

Connecticut State Board of Education
Connecticut Technical High School Committee
Minutes of Meeting Held on
May 18, 2011

Pursuant to noticed filed with the Secretary of the State, the Connecticut Technical High School Committee (the "Committee") met on May 18, 2011, at Norwich Technical High School, Norwich, CT.

Committee Member Present:	Joseph Vrabely, Jr., Chair Patricia Keavney-Maruca Ellen Camhi
State Department of Education:	Patricia A. Ciccone, Superintendent Robert Lombardi, Assistant Superintendent Ceferino Lugo, Assistant Superintendent Nivea Torres, Assistant Superintendent Pamela Charland, SDE Office Bea Tinty, CTHSS Consultant James Chasse, CTHSS Consultant Nikitoula Menounos, Principal, Norwich Tech and Vice President, American Federation of School Administrators Michele Cronin, Assistant Principal, Norwich Tech Elizabeth Curcio, Dean of Students, Norwich Tech Carolann Terry, Norwich Tech student Gabriella Zea, Norwich Tech student
State Vocational Federation of Teachers	Greg Beyer, Treasurer

- I. Chairperson Vrabely called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m. Mr. Vrabely introduced the students who shared some of their impressions of Norwich Tech.
- II. Executive Session - None
- III. Consideration of Minutes of April 13, 2011, CTHS Committee Meeting
Mrs. Keavney-Maruca moved, Ms. Camhi seconded, that the Committee approve the minutes of the April 13, 2011 Connecticut Technical High School Committee.

Vote:	In Favor:	Vrabely, Keavney-Maruca, Camhi,
	Opposed:	0
	Abstained:	0

Motion carried.

- IV. Public Participation - None
- V. Consent Agenda

Superintendent Ciccone presented a 14-Point Abstract entitled Norwich Technical High School “Literacy Intervention Tutoring Program”. It is a proposed academic grant from Liberty Bank Foundation. She asked that it be reviewed and approved by the Committee.

Mrs. Keavney-Maruca moved, Ms. Camhi seconded, that the Committee approve the grant application from Liberty Bank Foundation to Norwich Technical High School for the “Literacy Intervention Tutoring Program”.

Vote:	In Favor:	Vrabely, Keavney-Maruca, Camhi
	Opposed:	0
	Abstained:	0

Motion carried.

VI. Items Requiring Action

a. Rolling Capital Improvement and Capital Equipment Plan

Mr. Chasse shared specifics of the Capital Budget Request for the CTHSS Fiscal Years 2012 and 2013- \$28 million for each year to cover the following:

- Indoor Air Quality project for Grasso Tech
- Emergency repairs
- Installation of Fats, Oils, and Grease (FOG) containment systems; if not funded, daily fines may be imposed by municipalities.
- Replacement of plant vehicles and school transportation vehicles; if not funded, school closures may increase due to inability to remove snow and overtime for maintenance will occur.
- Replacement of outdated and obsolete equipment and technology; students will be denied access to the latest technology.

The Governor’s Recommended Capital Budget for the CTHSS Fiscal Years 2012 and 2013 is \$5 million each year.

Mr. Chasse stated that the superintendent requested that a minimum of \$10 million in capital funding be considered for the CTHSS fiscal years of 2012 and 2013. If approved, the budget will be presented at the next State Board of Education meeting and then the legislature. The ground breaking for JM Wright Tech is scheduled for 2012 with a projected start date in 2014. The equipment needed will cost \$9 million. The Office of Policy and Management (OPM) indicated that a request for funding for 2014 and beyond is not necessary. The funds should come out of construction expenses.

Mr. Vrabely stated that there is a difference between construction costs and operation costs. The money has to come from somewhere.

Ms. Camhi asked which schools are in line for funding.

Superintendent Ciccone stated that four schools are in line for funding; Ellis Tech is ready to go first.

Mrs. Keavey-Maruca moved, Ms. Camhi seconded, that the Committee approve the Connecticut Technical High School System's Rolling Capital Improvement and Capital Equipment Plan 2012-2016.

Vote: In Favor: Vrabely, Keavey-Maruca, Cahmi
 Opposed: 0
 Abstained: 0

Motion carried.

VII. Items for discussion

a) Inventory Executive Summary

Mr. Chasse stated that all of the technical high schools are doing inventory which must be finished by May 31, 2011. Staff will be sent from Hartford to each school in September 2011 to do any necessary adjustments.

Mr. Vrabely asked how the training is done.

