

CONNECTICUT TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOL SYSTEM BOARD

**Minutes of Meeting
June 21, 2016**

Pursuant to notice filed with the Secretary of State, the Connecticut Technical High School System Board (hereafter "Board") met on June 21, 2016 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. Fitz Walker
Dr. Daisy Cocco De Filippis
Commissioner Scott D. Jackson

Absent: Mr. Chris DiPentima
Mr. Peter Hoecklin
Commissioner Catherine Smith

Mr. Trefry called a motion to move Agenda Item IV. Executive Session to after the last item, Public Participation –Agenda Item X., and to move Items for Discussion VII.A., to just precede the Revised Admissions Policy- Item VI.A.3.

Mr. Barrasso moved, Ms. Keavney-Maruca seconded to move agenda item IV. Executive Session to the last item of the Agenda and to move Items for Discussion VII.A. Admissions Update, to Item VI.A.3. Revised Admissions Policy.

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

Motion carried unanimously.

II. Public Participation

There was no public participation.

III. Consent Agenda

Commissioner Jackson moved, Mr. Barrasso seconded, that the CTHSS Board approve the following consent agenda items:
III.A. Consideration of Minutes of the May 17, 2016 meeting and III.B., CTHSS Healthy Food Certification Statement.

A. Consideration of Minutes

Resolved, That the CTHSS Board approve the minutes of the May 17, 2016 meeting be approved.

B. Healthy Food Certification Statement

Resolved, That the that the CTHSS Board pursuant to Section 10-215b of the Connecticut General Statutes, approves that the CTHSS not to participate in the Healthy Food Certification for the 2016-2017 school year, although it will continue to main current Federal nutritional standards in its school meals and a la carte options.

VOTE ON

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

Motion Carried Unanimously.

A copy of the Healthy Food Certification Executive Summary is included in the official file of this meeting.

V. Report of the Superintendent of Schools

CTHSS Graduations

Superintendent Torres thanked everyone who joined the CTHSS for their graduations. Superintendent Torres was able to attend seven graduations. The Board members shared their reflections of the graduations they attended.

Grasso THS Hosts Ribbon Cutting of their new Welding Shop

On June 3, 2016 Ella T. Grasso THS had the honor of hosting a ribbon cutting ceremony for the new state-of-the art welding laboratory, a state investment of over \$2 Million and a partnership meeting with Electric Boat. Electric Boat and Three Rivers Community College will be using the Grasso’s facility in the evening to run apprenticeship and training programs in welding and metal fabrication. This is the first time in the district a distinguished group joined the CTHSS in an event including US Senators Richard Blumenthal and Chris Murphy, Congressman Joe Courtney and Lt. Governor Nancy Wyman who joined a roundtable discussion on workforce development. The Community Colleges, Workforce Development Board, and the CTHSS Board Chairman joined in the discussion on partnership efforts and next steps. In the afternoon, at the Submarine Museum in Groton, the CTHSS was able to meet with Whitehouse staff to discuss the need for the CTHSS programs and show just how vital they are to the workforce and economic development and to highlight the Strategic Action Plan.

2017 CTHSS Teacher of the Year

The CTHSS has identified the 2017 CTHSS Teacher of the Year, Ms. Aimee Correa, of Eli Whitney THS who is a Hairdressing Instructor and a Wilcox THS graduate. The surprise announcement was an exciting moment for Eli Whitney THS. The Board members will be able to meet Ms. Correa at the September 20, 2016 Board meeting where all of the Teachers of the Year will be honored.

Home Office and Administrators’ End of the Year Retreats

The week of June 27, 2016 the CTHSS will hold their annual retreat with staff. The topic is teamwork and planning for the upcoming school year.

CTHSS wins the 2016 Hartford Business Journal Green Circle Sustainability Award

On Monday, May 23, 2016 The Hartford Business Journal awarded the CTHSS the Green Circle Sustainability Award. The e-house initiative and the Project Learning Tree contributed towards winning the award. Superintendent Torres shared the award with the Board members.

VI. Items Requiring Action

A. Budget Recommendations

Superintendent Torres introduced Mr. Chasse who presented an updated financial report regarding the operating and capital budgets for the 2016-17 FY to the Board members and challenges the CTHSS will face moving forward. This report was shared at the Outreach and Finance Subcommittee members who met just prior to today's Board meeting.

