

**CONNECTICUT TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOL SYSTEM BOARD**

**Minutes of Meeting  
April 19, 2016**

Pursuant to notice filed with the Secretary of State, the Connecticut Technical High School System Board (hereafter "Board") met on April 19, 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  
Mrs. Patricia Keavney-Maruca, Vice Chairperson  
Mr. John Barrasso  
Ms. Karen Eichstaedt  
Mr. Peter Hoecklin  
Mr. Fitz Walker

Absent: Dr. Daisy Cocco De Filippis  
Mr. Chris DiPentima  
Commissioner Scott D. Jackson  
Commissioner Catherine Smith

**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 March 16, 2016 meeting be approved.

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

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

Superintendent Torres reported that April has been a busy month for the CTHSS. The last three weeks have been most significant in terms of our student accomplishments.

### **Annual SkillsUSA Competition at Wilcox Technical High School, Meriden**

On April 1, 2016, students from all of the technical high schools gathered at Wilcox THS in Meriden to take part in the annual SkillsUSA competition. Superintendent Torres thanked everyone who joined the competition. The CTHSS was honored to have Lieutenant Governor Nancy Wyman, City of Meriden Mayor Kevin Scarpati, and the Meriden Delegation join the CTHSS for the kick-off. Superintendent Torres also thanked the number of trade unions who allow the CTHSS to conduct the events at their sites. Several CTHSS winners from the SkillsUSA Competition are now moving on to the Nationals in Kentucky.

### **Board of Examiners for Nursing – Vinal Technical High School, Middletown**

On April 6, 2016, the Board of Examiners for Nursing voted 7 to 1 to close the Vinal THS LPN Program. Superintendent Torres assured the board that arrangements will be made for the Vinal LPN students to complete their program of study. Superintendent Torres will continue to have active conversations with the Board of Regents for Higher Education (BOR) regarding the oversight of the current CTHSS adult programs.

### **CTHSS Regional Professional Development (PD) Day**

On April 6, 2016, the CTHSS held their first ever regional PD day. The CTHSS is very proud of this event and how it clearly aligns with goal number four of the CTHSS Strategic Action Plan which is to invest in the development of faculty and staff to support the system's core mission. Superintendent Torres shared a sampling of the program offerings from each region. Over 100 teachers were presenters to their colleague at this event.

### **CTHSS Day at the State Capitol**

On April 6, 2016, the CTHSS celebrated CTHSS Day at the State Capitol. Superintendent Torres thanked the Board members who were able to take time out of their busy schedule to attend. This day is an opportunity for the CTHSS to celebrate their programs and highlight and celebrate the work of the students. As a follow-up to this event, a packet was sent to each member of the House and the Senate from the district which included the CTHSS Strategic Plan, a brochure of our schools and a cover letter from the Superintendent. Superintendent Torres will share this packet with Board members at the next meeting.

### **Sixth Annual Student Art Show**

The CTHSS Annual Art show highlighting the artwork of students will be held from April 11 through June 6 at the State Office Building in Hartford, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor. On April 26, 2016, there will be a welcoming reception from 5:00 PM to 7:00 PM at the State Office Building as well. All CTHSS Board members are welcome to attend.

### **National Automotive Competition**

Two seniors from Norwich Technical High School, Devin Bialek and Johnathan O'Neill won the National Automotive Competition held in New York City on March 29 – 30, 2016. The CTHSS is very proud that out of 30 teams competing from around the country, Connecticut was number one. These students will be recognized at the May 4, 2016 State Board of Education Meeting and the May 17, 2016 CTHSS Board meetings.

### **Prince Tech's Mykquan Williams Signs Professional Boxing Contract**

On April 11, 2016, Superintendent Torres joined the Prince Technical High School community as Mykquan Williams, Plumbing Trade Technology student, signed his professional boxing contract. Myquan requested to sign his contract at A.I. Prince THS because he wanted the teachers and students to be there to celebrate with him and also because he sees himself as a role model to other students at A.I. Prince.

**Emmett O'Brien's Sean Coyle is appointed to the U.S. Military Academy at West Point**

Sean Coyle, a Senior from Emmett O'Brien THS has been appointed to the U.S. Military Academy at West Point. Sean is a senior Mechanical Design and Engineering Technology Trade Student.

**Governor Dannel P. Malloy has declared May 11, 2016 CTHSS School, Family and Community Partnership for Student Success Day in the State of Connecticut**

On April 19, 2016, CTHSS Superintendent received an official statement and proclamation for the district on behalf of the Governor's Office. May 11, 2016 has officially been declared by Governor Dannel Malloy CTHSS School, Family and Community Partnership for Student Success Day in the State of Connecticut. The CTHSS has been a leader in family engagement. On May 11, 2016 the CTHSS is planning a celebration at the Sheraton Hotel in Rocky Hill from 12:30 PM to 4:40PM. All Board members are invited to attend.

**Walk-in Celebration at Henry Abbott Technical High School**

On May 4, 2016, the CTHSS will host a CTHSS walk-in celebration at Henry Abbott THS. Principal Stacy Butkus and SVFT President Ed Leavy have been working on a partnership on how to highlight and celebrate the collaboration between teachers, students and the communities. There are a number of schools across the nation and in Connecticut that are doing walk-ins. Superintendent Torres stated that this is a democratic exercise to celebrate the CTHSSs, teachers and parents.

