

Connecticut State Board of Education
Connecticut Technical High School Committee
Minutes of Meeting Held on
October 14, 2009

Pursuant to notice filed with the Secretary of the State, the Connecticut Technical High School Committee (the "Committee") met on October 14, 2009, at the Connecticut Technical High School System ("CTHSS"), Central Office in Middletown.

Committee Members Present: Mrs. Beverly Bobroske, Chair
Ms. Theresa Hopkins-Staten
Ms. Linda McMahon

State Department of Education
and CTHSS Staff Present: Mark K. McQuillan, Commissioner of Education
Ms. Patricia A. Ciccone, Interim Superintendent
Mr. Ceferino Lugo, Assistant Superintendent
Robert Lombardi, Assistant Superintendent
Beatrice Tinty, CTHSS Legal Consultant
Mr. James Chasse, CTHSS Consultant
Pamela Bergin, SDE Office
Ed Leavy, State Vocational Federation of Teachers
(SVFT)
Rick Tanasi, SVFT
Janis Hochadel, SVFT
Nikitoula Menounos, American Federation of School
Administrators (AFSA)

I. Chairperson Bobroske called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m.

II. Executive Session - None

III. Consideration of Minutes of the September 9, 2009, CTHS Committee Meeting
Ms. McMahon moved, Ms. Hopkins-Staten seconded, that the Committee approve the minutes of the September 9, 2009, Connecticut Technical High School Committee meeting.

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

Motion carried unanimously.

IV. Public Participation – Rick Tanasi, President, SVFT, asked if there will be four members on the committee. Mrs. Bobroske stated her intent to have the bylaws changed to allow for the fourth member to be a rotating member with voting rights.

V. Consent Agenda – No items

VI. Items Requiring Action

a) Request for Signature Change Form ED-099 (Agreement for Child Nutrition Programs)

Ms. McMahon moved, Ms. Hopkins-Staten seconded, that the Committee approve the Request for Signature Change Form ED-099 from the former superintendent, Dr. Abigail L. Hughes, to the present Interim Superintendent, Patricia A. Ciccone.

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

Motion carried unanimously.

VII. Items for Discussion

a. CTHSS Inventory Update

Mr. Chasse gave a brief update which included transferring and disposing of equipment; spot checks; accountability; training to be provided to principals and business managers, etc. He is confident we are going forward in the right direction with the inventory control procedures.

b. J. M. Wright Tech Update

Ms. Ciccone's update on J. M. Wright Tech included: security; maintaining the building at the lowest possible cost; agreement with Stamford on the use of Cubeta stadium for sports and the parking lot for adult education evening classes; remaining staff transferred in accordance with SEBAC agreement; on-going inventory; student records, personnel files, business office records and check book have been accounted for and secured; student activity accounts have been transferred to other technical high schools. Commissioner McQuillan is in the process of forming an advisory committee of business and community leaders, parents, educators and others to develop plans for a reconstituted Wright Tech. Commissioner McQuillan will send a draft membership list to the Committee.

Ms. Hopkins-Staten spoke on the knowledge and lessons learned during the suspension of Wright Tech and being able to replicate best practices at other technical high schools.

c. CTHSS Admissions Policy – Draft

A revised draft on the CTHSS Admissions Policy was presented to the Committee. A discussion followed which included the membership of the Admissions Advisory Committee; invitations and terms of service. Committee members asked to see another draft with their recommendations at the November meeting.

VIII. Report of the Superintendent

a) October 1, 2009 Enrollment

Ms. Ciccone shared the October 1, 2009 school enrollment with the Committee. All 16 Connecticut Technical High Schools and one Technical Education Center, began classes for students on August 27, 2009. J.M. Wright Technical High School's operation has been suspended for two years (2009-2011). The total enrollment for the CTHSS including Full-Time Day Adults and the students in the Technical Education Center is 11,078, which is an increase of 125. The total enrollment for 2008-09 was 10,953.

b) Fiscal Update

Mr. Chasse gave a brief fiscal update on the reductions and cuts to the CTHSS budget. Commissioner McQuillan stated that when looking at the entire department budget there are still tough decisions to be made due to the reductions. Ms. Hopkins-Staten asked to see a budget for the rest of this year and a budget showing 2-3 years out and having discussions sooner rather than later and informing parents and students of the possibility that sports may be eliminated. She also mentioned putting together a compelling case with supporting facts and meeting with the legislators to share the information. Commissioner McQuillan stated that the Governor's Office; the Education Committee and the Office of Policy and Management know how serious the situation is.

c) Skills USA District Wide Community Project

Over 200 hundred technical high school students participated in this year's Statesmen Conference Community Service Activity. Students used their skills in their trade areas to help spruce up Camp Farnam in Durham, Connecticut by doing electrical, masonry, carpentry work as well as a lot of painting, staining, raking and clearing trails. In addition, other students packed care packages for service personnel serving in Iraq and Afghanistan. Camp Farnam is a summer camp for underprivileged youth from the New Haven area.

d) Recent Events – Norwich Tech and Wolcott Tech

Ms. Ciccone shared an article that appeared in the Hartford Courant on September 20, 2009, "Lesson In Humanity in Torrington" which told the story of Nick Reardon, a student from Wolcott Tech, who plays for the football team and has cancer. Nick's dream of some day scoring a touchdown became reality thanks to Coach Quinion and his team. Committee members asked that a letter be prepared on their behalf to Coach Quinion thanking him and his team for their act of kindness.

Ms. Ciccone spoke about the inroads and changes being made due to the climate work. A troubled student at Norwich Tech sought out administrators at the school and let them know of a concern he had. She gave credit to the principal, Niki Menounos and her staff, in handling the situation and making the students feel safe and able to contribute to the safety of others.

A full professional development day for administrators and teachers was held on October 13th at various schools. It was very successful, staff provided feedback.

IX. Other Matters

- Ms. Hopkins-Staten spoke of an incident that involved a Cheney student who was robbed at gun point while waiting for the school bus. She asked that guidance be given to the parents and students to ensure they feel safe and that an alternate bus stop arrangement be made and to have a discussion with CREC who provides the bus transportation.
- Mrs. Bobroske asked about petty cash. Mr. Chasse informed the Committee that schools now only have @ \$50.00 petty cash on hand which is used to give students change when they purchase lunch.
- The Committee asked to be kept informed of any administrative changes.

- Ms. Hopkins-Staten congratulated Mrs. Bobroske who received the Distinguished Service Award from the National Association of School Boards of Education. She will travel to Cincinnati to accept the award.

X. Public Participation

Mr. Rick Tanasi, President, SVFT, expressed his appreciation for the efforts of the superintendent to open-up communication with the SVFT representatives and for the collaboration of the Committee and the CTHSS. Mr. Tanasi also expressed his frustration at Whitney Tech being taken off the bond commission list for renovation. Other concerns included supply funds, repairs, safety and students leaving the system.

IX. Adjournment

By unanimous consent, the meeting was adjourned at 11:10 a.m.

Approved at the November 10, 2009 meeting.