

**Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the**  
**STATE BOARD OF CAREER AND TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION**  
**HELD AT THE OLIVER HODGE EDUCATION BUILDING,**  
**2500 NORTH LINCOLN BOULEVARD,**  
**OKLAHOMA CITY, OKLAHOMA**

**August 21, 2025**

The State Board of Career and Technology Education began its regular meeting at 9:12 a.m. Thursday, August 21, 2025, at the Oliver Hodge Education Building, 2500 North Lincoln Boulevard, Oklahoma City, OK, and the meeting was also streamed on YouTube. Notice was properly given, and the final agenda was posted at 8:33 a.m. on August 20, 2025, in accordance with 25 O.S. 2011, § 311(9).

Members of the State Board of Career and Technology Education present and all appeared in person:

- Mr. Brent Haken, state director, ex-officio nonvoting member
- Mr. Michael Brown, Lawton
- Mr. Peter Dillingham, Enid
- Ms. Shaelynn Haning, Tulsa
- Mr. Leonard McCullough, Tulsa
- Mr. Rob Seeman, Morris

Members of the State Board of Career and Technology Education who were absent:

- Mr. Ryan Walters, state superintendent of public instruction and chair of the board
- Mr. Zachary Archer, Hammon
- Mr. Ryan Deatherage, Kingfisher
- Mr. Randy Gilbert, Tecumseh

Attendees from the Oklahoma Department of Career and Technology Education and other guests:

See Attachment A.

**1.01 CALL TO ORDER, ROLL CALL AND DETERMINATION OF QUORUM**

Mr. Brent Haken called the meeting to order at 9:12 a.m., and Ms. Ashley Rink called the roll and ascertained there was a quorum.

**1.02 PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE, SALUTE TO THE OKLAHOMA STATE FLAG  
AND A MOMENT OF SILENCE**

Led by Mr. Brent Haken.

### **1.03 OPENING COMMENTS**

Mr. Brent Haken said, "Not a whole lot to update you on. School's starting, everybody's busy with the first days of school. This is what I would call downtime for road activity and more of an in-the-office time, where we're working on budgets and things like that, which you'll hear a bit about in a moment. We just finished up our largest event of the year with Summit, and you'll be getting a great update on that from three individuals here. I'll leave that to them in just a minute."

### **1.04 DIRECTOR COMMENTS**

Mr. Brent Haken said, "I want to let you know that I am presenting in case you're here at uh two, possibly three sessions at OSSBA conference that's coming up, and I don't know if you guys are attending or not. You're welcome to attend those events, uh, as school board members or as state board members. So that's their training event for a lot of the school board members across the state. And so I'll be talking about CareerTech and then we have, uh, several members of our team that'll actually be there presenting as well.

"That is September 4-5. Friday and Saturday (5-6), the first week of September. So if you want to attend that, uh, let me know so that we can make sure that we have things available. Our tech center board members along with K-12 board members attend that to get a lot of their training points. There'll be a large crowd there.

"One thing that we're working on right now, you're going to get presented at your next board meeting. So I want to go ahead and make you aware is uh some changes in how we proceed with lottery funds that we get each year. So we'll talk about that and how we're going to be changing at the next board meeting. So if you have questions or concerns, please let me know. We'll be bringing you some updates at the next board meeting.

"Also wanted to update you on our field focused positions, I guess what I would call them, the people that are split up into regional activities and work primarily out in the field. We're changing it around in the agency where they're not in the office as many days where they can be out in the field working. So we have updated our first few positions with that, and we'll give you updates on how that's going. I know Randy's (Mr. Randy Gilbert) not here, but that's been a big priority of his is to make sure that those people can work in the areas where they serve the teachers. So we're pretty excited. That has not started, but we did update some job descriptions, and we'll start moving forward really soon.

"Then also as we've talked about before, I have got the HR team along with our data team reviewing the pay bands and where they are competitively to the field. So we'll be bringing those over the next few months to you as well to talk about where compensation is and if it's appropriate or not. You guys will get to make some decisions on that. So that's kind of what we're working on right now in the agency.

