these programs and should any steps be taken with the adult programs, they would be part of the conversation.

Read Across America

On March 1, 2016, the CTHSS celebrated Read Across America at A.I. Prince Technical High School in Hartford. February was Career and Technical Education Month, Nationwide. In order to celebrate, the CTHSS made and distributed CTE Bracelets to the students and staff and were encouraged to Tweet the hashtag I am CTE and post pictures of themselves in honor of Career and Technical Education. Superintendent Torres provided each of the Board members with a bracelet. Also discussed was the Article entitled "Rigor, Relevance, and the future of Career and Technical Education" and remarks from former US Secretary of Education Arne Duncan which Board members received in their packets. As part of the Read Across America celebration, all staff and students were asked to read the article. Superintendent Torres had the opportunity to discuss this article on March 1st with the Student Congress.

SAT Testing

On March 2, 2016, the CTHSS held SAT testing districtwide and the Superintendent toured a number of these schools. The CTHSS is well above the 95% participation rate. Only one student opted out to take the test, and there were minimal irregularities. Makeups will be held on April 27, 2016 for those students who were absent. Superintendent shared feedback from the students which overall was positive. Some challenges were in the Math portion of the test.

Bomb Threats

Superintendent Torres shared feedback from parents resulting from actions taken to address the issue of bomb threats that occurred last week which overall was very positive. Measures have been taken internally to work with CTHSS administrators and staff to inform youngsters about the severity in falsely reporting an incident. Superintendent Torres also asked staff to review the protocols and procedures currently in place on bomb threats.

Breakout of Hours CTHSS Schools are being used by the Board of Regents for Higher Education (BOR)

At the request of Commissioner Smith from a previous Board meeting, Superintendent Torres shared the number of hours CTHSS schools are being used by the BOR. Superintendent Torres provided a sense on how strong the partnership is with the BOR and how the CTHSS is capitalizing on state assets. A total of 6,662 hours were reported as follows: QVCC at Ellis – 4,000 hours, HCC at Platt – 156 hours, MCC at Cheney – 330 hours, MXCC at Wilcox – 712 hours, NVCC at Abbott – 1224 hours and NVCC at Kaynor. Programs will continue to expand.

Next Generation Accountability Results

The Next Generation Accountability Results were a topic at the March State Board of Education Meeting and Superintendent Torres plans to share the results at the April 8, 2016 Quality and Subcommittee meeting and the April 19, 2016 CTHSS Board meeting. As of today, four schools have shown gains in their high needs subgroups which are Bullard-Havens, Wilcox, Norwich and Kaynor THSs. Whitney and O’Brien have been identified as focus schools and these schools have developed school improvement plans. Intervention plans have been developed at Whitney and O’Brien for literacy and numeracy. This information is being monitored very closely.

CTHSS Ranks Fourth for Teaching Metalworking Skills by the National Institute for Metalworking Skills (NIMS)

Superintendent Torres shared an article from the Hartford Business Journal about the ranking provided by NIMS. The CTHSS ranked fourth for teaching metalworking skills by NIMS. The CTHSS presently has 791 students enrolled in NIMS. The CTHSS was the first in the state to credential in manufacturing.

Green Circle Sustainability Award

The CTHSS is proud to announce that the District has been named a finalist for this year’s Green Circle Sustainability Awards. The district is being recognized twice for energy conservation efforts. The award is specifically going to the district as a whole and the other is going specifically to the E-House initiative which is a one of the kind program in the nation. Details are forthcoming regarding an awards ceremony to be held on May 1, 2016.

CTHSS Day at the Legislative Office Building

For over five years the CTHSS has had a presence during the Legislative session where students provide either breakfast, lunch and set up a student exhibit at the Legislative Office Building (LOB). This year, the CTHSS has been asked to do the same on April 6, 2016 from 3:30 PM – 5:30 PM. This event is an opportunity for the CTHSS to highlight the work the students do and also share the progress the CTHSS has made in manufacturing and other career pathways. The Board members will be receiving an invitation soon to this event.

Fourth Annual All-District Choir Festival

On March 17, 2016, the CTHSS will hold its fourth annual all-district choir festival at Norwich Technical High School at 6:30 PM. The performance will feature students from Grasso, Kaynor, Norwich and Prince Technical High Schools as well as a combined choir under the direction of Temple University’s Dr. Rollo Dilworth, Chair of Music Education at the prestigious Boyer College of Music and Dance located in Philadelphia, PA.

VIII. Items Requiring Action

A. Trade Reauthorization (Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources Cluster, Health Science Cluster and The Human Services Cluster)

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 is to develop a clearly articulated trade/technology review process.

On March 11, 2016, the Quality and Policy Subcommittee recommended approval of the Trade Reauthorization of the Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources Cluster, Health Science Cluster to the CTHSS Board. Superintendent Torres

introduced Education Consultants Ms. Fennessy, Mary Skelly and Hank Weiner who presented the Trade Reauthorization. The presentation included the comprehensive process involved to develop the Trade Reauthorization aligning business and industry and input from both internal and external stakeholders. The presentation also included an in-depth description of each of these trade technologies, anticipated changes, along with Department of Labor projections and wages, and graduate follow-up survey results.