The budget for FY 2016-17 represents an increase of approximately \$359,000.00 in comparison to the rescission-adjusted budget for FY 2015-16 of \$160.0 MM. The additional funds are intended to fund nine (9) new positions for J.M. Wright THS as the school continues to expand its enrollment. For the 2016-17 school year, J.M. Wright will have students enrolled in grades 9-11. This level of funding also assumes that the school district will maintain a general fund full-time vacancy count ranging from 90-110 positions – unless other cost savings options are implemented.

The Superintendent has identified an initial savings plan as detailed on pages three and four of the financial report. The initial plan includes the freezing of 33 positions, closing of the adult health programs, delaying the start of a new class at the new aviation schools, suspension of extended hours programs, and fuel and utility savings. The resulting savings of \$3.75 M will allow the Superintendent to redirect resources to potentially fill approximately 141 vacancies for next fiscal year.

After development of this initial plan, the CTHSS received notification of an additional \$4.9 million cut. A working group meeting is scheduled for June 23, 2016 with Leah Grenier, OPM Budget Specialist and Kathy Demsey SDE Chief Financial Officer to discuss the impact of this additional reduction to the Technical High School System.

There was discussion on the Schools of Aviation-Hartford and Stratford. The Superintendent clarified that a preliminary decision was made to hold off on enrolling a class for the Fall of 2016 pending guidance from SDE and OPM colleagues about Title IV funding and other possible partnerships. This information was shared via conference call with SDE and OPM officials on Friday, June 17th, 2016. All existing aviation students will remain reenrolled until the completion of their program as late as December, 2017. There has been no discussion about the closing of these sites.

A motion was called at this time to reduce the fiscal year 2016-17 Budget to \$163,367,535.00 with the understanding the Superintendent provide the Board with a revised plan for the Board's approval and consideration if there are additional cuts.

Commissioner Jackson moved, Mr. Trefry seconded, that the CTHSS Board, approve to reduce the fiscal year 2016-17 adjusted budget to \$163,367,535 with the understanding the Superintendent provide the Board with a revised plan for the Board's approval and consideration if there are additional cuts. This budget reduction includes the closing of the certified nursing assistant, dental assisting, medical assistant and surgical technology programs.

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

Motion carried unanimously.

The Board members thanked Superintendent Torres for all of her hard work. Superintendent Torres commended her school leaders and staff.

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

1. 2017 CTHSS Board Meeting Schedule

A motion was called at this time to approve the 2017 CTHSS Board Schedule.

Mr. Barrasso moved, Ms. Eichstaedt seconded, that the Board, pursuant to Section 1-225 of the Connecticut General Statutes and its Bylaws, approves the 2017 meeting schedule as follows:

Tuesday, January 17, 2017
Tuesday, February 28, 2017
Tuesday, March 21, 2017
Tuesday, April 18, 2017
Tuesday, May 16, 2017
Tuesday, June 20, 2017
Tuesday, July 18, 2017
Tuesday, August 15, 2017 (If needed)
Tuesday, September 19, 2017
Tuesday, October 17, 2017
Tuesday, November 14, 2017
Tuesday, December 12, 2017

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

Motion carried unanimously.

VII. Items for Discussion

A. Admissions Update

Goal #2 of the CTHSS Strategic Action Plan states: “Create an alignment between K-12, Post-secondary and Adult Programs to provide a continuum of educational services resulting in readiness for career and college.” Framework for Success Item #2.4 state: “Refine the district’s admissions policy”.

Early on in the 2014-15 school year, OCR recommended that the CTHSS seek the researcher services of a notable psychometrician in the field of admissions for Career and Technical Education programs. The district was fortunate to have Dr. Shaun Dougherty from UCONN come on board two years ago. Dr. Dougherty has been working with the CTHSS on the admission process. He has vast knowledge to this process having worked with other career and technical programs across the United States. Superintendent Torres introduced Dr. Dougherty and Education Consultant Cynthia Mischel to the Board members. Dr. Dougherty presented his findings of his analysis of literacy and numeracy levels and the progress in the CTHSS curriculum. His PowerPoint entitled “Choosing Standardized Assessment Measures for CTHSS Admissions” included research undertaken to date, performance on STAR reading, academic GPA by grade, predicted failures for Grade 9, and predicted failures for grades 9-11. The use of an assessment for all applicants which helps indicate literacy has the ability to predict later progress in the CTHSS educational program. Dr. Dougherty concluded his presentation on the next step recommendations.

