

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

**Minutes  
Full Board  
November 18, 2020**

Pursuant to notice filed with the Secretary of the State, the Connecticut Technical Education and Career System (hereafter "Board") met on November 18, 2020 via Google Meet Virtual Conference.

**I. Call to Order**

Mr. Robert Trefry called the meeting to order at 9:02am.

Present: Robert Trefry, Board Member  
Patricia Keavney-Maruca, Board Member  
Jeffrey Wihbey, Superintendent of Schools

Virtual/Dial in: Christine Benz, Board Member  
Eric Brown, Board Member  
Lindy Lee Gold, Board Member  
Duncan Harris, Board Member  
Fitz Walker, Board Member  
Commissioner Kurt Westby, Board Member

Absent: Kelli-Marie Vallieres, 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 October 21, 2020, CTECS Board Meeting**

Commissioner Westby moved, Dr. Harris seconded, that the Board adopt the minutes of the November 18, 2020, Board Meeting.

Vote:	In Favor:	Benz, Brown, Gold, Harris, Keavney-Maruca, Trefry, Walker, and Westby
	Opposed:	0
	Abstained:	0
	Absent:	Vallieres

Motion carried unanimously.

Questions/Discussion included:

N/A

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

**IV. Items Requiring Action**

**A. CTECS 2021-22 Board Schedule**

Mr. Trefry reviewed the 2021-22 Board Schedule and requested the Board vote.

Ms. Keavney-Maruca moved, Commissioner Westby seconded, that the Board approve the 2021-22 CTECS Board Schedule.

Vote:	In Favor:	Benz, Brown, Gold, Harris, Keavney-Maruca, Trefry, Walker, and Westby
	Opposed:	0
	Abstained:	0
	Absent:	Vallieres

Motion carried unanimously.

Questions/Discussion included:

N/A

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

**B. Wellness Policy**

Mr. Trefry introduced, Kevin Benham, Food Services Director, who gave an overview of the goals and guidelines of the Wellness Policy.

It is the policy of the Connecticut Technical Education and Career System (CTECS) Board of Education to promote the health and well-being of district students by supporting wellness, good nutrition and regular physical activity as part of the total learning environment. In furtherance of this policy, the Board has created a Wellness Advisory Committee (WAC) to review any available state or federal guidance on wellness issues and to assist in formulating recommendations for specific goals and guidelines aimed at promoting lifelong wellness practices among district students. The WAC Committee meets annually to review and update the district Wellness Policy along with a triennial assessment of the policy which

requires approval from the CTECS Board.

A few goals and guidelines:

- To provide a comprehensive learning environment for the development and continued practice of lifelong wellness behaviors.
- To work collaboratively to support and promote proper dietary habits contributing to students' wellness; academic performance and demonstrating a commitment to improving student nutrition.
- To provide opportunities for students to engage in physical activity.
- To encourage and promote increased consumption of nutrient-dense foods and beverages.
- Promote professional growth and development of food service management and cafeteria staff.

Questions/Discussion included:

*Ms. Gold requested an update on how students are keeping up with their physical education requirements.*

*Mr. Wihbey shared examples of how students continue to keep up with their physical education requirements during distance learning.*

*Mr. Trefry shared his eagerness to review the policy for tips for his own personal health.*

Ms. Gold moved, Ms. Keavney-Maruca seconded, that the Board approve the wellness policy.

Vote:	In Favor:	Benz, Brown, Gold, Harris, Keavney-Maruca, Trefry, Walker, and Westby
	Opposed:	0
	Abstained:	0
	Absent:	Vallieres

Motion carried unanimously.

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

### C. Biennial Summary Report 2018-19 and 2019-20

Mr. Wihbey began the discussion by providing an overview of the report. The Biennial Report contains data on applicants, enrollment, program information, strategic school profile, graduate follow-up activities, fiscal data, and accountability report and index.

According to Connecticut General Statutes, Section 10-95k (a) not later than January 1, 1995, and biennially thereafter, the State Board of Education shall prepare a summary report concerning the Connecticut Technical Education & Career System and shall submit the report to the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to education. Upon approval of the report the technical high school system board, the report will be forwarded to the General Assembly in accordance with statutory requirements.

CTECS will continue to monitor applicants, enrollment, retention and graduate follow-up activities for the biennial reports.

Commissioner Westby moved, Dr. Harris seconded, that the Board approve the Biennial Report for 2018-19 and 2019-20.

Vote:	In Favor:	Benz, Brown, Gold, Harris, Keavney-Maruca, Trefry, Walker, and Westby
	Opposed:	0
	Abstained:	0
	Absent:	Vallieres

Motion carried unanimously.

