

CONNECTICUT TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOL SYSTEM BOARD

Draft Minutes of Meeting November 17, 2015

Pursuant to notice filed with the Secretary of State, the Connecticut Technical High School System Board (hereafter "Board") met on November 17, 2015 at Howell Cheney Technical High School, 791 West Middle Turnpike, Manchester, CT 06040.

I. Call to Order

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

Present: Mr. Robert Trefry, Chairperson
Mr. John Barrasso
Mr. Chris DiPentima
Mrs. Patricia Keavney-Maruca, Vice Chairperson
Ms. Karen Eichstaedt
Commissioner Sharon Palmer
Dr. Daisy Cocco De Filippis
Mr. Fitz Walker

Absent: Commissioner Catherine Smith

Mr. Trefry thanked Mr. Sartoris, Principal of Howell Cheney Technical High School for hosting the Board Meeting. Principal Sartoris thanked the Board members for their support. Mr. Sartoris shared a success story and read a letter from an employer regarding a recent graduate of Cheney THS and Gateway Community College. Mr. Sartoris introduced Elizabeth Tucker, Information Systems Technology major and Nicholas Vendetta, Electrical major who shared their experience at Howell Cheney and their post-secondary plans with the board.

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 October 20, 2015 meeting be approved.

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

VI. Report of the Superintendent of Schools

Superintendent Torres provided a handout updating the Board members on statewide partnerships and outreach efforts; teaching and learning; and school celebrations for the months of October and November, 2015.

Superintendent Torres highlighted the following items from her report/handout as follows:

- Roundtable discussion with President Mark Ojakian at Naugatuck Valley Community College
- Partnership meeting with Electric Boat and Eastern Workforce Investment Board, Middletown
- Lunch with European business and industry partners at the Aerospace and Defense International Summit, Mystic
- Presentation to the Joint Standing Committees of the Legislature on the CTHSS Annual Report, LOB (a copy of this presentation was distributed to the Board members). The Superintendent will also be presenting this report to the State Board of Education at their December 3rd meeting.
- District-Wide PD Day at the Convention Center (a copy of the program was distributed to the Board members)
- Teacher of the Year Celebration at the Bushnell, November 10th, Melanie Cometa CTHSS Teacher of the Year

Superintendent Torres distributed to the Board members the Report of the National Association of State Boards of Education (NASBE) Study Group on Career Readiness. Chairman Trefry was part of this national taskforce. There will be more discussion on this topic at a future Quality and Policy Subcommittee meeting.

Superintendent Torres distributed a news article to the Board members on the proposed budget cuts. Superintendent Torres presented a fiscal update to the Board Members which she also presented at the Outreach and Finance Subcommittee that met just prior to today's meeting. The latest monthly report projects a state deficit of approximately \$118.4M for the current fiscal year (2015-16). This projected deficit exists despite the September 18, 2015 rescission action totaling approximately \$102.8M. Additional budget reductions should be expected for both the current fiscal year (2015-16) and next fiscal year (2016-17).

The district's adjusted general fund operating budget for fiscal year ending June 30, 2016 is \$164,958,650. The district continues to experience a full-time general fund vacancy count of 95 positions of which the district continues to pursue the refill of 66 of these positions.

On November 16, 2015, the Connecticut Democratic Party issued a series of budget reduction proposals that included a reduction to the CTHSS budget of approximately \$6.7 Million for fiscal year 2015-16. Superintendent Torres reported she has begun to develop contingency plans.

A copy of the Superintendent's report, Presentation to the Joint Standing Committees, PD Day Program and the Report of the NASBE Study Group on Career Readiness are included in the official file of this meeting.

VII. Items Requiring Action

There were no items requiring action.

VIII. Items for Discussion

A. Focus Group Discussion for the SDE Strategic Plan

The Connecticut State Board of Education has embarked on a process that will culminate in the creation of a five-year plan dedicated to ensuring that every Connecticut public school student has equitable access to excellent educational experiences and results. On behalf of the State Board of Education, the CTHSS Board has been invited to participate in one of the Connecticut Department of Education focus groups.

Mr. Trefry introduced Mr. Jonathan P. Costa, Director of School and Program Services, and Professional Facilitator for Education Connection to the Board members. The CTHSS Board participated in a focus group session facilitated by Mr. Costa. Mr. Costa led Board members through a series of questions that were designed to explore the issues of equity and excellence in Connecticut's public schools. During the meeting, Mr. Costa recorded all of the CTHSS

Board member's spoken responses into a database. The responses will be transcribed by quality analysis tools, comparing trends, etc. and will be reported back to the State Department of Education on December 8, 2015.

Mr. Trefry thanked Mr. Costa for facilitating today's focus group session and thanked the Board members for their participation as their contribution will add to the quality of the State Board's plan.

A copy of the Focus Group questions are included in the official file of this meeting.

IX. Report of the Chair

Mr. Trefry announced that Mr. DiPentima has joined the Outreach and Finance Subcommittee and Dr. De Filippis has joined the Quality and Policy Subcommittee.

X. Committee Reports

A. Quality and Policy

The Quality and Policy Subcommittee met on November 13, 2015. The Committee members were briefed on the one to one rollout of the Google Chromebook and where the CTHSS is to date. The Committee members were provided an update on the topics covered at the November 3, 2015 CTHSS Districtwide Professional Development Day. Teachers from Wilcox and Cheney presented to the Committee on they are using Google Classroom, Google Apps and Add-ons.

B. Outreach and Finance

The Outreach and Finance Committee met on November 17, 2015 directly before the CTHSS Board meeting. The Committee members received an update on the CTHSS Budget.

XI. Public Participation

There was no public participation.

XII. Adjourn

The CTHSS Board adjourned its meeting at 3:05 PM.

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