

CareerTEC Board of Directors Meeting
Thursday, February 5, 2026
CareerTEC
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 under the following format Thursday, February 5, 2026.

I. ROLL CALL

The following responded to roll call at 1:31 p.m.: Asst. Supt. Shanna Rufener, Durand District; Supt. Anna Alvarado, Freeport District; Supt. Mike Schiffman, Pearl City District; Supt. Jenny Keffer, Dakota District; Supt. Julie Katzenberger, Orangeville District; and Supt. Carl Carlson, Pecatonica District. Also in attendance were Brian Greene, System Director; and Jody Ackerman, Recording Secretary.

II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion was made by Carlson to approve the agenda; seconded by Schiffman. All in favor with voice vote.

Motion carried 6-0.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion was made by Schiffman to approve the open-session minutes from the December 4, 2025, Board of Directors meeting; seconded by Katzenberger. All in favor with voice vote.

Motion carried 6-0.

IV. COMMUNICATIONS / PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

V. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS: Presented by Director Brian Greene.

A. CTEI Grant: Director Greene reported that we received payments in November & December & Jody reported that yesterday, Feb. 4 we received the January vouchered payment, making the total \$251,762 received of the \$301,316 grant. Jody is making purchases for the schools.

B. Perkins Grant: Reimbursements have been received, as requested. We have received \$60,476 of the \$87,588 grant. Purchasing for the schools continues.

C. Area Career Center Update: Brian reported that, after emailing proposed allocations to the board members, step 1 of the proposal is completed with the submission to ISBE CTE Director Dr. Erica Thieman. The outline of how the allocated funds (estimated \$200,000 for just the Area Career Center) would be distributed: 57% for in-house instructor salaries, 18% for St. John rent, 15% program costs, 4% capital improvement projects, 3% Internet service for in-house programs at St. John, 2% Technology updates, and 1% for program workbooks. Step 2 of the proposal was shared with the board and is done and ready to submit tomorrow after getting the board's approval at today's meeting. Brian used ChatGPT to help with some of the district statistics.

- D. CareerTEC Presentations:** Tours and presentations at the CareerTEC classrooms at St. John, HCC and Freeport High were held Jan. 16 for 248 sophomores from Dakota, Durand, Orangeville, Pearl City and Pecatonica. Previously, on Dec. 5, tours were held at St. John and HCC for approximately 105 sophomores from Freeport school. Brian reported that approximately 105 Freeport students attended of the 240 that possessed a 1.7 GPA or above and were given permission slips for the tours. The tours went well. Brian then presented to approximately 200 parents and students with good questions and conversations over the six nights at the schools. The parent attendance was increased from previous years at each school. There is increased awareness of the importance of CTE and they thanked Brian for starting the conversation regarding career options.
- E. 2026-2027 Applications:** Brian reported that the application window was opened on the CareerTEC website after returning from winter break on Jan. 5. We've now received 135 applications while last year we had received 92 applications as of this date. The guaranteed seat deadline is April 7. Sixty-six of the applications (48.9%) are for our in-house programs for which we pay the teachers' salaries. We aim for our goal set at the June 8, 2023, board meeting of 142. He also made note that Freeport won't start registering their 10th & 11th graders until at least Feb. 17.
- F. 2025 Perkins Measures Data:** Brian shared in a chart for each district and the CareerTEC region results of the Illinois measurements of the required secondary core performance indicators on CTE concentrator students. Concentrator students have taken two or more courses in a certain career pathway. Brian will have to report on the 2 of the 9 indicators that were not met by our region, namely Reading/Language Arts and Math. These are the same indicators from the past three years. He also stated that ISBE knows that CareerTEC has limited impact in some of the indicator areas.
- G. FERPA & Dual Credit Students:** There have been questions raised regarding what can be shared with parents of minors enrolled in dual credit classes. A parent was displeased with the grade her student received for Criminal Justice last semester and wanted information to help her student stay on track this semester. Criminal Justice instructor reached out to Brian and the HCC dean Rae Schupbach-Roe for permission to share general information or the syllabus. HCC dean stated that the student did not sign the FERPA release form at HCC that would allow HCC to share her grades with parents. Therefore, after HCC consulted with their lawyer, they did not allow the Criminal Justice instructor who teaches at HCC to share anything with the parents. Brian contacted the CareerTEC attorney, Justin Petrarca from the law firm Himes, Petrarca, and Fester in Chicago. He relayed an exception to the FERPA rule that student education records can be released to parents without prior written consent if the student is a dependent for IRS tax purposes. He also said the if the student is enrolled with CareerTEC while also enrolled at HCC we would be allowed to provide the info they request if we have it under the state Student Records Act. Feedback from board members was to continue how we have been no consent form needed for info release to parents at the CareerTEC level.
- H. Careers to Consider:** Brian shared that HCC will host this annual event on Feb. 12. CareerTEC helps by sending info to the member schools and forwarding registration forms to HCC to invite eighth-graders to increase junior high career exploration goal in the CLNA. There are 54 students from Dakota, Freeport, Orangeville and Pecatonica scheduled to participate. Durand, Pearl City and Lena Winslow elected to not participate this year. The event aims to help students explore high-demand professions. They will choose two and be assigned two. They will rotate through sessions and participate in hands-on activities, interact with instructors, and explore professions in the career pathways.