"And, like I said, most of the stuff we've done, you're going to get to hear about today. So not a whole lot other things to update you on. Any questions about those items?"

No questions were asked.

## **1.05 MINUTES OF THE JULY 17, 2025, REGULAR MEETING**

A vote was taken on the motion to approve the minutes of the July 17, 2025, regular meeting.  
The results were as follows:

Motioned by Mr. Leonard McCullough  
Seconded by Mr. Mike Brown

Mr. Brown, yes  
Mr. Dillingham, yes  
Ms. Haning, yes  
Mr. McCullough, yes  
Mr. Secman, yes

Motion carried.

## **2. RECOGNITIONS AND PRESENTATIONS**

**2.01 Presentation and Possible Discussion of the 58th Annual Oklahoma Summit – Ms. Gina Hubbard, Director of Statewide Outreach; Ms. Andrea Hancock, Communications and Event Coordinator; and Brenna Long, Communications and Marketing Coordinator.**  
A visual presentation was shown, and the following points were discussed.

### **58th Annual Oklahoma Summit Highlights**

- Event Overview
  - Held August 4-5 in Tulsa.
  - Brought together 4,400+ CareerTech educators for professional development, networking and collaboration.
  - Unique to Oklahoma's CareerTech system.
- Agency Participation
  - Entire state agency closed for the first time to attend (232 staff in uniform).
  - 33 staff attended for the first time.
  - Purpose: ensure staff understand the why behind CareerTech and their role in serving schools and stakeholders.
- Activities & Engagement
  - CareerTech Foundation golf tournament raised \$6,000+ for student scholarships and CTSO support.
  - Registration and event support handled in partnership with OkACTE.
  - Banquet keynote: Leslie Osborn (colorful, strong advocate for CareerTech).
  - Brent Haken honored with the NTHS Star of Excellence Award.
  - Rep. Chris Banning and Rep. Mike Lay recognized for legislative support, including pharmacy tech apprenticeship policy.
- Keynote & Guest Speakers
  - Josh Sundquist, Paralympian and motivational speaker, emphasized the power of persistence ("one more thing, one more time").

- Lieutenant governor highlighted CareerTech's importance to economic development and site selection.
- Awards & Recognition
  - Gold Star School Awards: top recognition for exemplary technology centers.
  - Teacher of the Year: Francis Tuttle representative.
  - Additional awards for support staff, new professionals, administrators, community service and more.
  - Major honors:
    - Arch Alexander Award – Dr. Michelle Keylon (Francis Tuttle Technology Center superintendent).
    - Bob Funk Advocate Award – Ms. Raina McVay.
    - Lifetime Achievement Award – Ms. Deborah Bartet (Indian Capital Technology Center).
    - Francis Tuttle Award – Dr. Brent Casey (Canadian Valley Technology Center).
- Social Media & Marketing
  - 669,000+ impressions (up 67% from last year).
  - 25,000+ engagements (up 62%).
  - New statewide marketing video debuted; gained 78,000+ views.
  - Strong engagement with throwback posts, full-agency attendance post and event coverage.
- Logistics & Planning
  - Event used multiple venues: six Tulsa Tech campuses, Cox/Arvest Convention Center, DoubleTree, Hyatt Regency, OSU-IT and Green Country Technology Center.
  - Day 2 focused on division-specific professional development (industry panels, technical training).
  - Planning begins a year in advance to accommodate programmatic and industry needs.
- Closing Notes
  - Board invited to attend future sessions/events.
  - Taking the entire agency was considered a success and will likely continue.

## **2.02 Presentation and Possible Discussion from the 2025 Oklahoma Teacher of the Year – Ms. Melissa Evon, Educator from Elgin Public Schools.**

Ms. Melissa Evon said, "It's an incredible honor to stand before you as the 2025 Oklahoma Teacher of the Year. I'm filled with immense gratitude, not just for the opportunity and the recognition, but because of the transformative path my career has taken because of Oklahoma Career Tech. Some of you might know my story, some of you may not. I went — I'm an Oklahoma public school graduate. I went to Southwestern Oklahoma State University, where I majored in social sciences education. Growing up, all I wanted to learn was history, government and geography. And so that's what I started doing in 1992.

