

**JOINT MEETING OF CAREER AND TECHNICAL BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
AND CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION TRUST**

**Minutes of Meeting held on Wednesday, June 24, 2015, at 2:00 p.m., Metropolitan Regional Career and Technical Center, 325 Public Street, Providence, Rhode Island**

The joint meeting of the Career and Technical Board of Trustees (“Board of Trustees”) and the Career and Technical Education Trust (“CTE Trust”) was called to order by Al Lubrano, Chair of the Board of Trustees, and Lisa Bisaccia, President of the CTE Trust, at 2:43 p.m.

**Members and Attendees:**

The following members of the Board of Trustees were present: Bob Baldwin, Bill Bryan, Shannon Carroll, Victoria Gailliard-Garrick, Stephen Osborn, Raymond Johnson, Al Lubrano, Bill McCourt, Jeannine Nota-Masse, Peter Petrarca, Commissioner Jim Purcell, and Kathie Shields.

The following members of the Board of Trustees were absent: Tim Byrne, Michael Grey, and Commerce Secretary Stefan Pryor

The following members of the CTE Trust were present: Lisa Bisaccia, Maura Dunn, Stephanie Federico, Brenna Force, John Gregory, Bill McCourt, David Rampone, and Martin Trueb.

The following member of the CTE Trust was absent: Commerce Secretary Stefan Pryor.

The following invited guest was in attendance: Scott Jensen, Director of the Rhode Island Department of Labor and Training.

**Report of the Chair of the Board of Trustees:**

Mr. Lubrano stated his concern that we are all over the place and need to zero in on the tasks at hand. He stated that we should meet with business leaders in various industries and see what is lacking in recent graduates of career and technical schools.

**Establishing a Vision Statement for the Board of Trustees and CTE Trust:**

Ms. Bisaccia stated that the most recent version of the draft vision statement is to “create a system of career and technical education that prepares students to meet the evolving needs of the private sector.”

Mr. McCourt stated that the vision statement should be centered on career and technical education.

Ms. Carroll asked why we are using the term “private sector.”

Ms. Bisaccia stated that the draft vision statement should be: “to create a system of career and technical education that prepares students to meet the evolving needs of Rhode Island’s employers.”

Upon motion and seconded, it was unanimously

**VOTED: To adopt the following as the joint vision statement of the Board of Trustees and CTE Trust: “to create a system of career and technical education that prepares students to meet the evolving needs of Rhode Island’s employers.”**

### **Continuation of Report of the Chair of the Board of Trustees:**

Mr. Lubrano stated that the next steps should be to identify the following: industries of focus, lists of employers, people to interface with employers, and the skills that are lacking in graduates of career and technical schools.

### **Report of the President of the CTE Trust:**

Ms. Bisaccia stated that we should become educated on what is already being done in the State with regard to career and technical education so there is no redundancy. She introduced Scott Jensen, Director of the Rhode Island Department of Labor and Training, to provide an overview of what the State is currently doing.

### **Report from Scott Jensen:**

Mr. Jensen stated that the Real Jobs RI program has been successful in identifying funding, and Real Jobs RI hopefully soon will announce funding of \$1.5 million aimed at career and technical education programs. Real Jobs RI is a grant program with a sector-based workforce development strategy. To obtain funding, at least two companies with jobs that they cannot fill must get together and present a plan. The funding is predicated on what the partner companies say that they need.

Ms. Bisaccia asked whether the program is focused on young workers without much experience, or whether the program is focused on more experienced workers.

Mr. Jensen stated that the program is demand-driven, and that the program funds what the companies need. Real Jobs RI looks at the quality of the partnership and the plan and works with the Governor’s Workforce Board directly. The State will work to see the partners grow in capacity. Real Jobs RI aims to find companies with real demand right now who want to partner with career and technical education programs. It wants to work with the Rhode Island Department of Education, the Board of Trustees, and the CTE Trust to remove bureaucratic impediments.