The Board members congratulated the CTHSS on all of these accomplishments.

**VII. Items Requiring Action**

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

Discussion and Action was tabled until the May 17, 2016 CTHSS Board Meeting.

**B. CTHSS Rolling Capital Improvement & Capital Equipment Plan for 2017-2019**

Discussion and Action was tabled until the May 17, 2016 CTHSS Board Meeting.

**XIII. Items for Discussion**

**A. Budget Update**

Superintendent Torres introduced Mr. Chasse, Education Consultant to the Board members who provided a brief update on the operating and capital budgets for 2015-16 and 2016-17. The operating budget was reduced by an additional \$2 Million on April 5, 2016 bringing the CTHSS total reductions for the year to approximately \$4 million resulting in an operating budget of approximately \$163 Million.

Since the CTHSS Board last met, the Bond commission approved an allocation of \$2.225 Million for the replacement of trade and academic equipment reducing the current unauthorized bond balance to approximately \$33 million. As noted in the rolling plan, there is legislation pending potentially reducing the unallocated bond balance by \$1.2 Million effective July 1, 2016. As to the 2016-17 operating budget, the situation remains fluid with the reported deficit in excess of \$900 Million. The current session of the General Assembly is scheduled to end on May 4, 2016. If the General Assembly fails to reach a compromise, they will be called into a special session. If they have not reached a budget by July 1, 2016 funding will provided to the district in 30 day increments until such time as the budget has been passed.

At the request of Mr. Trefry, Mr. Chasse was asked to clarify the various budget proposals. Mr. Chasse shared a brief comparison of the Governor's original proposal which would be to roll the CTHSS Budget into the agency's operations account that would be subject to a 5.75% reduction. The appropriations committee would reduce the CTHSS operating budget by 3% which is equivalent to \$5.1 million.

Superintendent Torres stated she is very concerned with the CTHSS' ability to function as a district and to provide services to the students. Superintendent Torres thanked Commissioner Wentzell and Ms. Demsey for their support and advocacy for the budget and refill of positions. Superintendent Torres held a conference call with Principals on April 14, 2016, regarding reallocating resources differently. Superintendent Torres spoke about the number of retirements the CTHSS has received. Superintendent Torres continues to meet with Mr. Chasse and Human Resources on a regular basis regarding staffing.

Commissioner Wentzell recognized the budgeting work that Superintendent Torres and her administrative team are doing on behalf of the CTHSS students. Commissioner Wentzell commended Ms. Demsey's work and advocacy for the CTHSS in her role as SDE Chief Financial officer and her working relationship with the Office of Policy and Management. Ms. Demsey has been able to demonstrate the fiscally responsible management of the CTHSS and the SDE. Commissioner Wentzell indicated that the CTHSS has received special hiring status- something that has not been granted to other state agencies in these difficult budget times. Commissioner Wentzell also commended Superintendent Torres, and Ms. Demsey for their leadership through this transition. The Board members thanked Commissioner Wentzell and her staff for all they are doing.

A question was raised by the Board regarding the cost per student. Commissioner Wentzell indicated that she had these numbers and would provide them at the next meeting.

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

## **IX. Report of the Chair**

### **Budget**

Superintendent Torres at the request of Mr. Trefry explained how the CTHSS will navigate through the budget implementation lean process and shared some of the internal discussions including the areas the CTHSS is looking at to trim the budget. If difficult decisions need to be made, the CTHSS will need to look at more efficient ways to continue to deliver the core mission. Commissioner Wentzell reminded the Board members that SDE is unsure how the system for budgeting will work. This is still under discussion.

Prior to the May 17, 2016 CTHSS Board Meeting, the Board may call a special session if strategic changes regarding the budget need to take place. A special meeting will require board discussion around potential strategic options and implementation. Mr. Trefry, Ms. Keavney-Maruca and Mr. Barrasso will stay in close communication with Superintendent Torres in the event a special meeting needs to be called.

The Board thanked Commissioner Wentzell and Ms. Demsey for their advocacy of the CTHSS.

### **The CSBE Five-year Comprehensive Plan, 2016-21**

Mr. Trefry provided an update on the State Department of Education's Five Year Comprehensive Plan. The State Board of Education has had several sessions to hear all of the comments from various focus groups across the state and constituencies. A draft is currently out for comment from these groups.

## **X. Committee Reports**

### **A. Quality and Policy**

The Quality and Policy Subcommittee met on April 8, 2016. The Committee members approved the Trade Reauthorization for the Health/Sciences Cluster. The Committee reviewed the Next Generation Accountability results for the CTHSS. Mr. Shellman, Vinal Tech Principal, walked the committee through the results for his school to highlight the indicators of the report. These results were pretty impressive considering they were not designed to take into account the credentialing that happens in the CTHSS. Discussions will continue at the May 17, 2016 CTHSS board meeting regarding the trade reauthorization. There will be further discussion centering on the enrollment at Ella T. Grasso THS and not specifically to the BET trade.

**B. Outreach and Finance**

There was no report on Outreach and Finance. The Committee did not meet on April 19, 2016.

**XI. Public Participation**

There was no public participation.

**XII. Adjourn**

The CTHSS Board adjourned its meeting at 2:15.

*Diane Curtis*

Prepared by:

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