- I. **Mall of Life:** This annual event that Colleen Mills coordinates for our member district 6th, 7th and some 8th graders plus Tri-County 6th & 7th grade students will be held Feb. 25-26 at HCC. Its primary focus is on financial literacy with real-life adult decisions. Brian will again be including a career exploration element this year by handing out a middle school career guide to the students. CareerTEC students from HOYA 2, CIB, CTYA, and Culinary will help along with some local community members.

VI. CONSENT AGENDA

Motion to Approve Routine Items

1. January bills

2. **Destruction of Closed-Session Recordings prior to 8/1/24**

Motion was made by Carlson to approve consent agenda; seconded by Katzenberger. Roll call vote was taken with Schiffman, Carlson, Rufener, Alvarado, Katzenberger and Keffer all in favor. (December bills were approved by admin agent and included to this Board).

Motion carried, 6-0.

VII. CLOSED SESSION: NONE

VIII. ACTION ITEMS

- A. **Submission for Area Career Center Step 2 Proposal:** Director Brian Greene stated rules for step 2 proposal is a signed statement by the president and secretary that the board has authorized submission of the proposal. Motion was made by Schiffman; seconded by Carlson for approval to submit step 2 of the Area Career Center proposal. Roll call vote was taken with Rufener, Carlson, Katzenberger, Alvarado, Keffer and Schiffman all in favor.

Motion carried 6-0.

- B. **Approval of Construction Trades Instructor Resignation:** Director received an email from James Shaw that stated that due to age and health he is resigning at the end of this 2025-2026 school year. However, he did state that if no replacement is found he would consider teaching again as he didn't want the program to die. Motion was made by Keffer; seconded by Schiffman to accept James Shaw's resignation. Roll call vote was taken with Alvarado, Schiffman, Carlson, Katzenberger, Keffer, and Rufener all in favor.

Motion carried 6-0.

- C. **Approval to Advertise Construction Trades Instructor Position:** The Director will post on Indeed, IL Ed Bank and/or call construction companies. Motion was made by Carlson; seconded by Keffer to advertise the position. Roll call vote was taken with Alvarado, Rufener, Katzenberger, Schiffman, Carlson, and Keffer all in favor.

Motion carried 6-0.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

Motion was made by Carlson to adjourn at 2:02 p.m.; seconded by Keffer. All in favor by voice vote.

Motion carried 6-0.



Jenny Keffer, Board President



Jody Ackerman, Recording Secretary