#### Questions/Discussion included:

*Dr. Harris requested clarification on the availability of trend data to assess and support regional needs.*

*Mr. Wihbey replied with a few examples.*

*Ms. Gold suggested a review of the Bio-tech program training and its certification requirements.*

*Ms. Gold suggested a review of the DECD and DOL statistical data to get a full understanding of the state's employment status.*

*Mr. Trefry recommended Board members consider joining the industry and outreach subcommittee if they are interested in the topic.*

*Mr. Brown requested clarification on the post-secondary career tech programs.*

*Mr. Wihbey shared the post-secondary programs have always been a part of CTECS programming and we continue to review and revisit program needs based on funding. Mr. Wihbey continued to share how CTECS facilities are currently being reviewed to better host both high school and adult programing safely.*

*Ms. Gold suggested the CT Workforce Council should be notified of facility use for adult programing including Aerospace programming.*

*Dr. Benz requested clarification on building capacity rates.*

*Mr. Wihbey responded capacity is based on shop availability. He continued to explain how other factors such as enrollment numbers, and staffing play a role in capacity rates. He shared examples of addition SPED students, and an increase in the incoming freshman class.*

*Ms. Gold asked for an update on the criminal justice programs and its internship numbers.*

*Mr. Wihbey responded with examples of internship partnerships.*

*Mr. Trefry shared his thoughts on the phase out process due to low enrollment in programs.*

*Ms. Keavney shared her thoughts on capacity rates including cafeteria size and other factors.*

*Commissioner Westby shared his thoughts on the districts data and the successful outcomes coming out of the trades programs. He continue to commend the districts efforts in building connections with community colleges and the vertical integrations with other programs in the state. He also shared data processes that are in the works to review programing outcomes.*

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

**V. Consent Agenda (Any Item may be removed from the consent addenda at the request of a Board member)**

**A. Students of Excellence Presentations**

Mr. Brent McCartney introduced senior student, Miss Renee James (Platt Tech Sustainable Architecture Program). Miss James presented a well-produced video highlighting her skills, successes, and future goals after graduation. Miss James beat out 30 other established artist from around the country to win the first annual art competition sponsored by MadLab in Norwalk, CT.

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

Questions/Discussion included:

*Mr. Trefry commended Miss James on all of her accolades and wished her continued success in her future endeavors.*

*Commissioner Westby congratulated Miss James and shared how impressed he was by her work.*

*Ms. Gold congratulated Miss. James on all of her success.*

*Mr. Brown requested more information about Miss. James upcoming art show.*

*Dr. Harris questioned if there was a virtual option to join her upcoming art show. He continued to share information on Capital Community College Architectural Program.*

*Mr. Trefry asked Ms. Sarah Bruno, Miss James teacher, if she was proud of her student's accomplishments.*

*Mr. Trefry shared his enthusiasm for the diversity in the trades' areas. He went on to commend the teachers for doing tremendous work during such difficult times.*

*Mr. Wihbey thanked Ms. Burton, and Mr. McCartney for bringing their student to the meeting.*

*Mr. Trefry ended discussions with words of encouragement to Miss James and well wished for her future success.*

A copy of Miss James article feature is included in the official file of this meeting.

**VI. Items for Discussion**

**A. Cultural, Climate, Instruction**

Mr. Wihbey introduced Ms. Tonya Stoute, Supervisor of Professional Development to the Board to share some district cultural competency initiatives and professional development.

A few professional learning highlights:

Strategies for teaching secondary Science	Science teachers training on formulating literacy standards for reading complex
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	instructions. Developing assessments that align to NGSS standards.
School Transformation: Implementing initiatives (student motivation and engagement) during difficult times.	Administrators training on strategies and pathways to continue with school-wide initiatives during difficult times.
Using the New Art and Science of Teaching in a virtual learning environment	Teacher training on transferring the skill set to hybrid and parallel teaching and learning.
Self- Care for Educators	Administrators, teachers, and counselors training on practical strategies and activities for teachers and administrators to implement and practice in and after school. A variety of resources were provided. Training was recorded and staff will be able to access for one year.
Cultural Competency	Administrators, consultants, supervisors, directors, and teachers training on cultivating common around diversity, equity, and inclusion. Aligned understanding of race and racism. Differentiating between non-racism and antiracism. Developing school action and response plans.
Social emotional learning concepts for trades and academics	Academic and trade teachers training on concepts for embedding student practices in the classroom and school-wide initiatives for students.