Discussion included: A concern raised as to whether or not the Board should be reauthorizing trades that have low enrollment. Superintendent Torres explained the current process on low enrollment shops. It was suggested that the Quality and Policy Subcommittee look more at the enrollment numbers. The decision was made to table action of the reauthorization and come back to the next CTHSS Board meeting with more information.

A copy of the Trade Reauthorization Report is included in the official file of this meeting.

IX. Items for Discussion

A. 2016 Heart of the Arts Award

Superintendent Torres introduced Mr. David Maloney, Director of The Connecticut Association of Schools (CAS), Mr. Dan Mello, E.C. Goodwin THS Principal, Ms. Adrienne Kiel, E.C. Goodwin THS Art Instructor and Sylvana Gonzalez-Torres, E.C. Goodwin THS Culinary Arts Student. CAS has selected Ms. Sylvana Gonzalez-Torres to receive the 2016 "Heart of the Arts Award". Many outstanding nominations were received but Ms. Gonzales-Torres academic standing, service and positive character traits more than exceed the award's expectations. Ms. Gonzalez's credentials will be sent to the National Federation of Schools for consideration as the national recipient of the "Heart of the Arts". Mr. Maloney, Mr. Mello and Ms. Kiel shared a few words about Ms. Gonzales Torres accomplishments including: class President, her service to the public including the re-design of her teacher's son's nursery using her graphics art talent. (Her teacher's son was afflicted with a medical condition), her participation in the Go Baby Go project, the redesigning of power wheels on strollers, and the redesign of robotics platforms to name a few. Ms. Gonzales said a few words to the Board members about her projects and also shared her post-secondary plans. Ms. Gonzalez-Torres was presented a plaque and took a photo with the board Chairperson, Mr. Trefry, Commissioner Wentzell, Superintendent Torres, Mr. Maloney and Ms. Kiel.

B. Budget Update

Superintendent Torres introduced Mr. Chasse, Education Consultant to the Board members who provided an update on the latest information potentially impacting the district's operating and capital budgets for fiscal years 2015-16 and 2016-17. The district continues to pursue the refill of critical instructional and operational positions.

Commissioner Dianna Wentzell requested Ms. Kathy Demsey, Chief Fiscal Officer, provide additional details on the recent communication issued by Secretary Ben Barnes, OPM. Ms. Demsey indicated to the Board members that the current freezing of positions will not apply to the CTHSSs instructional and health and safety positions.

Mr. Chasse resumed his report regarding the District's pursuit of bond funding for trade and academic equipment and afternoon school programs. Due to the ongoing budget negotiations, the Bond Commission meeting originally scheduled for February 26, 2016 was cancelled. Their next meeting is tentatively scheduled for March 24, 2016.

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

C. Legislative Update

Superintendent Torres updated the Board members on two raised bills being introduced this Legislative Session.

The first Raised Bill 5468 - An Act Establishing a Task Force to Study Issues Relating to the Recruitment of Manufacturing Teachers. The purpose is to study ways to improve efforts to recruit manufacturing teachers. Superintendent Torres reviewed the Bill with the Board members and the composition of the taskforce.

Commissioner Dianna Wentzell indicated the SDE submitted testimony supporting the bill.

The second Raised Bill No. 383 - An Act Concerning the Technical High School System. Superintendent Torres reviewed the Bill with the Board members highlighting some of the changes and new language which are underlined in the bill. Below is a sampling of excerpts from the bill shared with the Board members:

The superintendent of the technical high school system shall be considered the administrative head for purposes of sections 4-77 and 10-99g, as amended by this act.

The Superintendent of the technical high school system shall submit a proposed operating budget for the technical high school system to the technical high school system board. Such proposed operating budget shall include a statement of the staffing needs for such technical high school.

The superintendent shall communicate directly with the Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management regarding the creation or filling of staff positions included in the approved operating budget for the technical high school system.

The annual report to the Joint Standing Committee of the Legislature will now include (E) information regarding staffing at each technical high school for the current academic year. The superintendent of the technical high school system shall collaborate with the Labor Commissioner to obtain information as needed to carry out the provisions of this subsection.

A new manufacturing pilot is to be established at a technical high school.

Commissioner Wentzell indicated the SDE submitted testimony against the bill.

Chairman Trefry indicated that he originally submitted testimony expressing concern about the bill and suggesting a study to determine the impact of the proposed changes, upon reflecting on his role as board chair, decided to retract his testimony.

Ms. Kerry Kelly, Section Director of the Office of Policy and Management (OPM) and Susan Weisselberg, Deputy Secretary of OPM who were present at the meeting spoke to the Board members and offered LEAN training as an alternative to address the issues experienced with the SDEs hiring and recruitment process.

A copy of Raised Bill Number 5468 and Number 383 are included in the official file of this meeting.

X. Report of the Chair

XI. Committee Reports

A. Quality and Policy

The Quality and Policy Subcommittee met on March 11, 2016. The Committee members discussed the Trade Reauthorization for the Health/Sciences Cluster. The Committee also discussed Legislation.

B. Outreach and Finance

There was no report on Outreach and Finance. The Committee did not meet in March, 2016.

XII. Public Participation

There was no public participation.

XIII. Adjourn

The CTHSS Board adjourned its meeting at 3:35.

Diane Curtis

Prepared by:

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