Ms. Bisaccia asked whether Mr. Jensen saw an opportunity for the Board of Trustees and CTE Trust to focus on the grant winners.

Mr. Jensen stated that if, for instance, biotech companies partner with career and technical education programs, Real Jobs RI has the money and the Board of Trustees has the policymaking capacity to focus on biotech.

Mr. Gregory asked why we should be identifying specific industries.

Mr. Lubrano stated that we are getting lost in the weeds, because the vision statement states that our goal is to meet the evolving needs of employers. We are trying to identify what employers need.

Mr. McCourt stated that Rhode Island does not have manufacturing education programs in today's career and technical schools. Many of those schools cannot afford the appropriate manufacturing machines, and manufacturers need workers. So, the manufacturers had to go to Mr. Jensen and ask for help, and there is a patch system in place in which students are using equipment at CCRI.

Mr. Trueb stated that the system is not meeting the need of employers, and that students do not realize that they do not necessarily need a college education.

Mr. Baldwin stated that virtually every career and technical school has a carpentry program, but the system is disjointed. Even though all schools use the NCCR curriculum, students are taught at different levels depending on the school. The students need to be taught the level three or level four curriculum in order to not have a skills gap upon graduation, but some schools are only teaching the core level curriculum (which is intended for middle school students) and level one. The system is not doing its job, and the Board of Trustees and CTE Trust need to fix the system. The fixes will be patchwork based on the industry in question. The schools must be creating qualified students with no skills gap.

Mr. Lubrano stated that the Board of Trustees and CTE Trust must figure out how to ensure that students graduate with no skills gap.

Mr. McCourt stated that the CTE Trust's purpose is to act as the funding vehicle to decide where to put the money and to leverage private resources.

Mr. Gregory stated that instead of saying to employers "We know what you need," we are saying, "What do you need?"

Mr. Trueb stated that the Governor's Workforce Board is doing a good job of identifying the skills gaps and asking employers what they need, but did not go to the career and technical schools and ask them why they are not doing what needs to be done.

Mr. Johnson stated that with level four curriculum, Mr. Baldwin is looking for an 18-year-old student who can build a house, which is asking too much of the student.

Mr. Baldwin stated that students cannot just be able to use a tape measure upon graduation.

Ms. Shields stated that Davies has the best biotech program, and their students can get jobs upon graduation. There are some industries that still require a bachelors' degree. We know what employers need and we know the gaps, we just need to fix the system.

Mr. Osborn stated that the first joint meeting dealt with the sectors that we should focus on. And the second part is how we approach the biannual plan.

Mr. Purcell stated that manufacturing and construction are areas of focus. We need to see if the curriculum used by the schools is sufficient and being implemented properly.

Mr. Johnson stated that construction workers are trained through apprenticeships. There must be training included in an entry-level construction position.

Mr. Lubrano stated that we need to pick the industries and find out what the curriculum should look like.

Mr. Jensen stated that soft skills are also important.

Ms. Bisaccia stated that the scope for the Board of Trustees and CTE Trust is to define employer needs for entry level jobs in which a bachelors' degree is not required, but training may be needed. We need to define the skill areas by discipline and industry. What is not within the scope of the Board of Trustees and CTE Trust is to define the skill level needed.

Mr. Baldwin stated that we do not have a career and technical education system. We must look at individual schools and see what the issues are (ex: graduation requirements, bus schedules, etc.).

Ms. Gailliard-Garrick stated that the Rhode Island Department of Education has already captured the data on inconsistency among schools (ex: seat hours, job training, apprenticeships). We must determine what employers want then look at the data.

Mr. Osborn stated that if, for instance, Mr. Baldwin states that levels one and two curriculum is insufficient for hiring construction workers, we need to work with the schools to make sure that the curriculum is sufficient.

Mr. Lubrano asked what the action items were for the next meeting.