"Started teaching way back in the 1900s. I started teaching at Elgin High School. I taught there until 2001. And I had fallen in love with the man from Altus Air Force Base and his career, when we got married in 2001, took us to Northern Virginia. He was stationed at the Pentagon, and I

left Elgin, which was K-12, a thousand, and went to a school in Fairfax County, Virginia, 5,000 kids in the building. And that was an experience, and I learned so much.

"We left there. We went to Colorado Springs where I taught at Cheyenne Mountain High School. Then left there and went to Scott Air Force Base in southern Illinois. Took a little bit of time off from education when our son was born. But in 2014, when my husband was getting ready to retire, I said, 'Let's go home. I want to go back to Oklahoma.' We chose for our son to go through Oklahoma public schools. We wanted him to be a graduate.

"So in 2014, there happened to be a social science position open at Elgin schools teaching seventh grade geography. And my husband, who had had this career in cybersecurity for the Air Force, got to teach fifth grade history for a year and then became the technology director for Elgin School. So we're both employees of Elgin. Teaching seventh grade, woo. Seventh grade brain is a really, really special thing.

"And once I kind of moved out of that high school belief system and went and learned a little bit more about seventh grade, I really enjoyed my time there. But after about 10 years, I was beginning to struggle a little bit with the seventh grade brain. We'd had a big culture shift at our school, and I said, you know what, it might be time to do something different. And I really thought seriously about leaving education. But every time I thought about walking out of the classroom, I really had a physical response. My chest would get tight. I'd kind of begin to shake a little bit. I wanted to be in the classroom, but decided maybe I needed to go back to high school.

"So I contacted the Elgin High School principal and said, 'What do you have in social sciences?' And he said, 'Nothing.' He said, 'But you know, we might, you know, our Oklahoma history teacher is like 77 years old, and so he might want to retire one day.' And I was sitting with my best friend when I got a phone call from another teacher at Elgin High School: Hey, there's no social science opening, but family and consumer sciences is opening.

"And my best friend and I, we laughed and laughed and laughed. Me teach family and consumer sciences. I'm not a very good cook. And when I asked my mother to teach me to sew, it ended up with us yelling at each other, the sewing machine breaking. And my mother said, 'You can buy your clothes from now on.' And so I thought, 'I can't be the family and consumer science teacher.' But I sat with that for a couple of days. What would that look like? Could I be the family consumer science teacher?

"My son, all four years of high school, took family consumer sciences. And he said, 'Mom, I think you can do this. You could be teaching about jobs and how to get a job. You could be teaching financial literacy, hospitality, and tourism. You like to travel. Surely you can do that.'

"And so when I taught history, one of my favorite people in history is Peter. St. Peter, that guy. And I like Peter because he's not perfect. He makes some mistakes, but he gives it his all. And one of my favorite stories is when Peter decides to get out of that very safe boat and that very stormy sea. And a lot of times we criticize Peter because he got out of the boat but didn't quite have enough faith and began to sink. But I love Peter because he had the courage to get out of the boat, to leave what was safe and try something new.

"So I decided to choose reinvention over resignation and to have my own get out of the boat moment. I said, I want to be the family and consumer science teacher. And I worked through my licensing. I worked with a program specialist from CareerTech. And the coolest thing about CareerTech, they said, 'You're going to do something new. Yes, you're a career teacher. You've been teaching for a long time, but come for a week of training to be a family and consumer science teacher. We're going to give you a mentor. We're going to give you a program specialist.

We're going to give you a community of family and consumer science teachers. They're going to help you along the way.' And those teachers were incredibly supportive.

"The ag teachers at my school showed up. 'How can we help?' I'm going to be honest with you. I've been teaching for a long time, but until I started my journey in family and consumer sciences, I'd never had a budget as a teacher. So thank you for what you provide so that teachers can teach and do incredible things with kids.

