

CONNECTICUT TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOL SYSTEM BOARD

**Minutes of the February 28, 2017 Meeting of the of the
Sub Committee on Outreach and Finance**

Pursuant to notice filed with the Secretary of State, the Connecticut Technical High School System Board Committee on Outreach and Finance met on February 28, 2017 at 25 Industrial Park Road, Middletown, CT.

I. Call to Order

Mr. Trefry called the meeting to order at 12:30 PM

Present: John Barrasso Chairperson of the Outreach and Finance Committee
Gina Chiarella, Committee Member
Daisy Cocco De Filippis, Committee Member (Q & P)
Patricia Keavney, Vice-Chairperson of the CTHSS Board
Commissioner Catherine Smith, Committee Member
Nivea L. Torres, Superintendent of the CTHSS
Robert Trefry, Chairperson of the CTHSS Board
James Chasse, CTHSS Education Consultant
Mr. Jeffrey Wihbey, Assistant Superintendent of the CTHSS

Absent: Chris DiPentima, Committee Member
Commissioner Scott Jackson
Mr. Fitz Walker

II. Public Participation

There was no public participation

III. Minutes of the January 17, 2017 Meeting of the Outreach and Finance.

Commissioner Smith moved, Ms. Keavney seconded, that the Committee approve the minutes of the January 28, 2017 meeting of the Outreach and Finance.

Vote: In Favor: Barrasso, Chiarella, Keavney, Smith, Trefry
Opposed: 0
Abstained: 0
Absent: DiPentima, Jackson, Walker

Motion carried unanimously.

IV. Strategic Planning for the Connecticut Technical High School System

A. Budget Update

Superintendent Torres introduced Mr. Chasse who provided an update on latest information impacting the district's operating budget for fiscal year 2016-17. The district continues to pursue the refill of critical instructional and operational positions.

Mr. Chasse provided a breakdown of the current vacant positions. The latest projections assume that 41 full-time positions approved for refill by the Office of Policy and Management (OPM) will be filled by March 17, 2017. The

projections also assume an additional 50 full-time time general fund positions (including four durationals) currently awaiting approval to post will be filled by March 31, 2017.

The fiscal year 2016-17 revised budget is \$158,466,509 which includes total reserves of approximately \$1.5M for various collective bargaining payouts which have been placed on hold due to expiration of various collective bargaining agreements. Negotiations between the State of Connecticut and the State Employees Bargaining Agent Coalition (SEBAC) continue. There is currently a \$800,000 reserve for emergency building repairs in the event that additional bonding is not approved before June 30, 2017 to ensure funding is available in the event of unforeseen winter weather costs due to maintenance vacancies.

The district continues to pursue two critical bond allocations. A request for \$2,575,000 for various infrastructure repairs was submitted to the Department of Administrative Services - Construction Services for forwarding to the Office of Policy and Management (OPM) in October 2016 and awaits State Bond Commission consideration. In the event that this request is not approved before the close of the fiscal year, the operating budget could be negatively impacted. An additional request for \$2,500,000 for classroom and networking technology equipment was submitted to the State Department of Education on January 9, 2017 for forwarding to OPM.

On February 8, 2017, the Honorable Governor Dannel P. Malloy issued his Recommended Operating and Capital Budgets for fiscal years 2017-18 and 2018-19.

The **operating budget** highlights include:

- Additional funding (\$266,098 and \$309,525) necessary to hire additional staff at J.M. Wright THS.
- The transfer of funding (approximately \$1.7M) from the State Department of Education to the CTHSS for the projected payroll costs of twenty (20) staff persons being transferred from the SDE to the CTHSS. These staff persons include financial, human resource and information technology staff that already provide dedicated services to the school system. Superintendent Torres indicated that the CTHSS is still trying to determine with SDE Colleagues what these positions are.
- The proposed regionalization/centralization of school business offices resulting in the elimination of 35 positions at an approximate savings of \$2.7M. Superintendent Torres and Mr. Wihbey had a meeting with OPM and Ms. Demsey on February 23, 2017 and talked about the implications of the proposal. She provided examples/services provided including: production work, asset management, and electronic leave requests and internal audit issues,
- The continuation of the OPM holdbacks that originated in fiscal year 2016 and were annualized in fiscal year 2017 totaling approximately \$4.9M. Superintendent reminded the Committee members the impact is actually \$7.6 million counting the biennial. She also reminded that the \$4.9 includes the freezing 55 positions and curtailing operational needs. Commissioner Smith suggested a CORE system their currently have underway.
- The creation of a dedicated operating account for the CTHSS payroll and a separate operating account for all other services and supplies (including fuel and utilities).

The proposed **capital budget** would:

- provide no new capital funding during the biennial period;
- reduce previously-approved bond authorizations by \$5.5M, and
- eliminate the remaining \$8,066,000 for Extended Hours Programs.

Approximately \$20M in previously legislatively-authorized capital funding will be reprioritized to address the most critical needs – including the replacement of student transportation vehicles, technology and trade and academic equipment.

Questions/Discussion included: Overall positions are moving along quickly, reserves if not spent by June 30 go back to the general fund, clarification on the 20 positions from SDE to CTHSS, attrition, LEAN practice including Medtronic; concern of the number of substitute teachers if vacancies are not re-filled, the extended hours program and what the intent was, and the use of CTHSS Schools as training centers for corporations.

Superintendent Torres announced that she will be pursuing the refill of Assistant Superintendent of Pupil Personnel Services for Special Ed and Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning. The Committee members endorsed the pursuance of these positions.

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

B. Inventory Update

Superintendent Torres introduced Assistant Superintendent Jeffrey Wihbey to the Committee members who provided an update on the CTHSS inventory processes. Mr. Wihbey's presentation identified current issues including: SDE Bureau of Fiscal Service process, replacement value versus depreciated value, and unclear roles and responsibilities. Assistant Superintendent Wihbey discussed actions the CTHSS will be taking in the future to address these issues. Actions include: Creating a districtwide receiving process, update and reissue administrative letter on inventory, create user manuals, identify roles, responsibilities and actions for principals, consultants, department heads, building maintenance supervisors, fiscal and information system techs, and meeting with SDE Fiscal staff. Assistant Superintendent Wihbey will continue to keep the Committee members updated on the progress.

Discussion included state contracts for recycling.

C. Next Steps for Strategic Planning

Superintendent Torres shared with the Committee members an outline of the next steps for strategic planning. The Strategic Action Plan is approaching the end of its third year cycle and a new three year plan needs to be drafted by the end of the 2016-17 school year. Superintendent Torres has met and discussed the outline with the Subcommittee on Quality and Policy at their February 10, 2017 meeting. At their meeting it was agreed that the four goals should remain and that the CTHSS Board members need to look at the foundational imperatives and modify accordingly. It was agreed that a retreat will be scheduled to accomplish this task.

Superintendent Torres walked the Committee members through the steps as follows:

The CTHSS Team Presents Annual Report and Three Year Cycle Report to the CTHSS Board by July 2017
The CTHSS Board Reviews mission, goals and foundational imperatives by July, 2017
The CTHSS Team reviews performance indicators for each goal by Summer 2017,
The CTHSS Team presents to the CTHSS Board a draft of Tomorrow's Framework 2018-21 by September 2017
The CTHSS Board continues review of draft document by October, 2017
The CTHSS Board approves Tomorrow's Framework, 2018-21 by November 2017

The Committee members endorsed the timeline and the outline plan for the next steps and commended the superintendent on all of her work thus far.

A copy of the Strategic Action Plan Outline is included in the official file of this meeting.

V. The next meeting of the Committee on Outreach and Finance will be held on March 21, 2017.

VI. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 1:15.

Prepared by:

Diane Curtis

Diane Curtis, Administrative Assistant