Mr. Purcell stated that he would like to see people from the construction and manufacturing industries, ask them what they want the standard for curriculum to be, and then talk to the schools.

Ms. Dunn stated that Electric Boat is hiring 500 people and needs more workers. Employers need Rhode Island to move faster if it wants to obtain a competitive advantage. The Southern states are moving quicker than Rhode Island.

Ms. Federico stated that graduates should be college and career ready. We do not want students to get entry-level jobs and then be unprepared to get promoted because they cannot obtain a college degree. We also need to find out the college prep work that is needed.

Ms. Gailliard-Garrick stated that we must look at the total system. We want to get students both college and career ready, but there are time constraints in a school day.

Mr. Baldwin stated that biotech, Electric Boat, construction, and manufacturing should be the industries of focus. We should find out from the Rhode Island Department of Education what the impediments are to getting trained workers in those areas and what those four sectors need.

Mr. Osborn stated that we have never had a conversation with the schools saying this is what the employers need. We need to find out what the four sectors need, as well as what the impediments are to the schools meeting those needs.

Mr. Bryan asked whether the Rhode Island Department of Education had employment data on career and technical school graduates.

Mr. Osborn stated that the Rhode Island Department of Education did not have such data.

Ms. Bisaccia asked whether it was possible to informally poll 2015 graduates of career and technical schools on their employment.

Ms. Federico stated that we need to find out if the graduates of career and technical schools who opted for further schooling are still in school one year later.

Ms. Gailliard-Garrick stated that schools cannot collect the data because of confidentiality laws.

Mr. Osborn stated that he will work with the Rhode Island Department of Labor and Training to see what information he can obtain on post-graduation employment.

Ms. Bisaccia suggested that she and Mr. Lubrano come to the next meeting with a standardized script that can be used to reach out to employers in the four industries of focus.

Mr. McCourt stated that the Governor's Workforce Board has obtained sector data for years.

Ms. Bisaccia stated that the objective for the next meeting is to have data on the four industries.

Ms. Carroll stated that the workforce is so dynamic that we need a mechanism to speak with employers and see what they need.

Mr. McCourt stated that the manufacturing and construction industries interact with career and technical education centers. He stated that we should have a statewide system in which there are advisory boards for each discipline. Each school should have the same curriculum, and equipment purchasing decisions should be made with input from statewide advisory boards.

Mr. Baldwin stated that the existing career and technical schools are supposed to have advisory boards, but there are not enough people to serve on all of the disparate boards.

Ms. Carroll stated that she represents adult education and does not want to be left out of the loop.

Mr. Trueb stated that Rhode Island is a small state, and we should have one advisory board per industry.

Mr. Osborn stated that for the biannual plan, we need to discuss how to set up the structure for the advisory boards. We need a clear system with a clear structure.

Mr. Lubrano set the next joint meeting date as July 28, 2015, from 1:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Mr. Baldwin stated that the Warwick Area Career and Technical Center wants to host the next meeting. He will work on logistics.

**Establishing Action Items and Responsibilities:**

Prior to the next meeting, Mr. Baldwin will ask the construction industry, Mr. McCourt will ask the manufacturing industry, Mr. Jensen will ask Electric Boat, and Ms. Shields will ask the biotech industry the following questions:

- (1) What do you need from career and technical schools in order for graduates to be attractive candidates for employment?
- (2) What are you seeing as impediments to obtaining attractive candidates upon graduation?
- (3) What is working?
- (4) How do we measure success?

Mr. Baldwin, Mr. McCourt, Mr. Jensen, and Ms. Shields will report on their findings at the next meeting.

Upon motion and seconded, the Board of Trustees and CTE Trust unanimously

**VOTED: To adopt the action items for the next meeting of the Board of Trustees and CTE Trust.**

Upon motion by Mr. Baldwin and seconded, the Board of Trustees and CTE Trust unanimously voted to adjourn.

Respectfully Submitted,

Brenna A. Force  
Secretary, CTE Trust