"So being a consumer science teacher hasn't just been a job change, as I mentioned, it has completely changed my path. Here I am as the teacher of the year. It's given me a renewed passion, a different perspective, the opportunity to connect with students in ways I never imagined. It's been a gift to teach my students real life skills in a curriculum they truly value. I love teaching adulting skills, financial literacy, parenting, food safety, communication skills, hospitality and even some basic sewing.

"My students ask me questions like, 'Hey, Mrs. Evon, can you help me with this job application? Can you teach me to iron? How do I put air in a tire? How do I open a bank account?' And right before the end of the year last year, one of my hospitality students said, 'Mrs. Evon, I'm getting ready to be a dad and I've never even held a baby. Teach me all the things.' I ran into him last week and he's killing it as a dad and he said, 'How do I invest for my son so one day he can go to college?'

"So I know that teaching family and consumer sciences matters. It matters to my kids. It's changed them. It's changed me. As I mentioned, the community of family and consumer sciences in Career Tech has been monumental. It was monumental to my success those first two years of teaching family and consumer sciences. Thank you for the budget. Thank you for the resources that are available through the CareerTech curriculum, through the Instructional Material Center. Thank you for the investment and the support and the resources that you all give to teachers, students and CareerTech centers. It's making a difference to our educators, to our students, to our communities and our state.

"My message to teachers this year as I travel the state is to take a look and see where they can get out of the boat. That doesn't mean jumping ship, and it maybe is not as drastic as my career change, but maybe they can use a new pathway. Maybe they can use a new resource, a new technology, or try something a little bit different than they have before. Becoming a CareerTech teacher has proven to be one of the very, very best decisions of my entire professional life. The journey has shown me that reinvention is a powerful force. I'm so grateful that that decision led me to CareerTech and the opportunity to work with students building life skills while shaping our future leaders across our state. Thank you so much for all that you all do for all of us. That's all I have."

Mr. Brent Haken said, "Thank you. So you're going to have to be kind of on the circuit, so to speak. So we were talking the other day about what your year looks like. Would you explain that to the board, kind of what your year looks like now as the state teacher of the year?"

Ms. Melissa Evon said, "Sure. I'm still an employee of Elgin Public Schools, and that way my retirement is not affected, things like that. I have a contract with the OSDE and they want me to come in one day a week to the office and then they want me to do at least two visits a month visiting schools or CareerTechs or universities or civic groups. My understanding is that pre-COVID the teacher of the year used to do about a hundred visits around the state. After COVID, it got down to about 20. Last year, Rachel Keith from Ada, she's phenomenal, did 52 visits! And she said to me the night that I was announced that I had been selected for teacher of the year, 'You should do 75.' So 75 visits, that's my goal between now and next July.

"Last week I got to start my first school speech at Elgin. Then I was at the CareerTech center in Altus. I'm with you all today. I'll leave here this afternoon and go to Tahlequah and speak with student teachers. Next week I'm in Mustang, I'm in Norman, and I am in McAlester. And so that's what I'm trying to do, is fill my calendar talking to people about Oklahoma education, about the great things happening, the great things happening with CareerTech. So I have a calendar and I have a calendar request. If you know of any groups that I can speak to, I'd love to do that. I would love to hit that 75 or more to tell the story of Oklahoma education.

Mr. Brent Haken said, "I think you will. I think your passion for education is going to exude across the state and you won't have a problem filling your calendar. Questions that you guys might have for Melissa.

"Thank you for being here. Thank you for what you do to serve students, but also now as an advocate for the whole state. It's very, very important. We're proud that you're part of our family. We're proud that we could help. We know that we're different here in CareerTech, and thank you for recognizing the opportunity that you had.

"I think it's awesome to hear that story of support. As a teacher coming out right now in the environment that we have, you also feel kind of alone and not sure of where you're going many times. And so that's what we try to do with our teachers making sure that they have that team around them. It's exciting that we get to do that. We get to do that because of the decisions that you guys make."

