

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

Minutes of Meeting held on Tuesday, July 28, 2015, at 1:00 p.m., Warwick Area Career and Technical Education Center, Warwick, 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 1:00 p.m.

Members and Attendees:

The following members of the Board of Trustees were present: Bob Baldwin, Tim Byrne, Stephen Osborn, Raymond Johnson, Al Lubrano, Bill McCourt, and Jeannine Nota-Masse.

The following members of the Board of Trustees were absent: Bill Bryan, Shannon Carroll, Victoria Gailliard-Garrick, Michael Grey, Peter Petrarca, Commerce Secretary Stefan Pryor, Commissioner Jim Purcell, and Kathie Shields.

The following members of the CTE Trust were present: Lisa Bisaccia, Brenna Force, Bill McCourt, David Rampone, and Martin Trueb.

The following members of the CTE Trust were absent: Maura Dunn, Stephanie Federico, John Gregory, and Commerce Secretary Stefan Pryor.

Introductory Remarks:

Mr. Lubrano stated that they held a few sub-meetings to get some work done. There are a few areas of focus to get us started, and some things will get deferred until later on.

Acceptance of the Agenda for Today’s Meeting:

The floor was opened for comments on the proposed meeting agenda. No comments were made. Upon motion and seconded, it was unanimously

VOTED: To accept the agenda for the meeting.

Acceptance of the Meeting Minutes for the June 24, 2015 Joint Meeting:

The floor was opened for comments on the proposed meeting minutes for the June 24, 2015 joint meeting of the Board of Trustees and CTE Trust. No comments were made. Upon motion and seconded, it was unanimously

VOTED: To approve the June 24, 2015 joint meeting minutes.

Report of the Chair of the Board of Trustees:

Mr. Lubrano repeated 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.”

Mr. Lubrano stated that the Board of Trustees’ and CTE Trust’s initial scope will be as follows. The focus will be on grades 9 through 12, and the goal is to ensure that graduates of a career and technical programs meet entry level employment needs. Mr. Lubrano stated that as proof of concept, the initial focus will be on identified priority sectors.

Report of the President of the CTE Trust:

Ms. Bisaccia stated that we should take a narrow focus at first, so we can take action now. As time goes on, we can take a broader approach. Ms. Bisaccia stated that we should prove that the concept is doable before we take on other issues.

The initial focus will be on three priority sectors: construction, manufacturing, and health careers. Entry level jobs are available and open for graduates of CTE programs in these sectors.

Ms. Bisaccia stated that to create a system in touch with the needs of Rhode Island employers, we should have a standard for graduates of career and technical education programs across the state, so there is no deviation among career and technical education programs. We are looking at how to define what skills the graduates in each of the three industries should have.

The work should come from the Board of Trustees and CTE Trust, with help from experts as necessary.

Ms. Bisaccia stated that there will be three subcommittees: (1) construction, headed by Bob Baldwin; (2) manufacturing, headed by Bill McCourt; and (3) healthcare, headed by Jeannine Nota-Masse.

The work in defining graduation standards should be tied to recognized standards (we do not need to redefine the standards). We will leverage what is already recognized. Subcommittees will choose the appropriate standards. The subcommittees will define the specific skills with words that employers will recognize. Each industry of focus will have multiple standards, and we will probably have up to 20 sets of standards.

The near-term action plan is as follows. First, the subcommittees will define the entry-level positions. The Rhode Island Department of Labor and Training and the Governors’ Workforce Board will opine on the work. Second, the subcommittees will present drafts to the Board of Trustees and CTE Trust for review and approval. Third, once the standards are defined, the CTE Trust will use funding to reinforce established growth in these areas. Programs that commit to the standards will get the funding that they need to implement them.

Discussion of the Purpose, Scope, and Near Term Action Plan:

Mr. Lubrano stated that this is a dynamic process. There are other areas that people want us to work on, but we want to get started.

Mr. Trueb stated that there are industry partnerships that we can leverage. There are skills gaps organizations that we can work with. How do we distinguish this program from all the other government programs out there?

Ms. Bisaccia stated that we intend to leverage existing organizations. We will gain acceptance, because we are not doing this ourselves. We will work with industries to define the standards. In addition, we will talk to the new commissioner and the Governor to get the endorsements we need. We believe that standardization across the state is important and the funding will follow that standardization. Schools will get funding through objective criteria. Once the standards are defined, we will use those standards as criteria for schools to get funding. We are not attempting to get into curriculum. We are just saying what skills the graduates should have. We realize that things like transportation and seat time affect the skill level for graduates.