Mr. Chasse stated that each business manager was sent to training. They were instructed to meet with their principals and discuss the process.

Superintendent Ciccone stated that it has been a two year process to create a solution to past issues. The first report received listed only forty small items unaccounted for.

Ms. Camhi asked if the items are stamped.

Superintendent Ciccone noted that each item is tagged.

Mr. Vrabely stated that it is a good system that drives accountability. This will give the first base line to work with for the future. He then called for a fifteen minute recess.

When the meeting reconvened, Mr. Chasse stated that the budget is also affected by the Healthy Food Initiative. The sale of ice cream, soda, etc. has added \$143,000.00 to the budget in the past. This money would be lost under the initiative.

VIII. Report of the Superintendent

Superintendent Ciccone stated that there are ongoing SEBAC negotiations and budget reduction discussions. The Governor's Bill #6385 proposed transferring the technical high schools to local districts. She understood the governor's desire to assist local districts who are also dealing with budget issues by giving them an additional successful resource for their school systems. It was obvious that this would have no cost savings to the state and ultimately did not have legislative support. Bill #6385 is gone and a task force is now studying the CTHSS. She has not yet heard anything concerning the task force.

Mr. Vrabely and Superintendent Ciccone attended a luncheon with the Commissioner. It was suggested that Mr. Vrabely be on the task force due to his business background.

Information from OPM was published with a series of reduction plans ranging from an

82% reduction which would include closing the CTHSS and the loss of 1,400 personnel to a 25% reduction plan which Superintendent Ciccone stated that she has run; none of the solutions are good.

SEBAC has the framework of an agreement and will be working with bargaining units over the next few weeks.

Ms. Camhi asked how many students stay in Connecticut to work after graduation.

Superintendent Ciccone stated that 80-90% of the students stay in Connecticut. Although qualified, about 50% join the workforce part-time while attending institutions. The CTHSS is not able to do graduate follow-up that is 5-10-20 years out from graduations.

Superintendent Ciccone gave the board members a list of graduation ceremonies. They were invited to attend any that their schedule would allow.

Mr. Vrabely asked if there were any questions for the superintendent.

Mrs. Keavney-Maruca asked if there are administrators retiring and how many?

Superintendent Ciccone stated that there are some teachers and administrators retiring on June 1st and some on July 1st. She noted that Mr. Lugo and Mr. Lombardi will be retiring on June 1st. There is a request to OPM to post these positions and consider the rehiring of at least 1 assistant superintendent in retirement as the work at the end of the school year and start up in September is enormous.

Mrs. Keavney-Maruca asked if the positions for administrators and teachers have been posted. Superintendent Ciccone noted that positions cannot be posted due to the state hiring freeze.

Superintendent Ciccone stated that schools operated last year with administrator vacancies which was a savings to the State. A recruitment fair has been scheduled and they are going ahead with the interviewing process up to, but not including offers, so that they will be ready to fill positions.

Mr. Vrabely assured the two Norwich Tech students in attendance that everyone at the meeting is fighting for their school and believes in the CTHSS.

IX. Other Matters - None

X. Public Participation

Principal Menounos thanked everyone for coming, especially those who had a long drive. She informed the board of the following Norwich Tech statistics:

- Thirteen trades and one of the LPN programs
- 635 students in grades 9-12; 34 LPN students
- 183 incoming freshmen for September; new building at capacity
- Sixth annual Fine Arts Show last night

- Ford AAA national competition - Two students have qualified
- Governor's Summer Reading Program 2010 - Norwich Tech was one of the CT schools honored last week in Hartford for its reading program
- Governor's Scholar - Thirty students are chosen statewide. A Norwich Tech student has been chosen two years in a row for this honor.

Mrs. Keavney-Maruca stated that the Summer Reading List for Norwich Tech is very impressive.

Principal Menounos stated that students are required to read two books each summer. The ninth grade students did a great job this year. Students also have Silent Sustained Reading (SSR) every day for twenty minutes. Reading is strongly encouraged.

Mrs. Keavney-Maruca informed Principal Menounos that TD North Bank will open a bank account with \$10.00 for any student who reads ten books during the summer.

Mr. Vrabely asked Principal Menounos how long had she been in her position and when did the enrollment start to increase?

Principal Menounos responded that she has been principal for ten years. Enrollment began to increase at the older school and the new school has drawn more students.

XI. Adjournment

Mr. Vrabely thanked everyone for coming and participating. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:25 a.m.

Minutes approved at the June 15, 2011 meeting.