### **3. MANAGEMENT ACTION ITEMS**

#### **3.01 First Reading and Discussion on the FY27 Appropriations Request – Mr. Brent Haken, State Director of Career and Technology Education.**

Mr. Brent Haken said, "You have a document in front of you that is very rough draft. I don't know how else to say that. It's a starting place. So it's just something that's written down on paper right now so that we can start going through it.

"What I'm going to present to you today is last year's fiscal year budget — or the one that we're currently in. That's actually incorrect from what is printed. That's with lottery included. So it's actually \$175,562,874. That's the amount of money that we are starting this year with to allocate out for the different things. That is an increase from last year. Not substantial, but we did get a physical increase based on flex benefit allowance and then \$10 million added to the technology center formula. Those are the changes we've gone over before.

"From there, if we start looking down, we know that we're going to need about \$1.3 million for flex benefit allowance increase again. That will be part of our request even though it is statutory that it must be funded. We've been lucky that the legislature has held true to their obligation to fund that for teachers. That represents technology center teachers and support staff when you're looking at that number.

"Our growth continues in the system. We've had 16.5% growth in enrollments the last two years. That will continue, especially with increased dollars and the emphasis we've put on growth. So we expect to need \$1.3 million moving forward for new teachers coming in and increases in insurance. Any questions there? That one's pretty easy.

"Now we'll get into the more difficult ones. Workforce training, that is the technology center funding formula. We asked for \$41.65 million last year. We got \$10 million of that. So we're

going to go back and hit them up again and say, 'No, this is what I told you we needed if we're really going to fill the gap in workforce training.' We know we still have students on a waiting list, so to speak. We will be collecting that data over the next month to find out where we are as the fall semester starts.

"Right now as schools are starting, they're figuring out who is going to drop and who is actually coming in because of circumstances out of their control. Always a few drop, and then they can add students off that waiting list. So it'll take a little time to get that settled. Just so you're aware, we'll be gathering that again and trying to summarize how many more we should be training. That's what that number represents — how much money we think it would take to increase technology center service.

"We'll also be looking at technology center need from program. Something that builds into that is they get a survey each year that asks: "What programs is your community needing that you don't currently have or need to expand?" One of the largest is always health care. We're needing to expand health care constantly. As you likely know, health care classes have to be very small. That's largely dictated by outside agencies — the Board of Nursing, the RadTech Board, whoever it might be — that set the parameters for student-to-teacher ratio. For example, in nursing programs it's 1- 12.

"So figuring out ways that we can serve better is one of our big goals. Leonard and I had a meeting with a hospital director/CEO and talked about new opportunities. We're looking at that as well. How can we increase apprenticeships and keep that moving forward?

"There's a lot that goes into that \$31 million request. Again, that's tentative. Last year our cost per program was estimated at \$266,000 to operate. That will change this number as well if there's an increased cost.

"The K-12 career tech program support. That's an ongoing number as well that represents programs that need increased support or programs that have not been, um, not been funded yet. So every year we have schools requesting more and more programs for CareerTech, just like Melissa presented to us. The programs that they offer in those schools, like Elgin, they are supported with a budget that she mentioned that's 412 dollars. So that ranges depending on the program. The highest is \$15,000, and I think the lowest is \$8,000 now in program support that they get. They also get 411 dollars, which is their incentive to be a CareerTech teacher. It's \$2,200 or \$2,600. So not a large incentive, but it is some. That's what makes up that budget.

"And then for teachers, they are mandatory by statute to be 12-month employees. So we pay for the two summer months. So again teachers have the largest cost to us, uh, as CareerTech, to support those into the CareerTech schools. So we have a need to grow the number of programs, and that really drives your career exploration and starts your journey of career skills at the high school level before you get to postsecondary experiences, which are out of tech centers.

"So increased need. This is again a guess right now — 3.5. I really think as we get our requests in and we finalize that, it will probably be a little bit higher than that of what we actually need to fill that gap. Two years ago, the legislature fully funded that. Last year, um, we did not ask for an increase in new programs, only asked for an increase in 411 dollars. So we're going to have to go back to them again and say program numbers are going to have to go up if we want to continue what we're doing. So, um, that's what that number is generated by. Any questions there?