Questions/Discussion included:

*Dr. Harris shared his thoughts on the departmental work professional development requires and the cultural response from staff to the trainings.*

*Ms. Stoute shared the work is not optional and survey data provides feedback.*

*Mr. Wihbey added that although some professional trainings are optional, cultural competency training was mandatory for all staff and students. He continued to share the importance of the trainings correlation to the districts strategic operating plan.*

*Mr. Brown shared his thoughts on how impressively comprehensive the professional learning practices are. He requested clarification on scheduling and implementation.*

*Ms. Stoute responded that professional development is currently in a staggered training process. She continue to share strategies and examples of peer to peer trainings and learning.*

*Ms. Gold commended the districts phenomenal work.*

*Mr. Trefry requested to have Dr. Gay attend a Board meet to share some tools and strategies.*

*Mr. Wihbey shared some challenges of implementation due to the pandemic and distance learning.*

*Mr. Wihbey shared how impressed he was with Ms. Stoute's leadership, effort, and hard work to implement such important work throughout the district.*

*Ms. Keavney shared her thoughts on the importance of cultural competency work and its long term manifestation into the community.*

*Mr. Trefry closed discussion with his thoughts on the importance of early interventions for cultural awareness.*

A copy of the Professional Learning report for 2020-2021 is included in the official file of this meeting.

## **B. High Reliability Schools (HRS)**

Mr. Wihbey introduced, Dr. Mary Moran, Director of Development and School Improvement, who gave an overview of the CTECS High Reliability Schools certification process by the Marzano research group.

Schools that are reliably successful have common structures and instructional cultures. Structures need to evolve and be developed in a sequence in order to lay a foundation for growth. Developing these structures takes time and commitment.

The first 5 schools in the state of Connecticut that have reached Level 1 Certifications are all CTECS schools:

- Bullard-Havens Technical High School
- A.I. Prince Technical High School
- Norwich Technical High School
- H.H. Ellis Technical High School
- Howell Cheney Technical High School

A few highlights:

- CTECS and Marzano the golden standard.
- Five Level Certification Process
- Indicators



- Data Collection, Evidences, and Evaluation
- Certified Schools

Questions/Discussion included:

*Ms. Gold requested information on how many schools in the country are certified.*

*Dr. Moran shared there are a little over 300.*

*Dr. Benz requested clarification on other school certifications available and the cost associated with the certifications.*

*Dr. Moran shared that there other certification program options throughout the state. She continued to share the district does have a contract with Marzano for trainings and certifications.*

*Ms. Keavney asked if there are studies to review impact.*

*Dr. Moran highlighted a few examples, including the states' performance index as an option for review.*

*Mr. Trefry shared his thoughts on having a cohesive approach on high reliability efforts across the state.*

*Mr. Brown shared an opportunity with CONNSTEP and a grant for manufacturing.*

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

### **C. School Construction Update**

Mr. Wihbey introduced Mr. Richard Cavallaro, Assistant Superintendent for School Development and Accountability, who introduced, Mr. Donald Poulin, Chief of Engineering to committee members to share an update on the districts construction projects.

A few Highlights:

- **Ella T. Grasso Technical High School, Groton, CT** - New construction of technical high school to replace the existing 212,949 square foot school constructed in 1977 on its 66.90 acre site. Also construction of a new field house/garage building, athletic fields and a new running track, playing surfaces shall be synthetic turf.

- **Platt Technical High School, Milford, CT** - New construction of technical high school to replace the existing 221,320 square foot school constructed in 1974 on its 34.40 acre site. Inclusive, is the construction of a new field house/garage building, and new athletic fields.
- **Vinal Technical High School, Middletown, CT** - A Classroom Build-out project was facilitated to accommodate a new Veterinary Program within Vinal Technical High School.
- **Bullard-Havens Technical High School, Bridgeport, CT** - New construction of technical high school to replace the existing 267,212 square foot school constructed in 1952 on its 34.17 acre site. Inclusive, is the construction of a new field house/garage building, athletic fields and a new running track.
- **Windham Technical High School, Willimantic, CT** - New construction of technical high school to replace the existing 172,979 square foot school constructed in 1956. Inclusive, is the construction of a new field house/garage building, athletic fields and a new running track. This project is in the project initiation phase.

Questions/Discussion included:

*Mr. Wihbey shared collaboration efforts with Vinal Tech and Middlesex Community College to create a satellite location.*

*Mr. Brown shared his thoughts on potential options to share athletics fields with local schools.*

*Mr. Trefry shared his enthusiasm for the work coming together for Windham Tech.*

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

## **VII. Report of the Superintendent of Schools**

### **A. Superintendent's Report**

Mr. Wihbey shared an overview of his report.

A few highlights:

- Five CTECS schools (Bullard-Havens, Prince, Norwich, Ellis and Cheney) have been given the designation of being certified as Level One under the High Reliability Schools model. Level One distinction means that schools have a safe,

supportive and collaborative culture. These are the first 5 schools in Connecticut to receive this certification.