Mr. Lubrano stated that we will encourage career and technical education schools to talk to the subcommittee chairs and get involved so they can address their concerns. Once the standards are established and a school is not willing to meet them, the school will not get funding.

Mr. Trueb stated that the focus is on grades 9 through 12 initially. We are not waiting until it is too late and this will have the potential for two positive outcomes. The students will be prepared to get jobs upon graduation, and the schools will retain kids who are now leaving, because they do not see any benefit to remaining in school.

Mr. Rampone stated that recruitment must go to the 8th graders. It is too hard of a sell at age 12 to get a kid to make a career choice.

Ms. Bisaccia stated that to market career and technical education as a viable choice for 8th graders, we will have to market it as the career that the student can have upon graduation.

Mr. Lubrano: Things have changed in the past 5-10 years. College students are graduating with liberal arts degrees and a lot of debt, and are getting jobs flipping burgers. A career and technical education graduate can get a high-wage job upon graduation with no debt.

Mr. Baldwin stated that we must set the standard for the private sector.

Mr. Rampone stated that we should figure out how to market career and technical education at the same time that we choose the standards.

Mr. McCourt stated that it is not easy to walk into most middle schools to talk about manufacturing careers, but it is easier than it was 3-4 years ago. The doors are more open today and there was a national public relations campaign.

Mr. Rampone stated that we can glean information from how New York is doing it.

Mr. Lubrano stated that NAM in Washington, DC has a certification program. Graduates can go to employers with that certification.

Mr. Johnson stated that we must sell career and technical education to parents and guidance counselors more than to students. The parents will understand the opportunities.

Mr. Lubrano stated that the best publicity is coming from the in-debt liberal arts college graduates with no jobs.

Mr. Byrne asked whether we are giving equal weight to career schools and comprehensive schools. Students who go to career and technical education schools know that they want to work with their hands and do not want to go to college.

Ms. Bisaccia stated that we spent a long time thinking about this and do not want to take on that battle right now. We will hold comprehensive high schools with existing career and technical education programs to the same standards as career and technical education schools so the students will not be disadvantaged.

Mr. Baldwin stated that a comprehensive high school cannot just create an elective and call it a program. It must meet the standards.

Ms. Nota-Masse stated that we must start in grade 6 because that is when math and reading levels are identified. In addition, college and career and technical education can mix. Students in career and technical education programs should be the ambassadors for recruitment.

Mr. Johnson stated that he goes to middle schools and speaks. He asks the students to come to his school. He had a career day, and kids from the middle school got to touch the building materials. Before the career day, he had about 4 students committed to attending, whereas now, after the career day, he has about 30 students attending.

Mr. Baldwin stated that Mr. Johnson, unlike many other schools, can recruit students.

Mr. Johnson stated that most of his students are from Cranston. Seven students got into the union two weeks ago and are starting at \$18/hour with health benefits and an annuity fund.

Mr. Rampone said that some of his construction workers' benefits exceed that of his engineers.

Mr. Lubrano stated that career day at a facility blows away other marketing efforts. There is a national manufacturing career day, and this is part of recruitment efforts for manufacturing careers. But, there are barriers in the state—the superintendent of a school district might not let the kids participate.

Ms. Nota-Masse stated that time away from school is precious, and we must choose what career day programs students can attend, otherwise there will be field trips all the time.

Mr. Trueb stated that funding goes to the school, not the student. He thinks that every student should get a scholarship and the schools should have to convince the students to attend.

Ms. Bisaccia stated that Mr. Trueb made a great point, but it is outside the scope of the Board of Trustees and CTE Trust. She stated that there is interest in how the funding will be applied.

Upon motion by Mr. Baldwin and seconded by Mr. McCourt, it was unanimously **VOTED: To approve the action plan.**

Mr. Rampone asked the timeframe for the committees to finish.

Ms. Bisaccia stated that the subcommittees should be small enough to be nimble. She wants to see drafts after Labor Day, so the Board of Trustees and CTE Trust can agree on standards by the end of September.

Mr. Lubrano stated that not every standard needs to be done by the end of September, but we will have a good start.

Ms. Bisaccia stated that the subcommittees will draft one-page documents defining the standards, which will reference published standards. The goal is to publish the documents by the end of the year and start the communications and marketing end.

Mr. Baldwin wondered whether welding falls under construction or manufacturing.

Ms. Bisaccia stated the Mr. Baldwin and Mr. McCourt can decide that. The next meeting will be after Labor Day to give the committees time to get started.

Mr. Lubrano asked if there was any other business.

Mr. Rampone stated that we need to teach kids arithmetic.

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

Respectfully Submitted,

Brenna A. Force
Secretary, CTE Trust