Thoughts?

"Technology center expansion incentive. This is our white space areas that are not currently in technology center districts. We have offered incentives to schools coming in when we had the dollars available so that it would get them started quicker. So when you annex a geographic area

to come into a technology center service area, they don't get taxes until the year after. It takes a while to get their budget started.

"What we started doing two years ago is offering \$250,000 per school if they would annex in to be a part of the technology center district, and that would help them be served. We were able to do that with Beaver County when it came in. That was really the first example of that. For schools in Beaver County moving forward, it helped that school at High Plains (Technology Center) jump into their programs, remodel some spaces, and they were being served faster. So they already have classes up and going this year, which couldn't have happened until a year later if we had not done that.

"So that's one way that we help serve a little bit quicker is getting this done. Not something that we have to do, but it's an incentive for the K-12 and the technology center. I think if we're going to go after white spaces not currently served by technology center districts, we're going to have to do that to really make a dent.

"Right now there's about \$32 million that are not being accessed for technology center districts because they're not in a technology center district. So if they were added in, it would be around \$32 million that would come into that and we wouldn't have to ask the state for those dollars at that point. You can serve those students.

"Any questions there?"

Mr. Michael Brown asked, "How many schools are there that are not in a technology center district?"

Mr. Brent Haken said, "I didn't bring it with me, but I do have that. I have that in a map."

Mr. Michael Brown asked, "More than 20?"

Mr. Brent Haken said, "Yes, much more than 20. I would say closer to 50 schools. I wish I could just pull up our map for you. I'll send you guys our technology center service map. It's been a while probably since you've seen it. Northwestern Oklahoma is the largest. There's two counties in the Panhandle that are not served at all. There's a full county (Grant County). Medford is an area that has a whole county. In southeastern, there's almost a full county in Johnston County. And one other that's pretty full county that are not being served either. And then there are various spaces around the state that are not.

"Those schools have smaller numbers, or those counties have smaller numbers of schools than what you would see in Oklahoma County or some where like that. But still, four or five up to eight in those counties. Johnston County has more than Grant County, I think, is where Medford is. I think there's only four in that county as well. So it depends on the area of the state. In the Panhandle, a couple of those counties may only have three or four schools in them as well because it's such a sparse population up there.

"So the hope is say you take in like a Grant County and you have four schools that pull in. They have enough money to probably operate a campus or a small campus in their area that would be closer, because you really never want a bus ride over about 45 minutes to get to a technology center or it becomes counterproductive. And that's the problem in these rural areas. So you could put a building in the middle of those four schools in a county and they could pretty much support operations, but they probably couldn't support getting it started and the upkeep. So this would go in. Now you'd have a million dollars to get you started.

"To give you an example, Indian Capital Technology Center has been probably our fastest in growth lately. And he's building buildings like that for about \$2 million. We're building for our skill centers right now; \$1.6 million that we are spending on a building to add programs into. So

we know that it can be done in a cost-effective way if it needs to be done. I think we have a model that would be replicable across the state to bring some of those schools in."

Mr. Michael Brown asked, "So if we don't spend the \$5 million, let's say we spend a million, what happens?"

Mr. Brent Haken said, "We carry it over and go again the next year. We get to keep it. If the legislature gives it, usually we get to keep it. Yes. It doesn't have to be re-occurring the next year. It depends on how they fund it. So they can fund reoccurring dollars or one-time dollars. So that they can do. But we can carry it over if not all expended. We do have a limit as to what we can carry over. So that depends on the total budget and how much that is. We have 27 months to spend it if it's one-time dollars.

"Great questions, and I think you understand what my goal is: Bring more of them in. I don't want students not being served, and it is not fair to serve students when their population is not being taxed for the same service that other people are. So that's my opinion on it anyway. So that's why that dollar sign is there for \$5 million.

"This next bullet is brand new, and it's kind of similar but different. There has been a huge push across the state for career exploration in hard trades especially, but also including health care and some IT. But hard trades are not prevalent across schools anymore. You don't have shop classes, so to speak. That's been something schools have been begging for our help in. Legislators have been asking for help in. So what I've done is generate if we did that as an outreach service.