Dr. Dougherty and Ms. Mischel responded to questions the Board members raised on the presentation.

Revised Admissions Policy

Goal Number 2 of the Strategic Action Plan is to create an alignment between K-12, Post-secondary and Adult Programs to provide a continuum of educational services resulting in readiness for career and college. The Framework for Success 2.4 is to refine the district’s admissions policy.

On June 10, 2016 the Subcommittee on Quality and Policy met and agreed to recommend to the CTHSS Board approval of the use of an internal literacy and numeracy assessment as part of the admissions process in order to assess an applicant’s literacy and numeracy skills necessary for participation in the CTHSS 9th grade program

Superintendent Torres introduced Education Consultant’s Cynthia Mischel to the Board members. Based on the analysis presented by Dr. Dougherty and the clear relationship between these objective measures and incoming literacy and numeracy of ninth grade students, the CTHSS is recommending to the Board the use of an internal literacy and numeracy assessment as part of the admissions process in order to assess an applicant’s literacy and numeracy skills necessary for participation in the 9th grade program with the understanding that this study will continue. This process continues to evolve based on the feedback the CTHSS receives from the Board and members from the CTHSS community. Ms. Mischel added that this will help level the playing field. The CTHSS presently relies on Math and English grade information to rank students. The use of an internal literacy and numeracy assessment as part of the admissions process would help give a better picture of the skills students have. Other factors are included in the admissions process will continue to be included.

Discussion included trade assessments. The CTHSS has not been able to find age appropriate trade assessments. Also discussed is how to gauge interest—i.e. surveys, etc. Conversations will continue at the Quality and Policy Subcommittee meetings. The admissions council hears the boards concerns that academic achievement should not be the only measure. This is the first step and meetings will continue regarding other measures.

A motion was called at this time. The CTHSS requests approval of the use of an internal literacy and numeracy assessment as part of the admissions process in order to assess an applicant’s literacy and numeracy skills necessary for participation in the CTHSS 9th grade program.

Ms. Keavney moved, Mr. Barrasso seconded, that the CTHSS Board approve the use of an internal literacy and numeracy assessment as part of the admissions process in order to assess an applicant's literacy and numeracy skills necessary for participation in the CTHSS 9th grade program.

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

The existing policy will be revised and be brought back to the Board for approval. The revision will include under follow-up activities, grade variation and how this correlates with success in the trade area.

Motion carried unanimously.

A copy of the executive summary and revised admissions policy is included in the official file of this meeting. The revised executive summary based on today's approval will be revised and re-sent to the Board members.

VIII. Report of the Chair

The Association of School Boards delegation is sponsoring a technology education bill to provide funding. The sponsors are all from Connecticut.

IX. Committee Reports

A. Quality and Policy

The Quality and Policy Subcommittee met on June 10, 2016. It was the first time the Committee received public participation. The Committee members agreed to recommend approval to the CTHSS Board the closing of the CTHSS certified nursing assistant, dental assisting, medical assistant and surgical technology programs. The Committee also agreed to recommend to the CTHSS Board approval of the use of an internal literacy and numeracy assessment as part of the admissions process in order to assess an applicant's literacy and numeracy skills necessary for participation in the CTHSS 9th grade program.

B. Outreach and Finance

The Outreach and Finance Subcommittee met on June 21, 2016 just prior to today's Board meeting. The Committee members met and agreed unanimously to recommend to the CTHSS Board the approval of the Healthy Food Certification Statement. It is recommended that the Board approve not to participate in the Healthy Food Certification for the 2016-17 school year. The Committee members also discussed the financial report regarding the operating and capital budgets for the 2016-17 FY and made the recommendation to accept the budget proposal.

X. Public Participation

There was no public participation.

IV. Executive Session

The Board voted unanimously to go into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing the Superintendent's Evaluation for the 2015-16 School Year.

XI. Adjourn

The CTHSS Board adjourned its meeting at 3:20.

Diane Curtis

Prepared by:

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