

**CONNECTICUT TECHNICAL EDUCATION AND CAREER SYSTEM BOARD
Hartford, CT**

**Minutes
Full Board
January 20, 2020**

Pursuant to notice filed with the Secretary of the State, the Connecticut Technical Education and Career System (hereafter "Board") met on December 16, 2020 via Google Meet Virtual Conference.

I. Call to Order

Mr. Robert Trefry called the meeting to order at 9:06am.

Present: Robert Trefry, Board Member
Patricia Keavney-Maruca, Board Member
George Anderson, Board Member
Jeff Aucker, Board Member
Christine Benz, Board Member
Karen Wosczyzna Birch, Board Member
Lindy Lee Gold, Board Member
Duncan Harris, Board Member
Kelli-Marie Vallieres, Board Member
Fitz Walker, Board Member
Commissioner Kurt Westby, Board Member

Jeffrey Wihbey, Superintendent of Schools

Absent: Eric Brown, Board Member
Fitz Walker, Board Member

Mr. Trefry welcomed Board members and guests and lead the pledge of allegiance.

II. Public Participation

There was no public participation.

III. Consideration of Minutes of the December 16, 2020, CTECS Board Meeting

This item was tabled to the next Board meeting.

IV. Items Requiring Action

A. Youth Suicide Prevention and Intervention Policy

Mr. Robert Trefry introduced, Ms. Susan Scott, CTECS Legal Director, who gave an overview of the CTECS Youth Suicide Prevention and Intervention Policy with added points provided by Mr. Tom Cronin, CTECS Director of Admissions.

Nationally, suicide is the second leading cause of death among high school students.¹ Moreover, there has been a consistent trend in the past decade of increased suicide attempts among teens across different demographic groups.² The data also indicates that students who experience mental health and substance abuse issues are more likely to complete treatment when interventions are offered in the school setting.³

CTECS' schools are in a unique position to develop effective school climates, including whole school, small group and student specific strategies to help students who may experience suicidal ideation or engage in suicidal behavior. Connecticut state law requires CTECS to adopt a written policy and procedures for dealing with youth suicide prevention and youth suicide attempts.⁴ With these things in mind, CTECS establishes this policy and guidance and re-affirms its collective belief that student safety is the foundation of a great school and student success.

A few elements and highlights: Prevention Awareness, Intervention and Collaboration, Postvention and Response, Training of Staff and Students, Evaluation and Data Collection, and Implementation Responsibility, and Guiding Principles.

Questions/Discussion included:

Ms. Keavney-Maruca shared the committee's enthusiasm with the policy and praised the district for keeping current with the times. She continued to share the importance of social emotional support in academic settings.

Dr. Harris requested additional information on participation and utilizing screening tools.

Mr. Cronin shared the power of screening tools to assess content, effectiveness, and data review.

Mr. Trefry thanked all involved for all of their efforts.

Ms. Keavney-Maruca moved, Ms. Lindy Lee Gold seconded, that the Board adopt the Youth Suicide Prevention and Intervention Policy.

Vote: In Favor: Anderson, Aucker, Benz, Birch, Gold/Vallieres, Harris, Keavney-Maruca, Trefry, and Westby

Opposed: 0
Abstained: 0
Absent: Brown, Walker

Motion carried unanimously.

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

**B. Health and Bio-Sciences Career Cluster Trade Reauthorization
Bio-Science and Environmental Technology**

This item was tabled to the next Board meeting for review, discussion, and recommendations.

V. Students of Excellence Presentations

Mr. Jeffrey Wihbey, CTECS Superintendent of Schools introduced, Mr. Adrian Solis, CTECS Social Studies Instructor at Abbott THS, who introduced senior students, Aidan Cintron, Noelia Nunez, and Jeilyn Paulino who all presented a well-produced PowerPoint highlighting their current course work in their Latino studies course.

The Board members were very impressed with their presentation and thanked all the CTECS staff who have contributed to their success and incredible work.

Questions/Discussion included:

Board Members commended Mr. Solis and his students on all of their honors and wished them continued success in their future endeavors.

Commissioner Westby commended the whole program for offering a liberal education for all students.

Mr. Trefry commended Mr. Solis for encouraging pride in heritage and culture through curriculum.

VI. Items for Discussion

A. Board Legal Training

Mr. Trefry introduced Ms. Susan Scott, CTECS Legal Director to present the legal training PowerPoint on do's and don'ts for new board members.

A few highlights:

- Establish policies, achievement goals for students and staffing, and fund management.
- Protect Confidential Information
- FERPA
- Meeting Requirements
- Email Use and Meetings
- FOIA
- Use of Personal Devices and Accounts

Questions/Discussion included:

N/A

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

B. SAT Update

This item was tabled to the next Board meeting for review, discussion, and recommendations.

VII. Committee Reports

A. Policy and Quality Subcommittee Meeting – Ms. Patricia Keavney-Maruca

The Subcommittee met on January 19th, 2021 just prior to the CTECS Board meeting. The committee held discussions on the Youth Suicide Prevention and Intervention Policy.

A copy of all handouts is included in the official file of this meeting.

B. Industry Outreach Subcommittee Meeting – Mr. Eric Brown

The Subcommittee met on January 19th, 2021 just prior to the CTECS Board meeting. The committee held discussions on the Bio- Science Cluster Trade Reauthorization.