- November 3 was a district professional development day. Workshops in all academic and trade areas were conducted. Of note, Administrator workshops included national speakers Kim Marshall and Dr. Derrick Gay. Marshall presented how administrators can conduct teacher evaluations under the flexibility model with a focus on informal observations as key to effective teacher feedback. Dr. Gay continued his work from the summer with administrators and focused on Courageous Conversations. The District Management Group presented its findings on CTECS' current math program and gave recommendations on how to build a stronger, more relevant program.
- In response to the board's favorable support of the new admissions policy and procedure, the admissions department and the information technologies department developed an online application which aligns with the new policy and will be accessible to all applicants across the state. The open enrollment period will run for two months, from early November until early January. This significant process improvement will allow for all applicants to be considered consistently across all our high schools. In addition, it limits the redundant handling of paper applications and data entry. Finally, it provides for less in-person contact which limits possible exposure to COVID-19.
- CTECS' teacher recruitment initiative (now paused due to the deficit mitigation planning) has seen nearly 320,000 ad views in the first month of implementation, with over 1,500 visits to CTECS career postings webpage. In order to capture the information of interested applicants during the hiring freeze, an online submission form has been created.

Questions/Discussion included:

N/A

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

## **B. Pandemic Response Team Update**

Mr. Wihbey shared an overview of the members and the purpose of the CTECS Pandemic Response Team. He provided a brief update on what their areas are doing in support of the CTECS district's students, families, and staff, during the current COVID-19 Pandemic.

A few points:

- Sanitation / Disinfecting / Filter Replacements/ Protective Screens

- Contact Tracing / Weekly Department of Health Conference Calls
- Schools have been in Phase 3 and Phase 4 due to uptick in COVID cases
- Constant Communication with Principals, Staff, Student, and Parents.
- CIAC – Winter Athletics postponed until mid-January.
- Distance learning committee – full distance /hybrid programming
- Legal counsel as situations arise. Continued focus on the safety of staff and students.

Questions/Discussion included:

*Mr. Trefry asked how staff are doing.*

*Mr. Wihbey shared that staff are stressed, but coping with the ever-changing COVID scenarios.*

*Mr. Brown asked for clarification on the Department of Health's reporting statistics.*

*Mr. Wihbey responded that the data being provided on a weekly basis has been informative and cosigned with additional verbally information during weekly conference calls.*

*Dr. Harris shared some of his experiences with COVID and related to the many efforts necessary to successfully run schools.*

**C. Certifications and Work Based Learning Update (WBL)**

Mr. Wihbey shared an overview of the monthly Credentials and Work Based Learning reports.

A few points:

- Abbott Tech and Windham Tech shared great numbers for credentials this month.
- Currently 284 students are participating in work based learning
- In December of 2019, 517 students participated in work based learning

Questions/Discussion included:

*Ms. Keavney complemented Cheney Tech for their numbers and efforts.*

*Mr. Wihbey added that Cheney Tech has a top Department Head, who proactively gets students placed. As well as a great electrical shop teacher who goes above and beyond.*

*Ms. Gold shared her thoughts on how COVID has limited placements and certification opportunities.*

*Ms. Keavney and Mr. Wihbey both highlighted the use of schools vans to assist with transportation needs for programming.*

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

#### **D. Expenditure and Revenue Report**

Mr. Wihbey 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:

*Mr. Wihbey shared how limited maintenance staff is causing “burn out” and additional cost in overtime.*

*Mr. Trefry asked about contracting out for services.*

*Mr. Wihbey responded, only during emergencies.*

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

#### **E. Vacancy Update**

Mr. Wihbey reviewed the latest vacancy report to committee members. The list consisted of critical positions needed throughout the district.

Questions/Discussion included:

*Mr. Wihbey shared the State of Connecticut is currently in a hiring freeze. Specifically, a budget deficit mitigation strategy, meaning, all vacant positions are on hold until further notice. Mr. Wihbey continued to share how vacancy numbers have increased due to the mitigation and retirements. No positions were hired this month.*

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

**VIII. Report of the Chair**

**A. Committee Structuring**

Mr. Trefry addressed the Board and gave an overview of the Board subcommittee descriptions. He asked Board members to review the committees list, as designations would be forthcoming.

Questions/Discussion included:

*Mr. Trefry shared subcommittee meetings would be virtual and a week prior to the Board meetings to keep timeframes short.*

**IX. Adjourn**

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

Questions/Discussion included:

*Mr. Trefry, Ms. Gold, and Dr. Harris commended Ms. Stallings and Mr. Luis for all of their efforts in providing a smooth virtual meeting.*

*Both Ms. Stallings and Mr. Luis responded with gratitude.*

*Board Members shared well wishes for a safe and wonderful holiday.*

Ms. Keavney moved, Dr. Harris seconded, that the Board adjourn.

Vote:	In Favor:	Benz, Brown, Gold, Harris, Keavney-Maruca, Trefry, Walker, and Westby
	Opposed:	0
	Abstained:	0
	Absent:	Vallieres

Motion carried unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 11:28am.

Prepared by: Ms. Ronke Stallings, CTECS