

CareerTEC Board of Directors Meeting
Thursday, December 4, 2025
CareerTEC Conference Room
2037 W. Galena Ave.
Freeport, IL 61032

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CAREERTEC BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The meeting of the CareerTEC Board of Directors was conducted at 1:30 p.m., Thursday, December 4, 2025, at the CareerTEC office.

I. ROLL CALL

Present and responded to roll call at 1:30 p.m. were Supt. Jenny Keffer, Dakota District; Supt. Kurt Alberstett, Durand District; Supt. Anna Alvarado, Freeport District; Supt. Julie Katzenberger, Orangeville District; Supt. Mike Schiffman, Pearl City District; and Supt. Carl Carlson, Pecatonica District. Also in attendance was Brian Greene, System Director, who served as secretary for this meeting. Absent: Jody Ackerman, Recording Secretary.

II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion was made by Alvarado to approve the agenda; seconded by Alberstett. Motion approved by voice vote. Motion carried 6-0.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion was made by Schiffman to approve the December 4, 2025, Board of Directors open- and closed-session meeting minutes; seconded by Katzenberger. Motion approved by voice vote. Motion carried 6-0.

IV. COMMUNICATIONS/ PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no communications or public comments.

V. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

A. CTEI Grant FY26: Director Brian Greene reported that we received payments as of Dec. 3 totaling \$179,836 of the \$301,316 grant. Yesterday, a payment of \$41,450 was received. Payments are on schedule.

B. Perkins Grant FY26: Reimbursement of \$5,054 was received, as requested. Jody continues to make purchases for this \$87,588 grant; to date, we have received \$39,936.

C. Local Needs/Comprehensive Local Needs Assessments: During their Nov. 19 meeting, Brian shared detailed information with the school principals regarding the upcoming Local Needs Assessment (LNA), which is due March 31, 2026. Brian emailed survey links to the principals to distribute to district parents and employers. Schools are also to use a provided link to survey high school students; he is handling the survey to region CTE teachers. Survey results will be shared with principals in early March. Schools should meet with all district CTE stakeholders in January or February. Once all six LNAs are submitted in IWAS, Brian can work on the Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment (CLNA), which is due April 30, 2026. The LNA and CLNA are required to be eligible for funding through the Perkins Grant.

D. Rural IL CTE Project: The most recent Rural IL CTE Project report was shared with the Board. The report offers an analysis of the data received through surveys, and then puts forward renewed action steps for uplifting and strengthening rural career and technical education across the state.

- E. E-Learning Days:** Brian reminded the Board that CareerTEC will utilize E-Learning for emergency days when at least half of our member schools cancel school or institute e-learning days due primarily to snowy or frigid cold conditions. The Board also encouraged Brian to renew the E-Learning Program this spring for another three years, as the current plan expires at the end of 2025-26 school year.
- F. Dec. 15-19 Schedule:** With it being semester exam week at all of our schools except Freeport, many students will be testing and thus be unable to attend CareerTEC classes between Dec. 17-19. At St. John and Construction Trades only, there will be no afternoon classes on Dec. 17; no AM1 classes on Dec. 18; and all classes are canceled on Dec. 19. AM 2 classes will run as normal Dec. 15-18, as will classes at Freeport High School. CareerTEC classes at HCC held semester finals and final classes between Dec. 3-9. CareerTEC resumes classes Jan. 5, 2026, at St. John, Construction, and FHS; classes at HCC start back up Jan. 12, 2026.
- G. Prospective Member Update:** Despite setting plans a week earlier for him to present to grade 9-11 students in December, Brian received an email Nov. 20 from Le-Win principal Ann DeZell stating the district was “halting any chance of a return for Le-Win to Career Tech [sic] in the near future.” DeZell cited a desire for the district to focus on pathway endorsements and the Northwest Illinois Career Training Expo instead.
- H. First Semester Drops:** Brian shared the number of drops and reasons compared to last year. 1.8% decline this year compared to 3.3% last year; none of the drops (as of Dec. 1) are due to excessive absences. None of the 12 provisional students have been dropped for exceeding three absences in the first semester. In total, six students have been sent warning letters for missing at least five days and one student for missing seven days, which is a vast improvement from last year in which 16 students were sent letters. Last year at this time, seven students were dropped due to exceeding the max allowable nine absences.
- I. 2026-27 CareerTEC Course Catalog:** Seeking answers related to approval of our 2026-27 Course Catalog and the restart of a Computer Science program, Brian spoke to attorney Justino Petrarca for clarification on recall rights for a former Computer Information Systems teacher, who was honorably dismissed due to low enrollment. According to Petrarca, we “have no problem (moving forward with Highland Community College offering the Computer Science and Information Systems program).” He went on to say that honorably dismissed teachers have one year of recall rights starting the first day of school the year following the reduction in force. Following Petrarca’s comments about CareerTEC teachers not being part of a union, Supt. Katzenberger asked if CareerTEC follows the Freeport Education Association contract with FSD #145, which Brian replied that some elements (including the salary schedule) of the contract are observed but most elements are not.
- J. Director Holiday Leave:** As his contract states when he takes three or more consecutive days off work, Brian notified the Board that he will be out of the office from Dec 20, 2025, to Jan 4, 2026, for winter break. He will return to work the same day students and teachers return on Monday, Jan. 5, 2026.

VI. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Motion to Approve Routine Items: November bills and Destruction of Closed Session Recordings prior to 6/1/24

Motion was made by Schiffman to approve the consent agenda; seconded by Carlson. Roll call vote was taken with Alvarado, Schiffman, Carlson, Katzenberger, Keffer and Alberstett all in favor. Motion carried, 6-0.

VII. CLOSED SESSION: None

VIII. ACTION ITEMS

A. Approval of 2026-27 CareerTEC Course Catalog

Motion was made by Alberstett to approve the 2026-27 CareerTEC Course Catalog; seconded by Alvarado. All approved with voice vote. Motion carried 6-0.

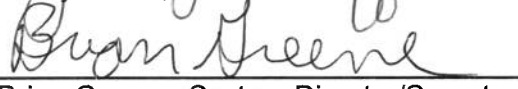
B. Approval of Cancellation of Jan 8, 2026, Board meeting

Brian proposed the Jan. 8, 2026, "if needed" Board meeting not be held. The main item of bill approval on the January agenda can be approved through the fiscal agent, FSD #145, then presented to the CareerTEC Board at the February 5 meeting. Motion was made by Katzenberger to approve the cancellation of the 1/8/26 Board meeting; seconded by Schiffman. All approved with voice vote. Motion carried 6-0.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

Motion was made by Alvarado to adjourn at 1:49 p.m.; seconded by Alberstett. All approved with voice vote. Motion carried 6-0.


Jenny Keffer, Board President


Brian Greene, System Director/Secretary

