

Connecticut State Board of Education
Connecticut Technical High School Committee
Minutes of Meeting
May 13, 2009

Pursuant to notice filed with the Secretary of the State, the Connecticut Technical High School committee, the “Committee” met on May 13, 2009 at Norwich Technical High School, Norwich.

Committee Members Present: Mrs. Beverly Bobroske
Ms. Theresa Hopkins-Staten (participated
via conference telephone)
Ms. Janet Finneran
CTHSS Staff Present: Dr. Abigail L. Hughes, Superintendent
Mr. Robert Lombardi, Assistant Superintendent

I. Acting Chairwoman Bobroske called the meeting to order at 1:15 p.m.

II. Executive Session: None

III. Consideration of April 7, 2009 Minutes
The minutes were unanimously approved.

IV. Public Participation

Mrs. Bobroske invited Dr. Menounos to give an update on Norwich Tech. Dr. Menounos thanked the members for coming to Norwich Tech for their meeting and hoped that they enjoyed the tour of the new school building. She thanked the two DECA students, Amanda Smith and Kyle Stratton, for conducting the tour, Mrs. Curcio, Dean of Students, for the training of the students and Mrs. Hans for taking pictures. Dr. Menounos introduced Norwich Tech’s Student of the Year, Jamaal Bruzual, and gave a brief overview as to why he was chosen this year. Dr. Menounos informed the members that CONNCAN recognized Norwich Tech as one of the top ten high schools in closing the achievement gap. Two hundred freshmen students have been accepted for September and NTHS is competitive with area schools. She stated that reading is highlighted. Jana Laiz, author of Weeping Under This Same Moon, will be speaking to the students on Friday, May 15, 2009. This is the eighth year that students have twenty minutes of daily silent sustained reading. Students are required to read two books during the summer. She showed the members the booklet that students will receive with the recommendations for each grade. The school, along with Bank Square Books of Mystic, will host a book fair on June 3, 2009. She explained that these are some of the ways that Norwich Tech is closing the gap. Mrs. Bobroske thanked Dr. Menounos for hosting the meeting, the knowledgeable DECA students for the tour and congratulated Jamaal Bruzual and his family for his nomination.

V. Consent Agenda – None

VI. Items Requiring Action

a. Healthy Food Certification

A discussion was held on whether the CTHSS should participate. The committee decided not to participate in the Healthy Food Certification for the 2009-2010 school year due to cost. The committee will inform the Board. Upon motion duly made by Janet Finneran,

and seconded by Beverly Bobroske, the CTHSS committee will not participate in the Healthy Food Certification for the 2009-2010 school year.

VOTE: In Favor: Finneran, Bobroske, Hopkins-Staten
 Opposed: 0
 Abstained: 0

VII. Items for Discussion

a. Affirmative Action Plan

Mrs. Bobroske invited Sharon Gaddy, Affirmative Action Officer, SDE, to speak. A copy of the draft of the SDE Affirmative Action Plan Summary was distributed to all in attendance. The Commission of Human Rights had disapproved the March 1, 2007 – February 28, 2008 report stating the CT State Department of Education had failed to achieve the goals or did not make a good fair effort to achieve the goals. Ms. Gaddy reviewed some of the eighteen sections contained in the summary. A discussion was held on the three pages of statistics. Ms. Finneran asked which part of the report applies to the technical high schools. Ms. Gaddy stated that the report applies to the Department of Education including CTHSS. Ms. Hopkins-Staten stated that the SDE last report was disapproved but how would they know that the CTHSS was not in compliance. She asked if it could be tracked quarterly. Ms. Gaddy stated that they are trying to change the way the data is reported and some have suggested CHRO should establish a standard for guidelines. Ms. Hopkins-Staten stated that guidelines would enable the CTHSS to analyze their own data. She asked Ms. Gaddy to explain the formulas that are used to come up with their numbers. Ms. Gaddy stated that the process is very involved but would be happy to come back and explain how the goals are set. Ms. Thompson added that the SDE's failure was due to its inability to explain why it did not meet the goals. Ms. Gaddy gave a brief overview of the process. Mrs. Bobroske suggested that members receive the data before the next meeting so they will be able to ask the right questions. Ms. Finneran proposed that the information be shared with the entire State Board of Education and, in the future, should be on the agenda annually. Mrs. Bobroske asked for a bullet page with the most important things that they should know.

b. Inventory Update

Mr. Lombardi informed the members that a committee was recently formed to address the loss of inventory items. The committee has two CTHSS principals, two CTHSS business managers and a member of the teachers' union.

- members were informed of the purchasing and tagging process
- tagging is inconsistent throughout the CTHSS
- Process for removing items from inventory needs to be improved
- Storekeepers were hired to process shipping and receiving at each school but Central Office assigned them to track inventory

A discussion was held as to who decides what items should be tagged. All acknowledged that the present system is not working. This has been an ongoing problem. The inventory committee will submit a draft of their report at a meeting in Hartford and provide a copy to the State Board of Education in June 2009.

VIII. Report of the Superintendent

a. J.M. Wright Technical High School Update

Dr. Hughes stated that Linda McMahon will be joining the committee. Ms. McMahon toured Wright Tech and was shocked by what she saw. She will be attending their graduation ceremony. Dr. Hughes provided the following information-

- Wright Tech has 182 students, 44 of them are seniors
- 24 freshmen in September; little participation at the second Open House
- The principal, Joseph LaVorgna, is retiring. Karen Shaw, Bureau Chief, Human Resources, put forward the request to the Office of Policy and Management to have Mr. LaVorgna continue working as the Principal as a retiree.

b. ERIP

Dr. Hughes commented on the fact that twelve of the 62 administrators have either submitted letters or verbally informed her that they will be retiring. A discussion was held about the process of filling the positions of administrators and teachers. Mr. Lombardi stated that 92 teachers have submitted letters and that more is expected.

IX. Other Matters: None

X. Public Participation: None

IX. Adjournment

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 2:37 p.m.

Submitted by Arlene Ciccone

Minutes approved at the June 16, 2009 meeting