

## CareerTEC Board of Directors Meeting

Thursday, March 5, 2026

CareerTEC Office

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, March 5, 2026, at the CareerTEC office, Freeport, IL.

#### I. ROLL CALL

Present and responded to roll call at 1:41 p.m.: Supt. Anna Alvarado, Freeport District; Supt. Mike Schiffman, Pearl City District; Supt. Carl Carlson, Pecatonica District; Supt. Julie Katzenberger, Orangeville District; and Supt. Jenny Keffer, Dakota District. Also in attendance were Brian Greene, System Director; and Jody Ackerman, Recording Secretary. Absent from meeting was Supt. Kurt Alberstett, Durand District.

#### II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

Motion carried 5-0.

#### III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion was made by Katzenberger to approve the open-session minutes from the February 5, 2026, Board of Directors meeting; seconded by Schiffman. All in favor with voice vote.

Motion carried 5-0.

#### IV. COMMUNICATIONS / PUBLIC COMMENTS: NONE

#### V. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

- A. **CTEI FY26:** We are awaiting payment of the \$9,777 February voucher and are close to being on pace for the grant funding. We are around \$50,000 short of receiving the whole \$301,316 grant. Brian shared that Gov. Pritzker's budget put in additional \$50 million to support Area Career Centers, and perhaps we could get more funds if approved as an Area Career Center.
- B. **Perkins:** Reimbursement of \$6,884 was received, as requested. Jody continues purchases for schools with Perkins and CTEI. We've received \$67,360 of the \$87,588 grant.
- C. **FY26 Grant Amendments:** Brian has given to the schools a deadline of May 1 for any changes or additions to their grant fund use. Any changes require a grant amendment, which are due 30 days prior to the end date of June 30. CareerTEC will keep any unused member school funds after May 1.
- D. **FY27 Enrollment Update:** Currently sitting at 262 total applications with 132 of those for our in-house programs (those located at St. John and construction trades) compared to 241 total last year with 138 in house at this time (142 is our in-house goal). Guaranteed seats are due April 7. Brian sent a table giving each school's preliminary enrollments compared to the prior six years enrollment and six-year average. Dakota, Orangeville, Pearl City and Pecatonica are up; Freeport is below and Durand is basically the same. Wait lists have been started for Digital Design and Animation and close to starting for Early Childhood Education, Construction Trades, Industrial Manufacturing and Careers in Auto Tech. Brian relayed that he met with Freeport's Early Childhood Center director Sara Latimer and the ECE instructor Melissa Johnson to discuss the potential to open a PM section, which would allow the possibility to send students to work with the children at the Early Childhood Center. Ms. Johnson is retiring and HCC has hired Rachel Stewart as the new teacher. She has worked with the program for a while. Brian reminded the Board that we are seeking a part-time Construction Trades instructor for the 26-27 school year.

- E. **CTE Teachers Workshop:** The Annual Professional Development workshop will be combined with the annual grant planning session at HCC Student Conference Center and is set for April 10. Registrations due March 26 and so far have a teacher from each school except Orangeville. It's going to again be in conjunction with EFE 150 CEANCI (Rockford region) and EFE 160 CTE Academy (Elizabeth region). Teachers will receive 5 PDUs for attending and is free to CTE teacher and counselors. CareerTEC will reimburse sub and mileage cost for our region's teachers. The workshop will focus on Artificial Intelligence and be led by Ben Sondgeroth, the lead EdTech coordinator in northern Illinois for the Learning Technology Center. Morning session will focus on what AI is and how to develop it as a partner in the work that you do. Last year's teachers surveyed wanted a different topic after several years of the focus on Reading/Language Arts and Math. After the catered lunch, there will be time for each region to break out and work on their grant planning.
- F. **Mall of Life Event:** Colleen did a great job organizing this financial literacy event, which was held on Feb. 25-26. We had fewer students this year. All member district's 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup> grade students (approx. 245) except Durand participated. Brian included a career exploration element to the event again this year by handing out middle school career guides. He also shared that 100% of the volunteers surveyed thought the Mall was worthwhile and effective. Participating students surveyed said they learned more about managing money.
- G. **Careers to Consider:** This event sponsored by Highland Community College was held Feb. 12 at HCC for 57 eighth-graders from Dakota, Pecatonica, Orangeville, and the home school association. The post event survey indicated students were more aware of the different fields and they would recommend the Careers to Consider event to a friend.
- H. **Director Vacation Time:** The director contract states that he is to inform the Board of days out of office longer than 3 days in length. Brian plans to be out for spring break March 30-April 6. Will return on Tuesday, April 7 when the students return.

#### VI. CONSENT AGENDA

##### 1. Motion to Approve Routine Items

Motion was made by Schiffman to approve February bills and the destruction of closed-session recordings prior to September 1, 2024; seconded by Carlson. Roll call vote: Alvarado, Schiffman, Carlson, Katzenberger, and Keffer all in favor.

Motion carried, 5-0.

#### VII. CLOSED SESSION: NONE

#### VIII. ACTION ITEMS:

A. Approval of Lori Steele's intent to retire effective end of 2026-2027 school year and

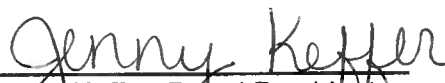
B. To advertise a HOYA position for SY28 at the appropriate time:

Motion was made by Schiffman to approve; seconded by Carlson. Roll call vote: Keffer, Alvarado, Schiffman, Carlson, and Katzenberger all in favor.

Motion carried, 5-0.

#### IX. ADJOURNMENT

Motion was made by Alvarado to adjourn at 1:58 p.m.; seconded by Katzenberger. All approved with voice vote. Motion carried 5-0.

  
Jenny Keffer, Board President

  
Jody Ackerman, Recording Secretary