A copy of all handouts is included in the official file of this meeting.

VIII. Report of the Superintendent of Schools

A. Superintendent's Report

Mr. Jeffrey Wihbey, CTECS Superintendent of Schools shared an overview of his report.

A few highlights:

- A grading committee was formed to analyze current grading procedures during distance learning. The findings of the committee will inform current student engagement during virtual learning, remediation that needs to occur before the end of the school year and competency skills attained by the students in trade areas, to be able to proceed to the next grade level.

- CTECS new admissions policy is being implemented. It includes an online, centralized and parent driven process. Local and statewide marketing efforts continue to drive applicants to the new application. Over the next several weeks, applications will be reviewed and offer letters will be sent to families. Considering the impact of the pandemic, it has been very good timing and advantageous to have a fully virtual application process.

- Collaborated with Department of Labor on a \$780k grant for registered apprentice related-instruction training for building trades and construction industry. This grant will provide additional access and opportunities for approximately 800 apprentice students.

- Sought approval to hire teachers who were interviewed prior to the deficit mitigation freeze. Also submitted priority staffing positions with no OPM pre-approval needed. As a result, the hiring process was shortened and 32 teachers have been placed in classrooms.

- Watch the latest [Alumni Success Stories episode featuring Gil Simmons](#), Channel 8's local weatherman, as he shares his experience as a Harvard H. Ellis Tech graduate.

Questions/Discussion included:

N/A

A copy of the Superintendents Report is included in the official file of this meeting.

B. Credentials and Work Based Learning (WBL) Update

Mr. Jeffrey Wihbey, CTECS Superintendent of Schools shared an overview of the monthly Credentials and Work Based Learning reports.

A few points:

- Limited placements due to COVID-19.
- Currently 374 students are participating in work-based learning

Questions/Discussion included:

Commissioner Westby commended the Superintendent for continuing to increase work-based learning placements despite pandemic restrictions and different work scenarios.

Mr. Wihbey returned appreciation to Commissioner Westby and the Department of Labor for all of their support in providing pre-apprenticeship hours for students.

A copy of the Certifications and Work Based Learning Reports is included in the official file of this meeting.

C. Expenditure and Revenue Report

Mr. Jeffrey Wihbey, CTECS Superintendent of Schools introduced Ms. Maura Kjar, Chief Financial Officer to review the expenditure and revenue report.

The latest report reflected the following items:

- COVID-19 Expenditures
- COVID-19 Overtime
- Revenue
- Personal Services by Region
- Operating Expenses by Region

- Per Pupil Cost by Region

Questions/Discussion included:

Dr. Harris asked for clarification on the districts Cares Acts funding.

Mr. Trefry shared his thoughts on the benefits of the funding.

A copy of the Expenditure and Revenue Report is included in the official file of this meeting.

D. Vacancy Update

Mr. Jeffrey Wihbey, CTECS Superintendent of Schools and Mr. Robert Sartoris, CTECS Director of Talent Management, reviewed the latest vacancy report to committee members. The report consisted of critical positions needed throughout the district.

Questions/Discussion included:

Mr. Wihbey shared some of examples of the districts staffing limitations.

Ms. Keavney shared her concerns with the limited nurse positions.

Mr. Trefry shared updates on the voted on letter to DAS for support in district staffing.

Ms. Keavney asked for updates on teacher vaccinations.

Mr. Wihbey shared that teachers are anticipated to receive vaccinations in group 1B in the coming months.

A copy of the Vacancy Report is included in the official file of this meeting.

E. Separation Committee Update

Mr. Wihbey introduced CTECS Legal Director, Ms. Susan Scott and Assistant Superintendent, Mr. Richard Cavallaro to share updates from the Separation Committee.

The committee meets monthly to address plans for the anticipated separation from the State Department of Education (SDE).

A few points:

- Assembly of subcommittees with SDE, OPM, DAS representatives.
- Making good progress on identifying needs.
- Productive collaborative meetings

Questions/Discussion included:

N/A

IX. Report of the Chair

Questions/Discussion included:

Mr. Trefry shared appreciation to CTECS staff and their commitment despite staffing concerns and praised Deputy Commissioner, Charlene Russell-Tucker for all of her support in address staffing concerns.

Mr. Wihbey joined in the praise of Deputy Commissioner, Charlene Russell-Tucker for all of her support in the recent hiring of nursing staff.

Mr. Trefry shared nomination news of the Commissioner of SDE for the role of Secretary of Education for the White House.

Ms. Gold requested updates on strategies for seniors since they missed trainings due to COVID-19.

Mr. Wihbey share some remediation plans for the summer and fall.

X. Adjourn

Mr. Trefry thanked everyone for joining the meeting and requested a motion to adjourn.

Questions/Discussion included:

Board Members shared well wishes and said goodbye.

Ms. Keavney moved, Ms. Gold seconded, that the Board adjourn.

Vote: In Favor: Anderson, Aucker, Benz, Birch, Gold/Vallieres, Harris, Keavney-Maruca, Trefry, and Westby

Opposed: 0
Abstained: 0
Absent: Brown, Walker

Motion carried unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 10:48am.

Prepared by: Ms. Ronke Stallings, CTECS