"And that's happening at Central Tech and High Plains right now, where they have TAP programs or Explore programs for really sixth and seventh grade students, on up to eighth and ninth at times, but primarily sixth and seventh grade students, where they get a hands-on realization of what careers look like. Everything from building trades to IT to nursing are usually the ones that we try to stick around. That's primary trades that we train for. But there can be offshoots of other things depending on their area.

"It has been phenomenally popular for students, for parents and for schools to understand there are a lot of careers that you can go into without debt and come out with great jobs. So it's really been a service to the state that we lost for years and years and years. This would be an opportunity that I want to present to the legislature and say, 'Hey, if you really want to make this work like you say you do, this is what it's going to cost.' What that is, is \$250,000 per technology center campus where they could kind of be the outreach arm if they need to be. So that's what that dollar represents."

Ms. Shaelynn Haning asked, "You said sixth and seventh graders? It's housed in their K-12 school?"

Mr. Brent Haken said, "It is housed in their K-12 school, but it is usually a teacher from the technology center, or more than one teacher sometimes, that does that."

Ms. Shaelynn Haning said, "But we're not asking for the money for a building, so that's helpful?"

Mr. Brent Haken said, "Yes. That's why it's a small amount per campus."

Ms. Shaelynn Haning said, "Can we get like video footage of some of these kids? Because if we were able to show that, that would, like I distinctly remember my own family in consumer sciences, but I did go on to sew for a living. I also remember my shop class really well."

Mr. Brent Haken said, "We got a lot of that already. We've had the governor tour several times at TAP. We've had a lot of legislators out and tour both Central Tech and High Plains. They're different models in how they work, but they serve their local needs.

“Ripley Public School is a small school in the Central Tech area, and they have one now inside of their — they wanted to take it up early. They wanted to pilot that, and so it’s worked really well. Mannford has one. They’re adding four more this year. Right now these schools are adding them at their own expense. I’ve cautioned schools from doing that because it’s a great service, but to be honest, to the technology center, then you’re not able to offer the real career training if you’re spending money on that. So you’re going to limit yourself while you’re showing students. And I believe there is value in getting them in the right programs so that we don’t waste dollars. Great, but we still only have so many dollars.

“When you’re doing that, you can’t offer, whether it’s an aerospace training or whether it’s an IT class, you can’t do that because you just spent the money on the teacher for the middle school. So it creates its own problem. Great thing, but it bottlenecks us, and that’s what I’m afraid of. And so we haven’t pushed to expand this across the state because it’s expensive to do that. And so we need to support it. And so it’ll take the legislature buying in to do that, or if we could find a federal grant or something like that.”

Ms. Shaelyn Haning asked, “Do we have a rough number of what it would take to put a shop class, you know, back into a school that doesn’t have one? Is it a million dollars? Is this 500,000? Like what is it? How many shop classes can we buy with this?”

Mr. Brent Haken said, “62 is what that would buy. So it’s about \$250,000 is what it takes. So last year our cost per program.

So your instructor costs, depending on, they’re not all the same, so depending on experience and what certifications they have, but that’s going to cost a school right around \$100,000, so it -- up to \$150,000. So depending on what they can do, because you have to pay flex benefit allowance on top of that, you have to pay for other things that are incurred by having a staff member. So though their compensation may only be \$75,000, you’re going to have a lot of other costs that go along with that that bring it up to around \$100,000.”

Mr. Shaelynn Haning said, “OK, that’s great. Last, not question, statement would be that ‘debt-free careers’ should literally be our next T-shirt. So let’s keep that one in mind. You guys hear that? Very catchy.”

Mr. Brent Haken said, “In case you didn’t know, along those lines, last year Oklahoma incurred \$567 million in student debt. \$567 million in student debt. High or college graduation rate is below 50%. In case you didn’t know that.

Mr. Michael Brown asked, “So I want to start a program. Is there like an application process?”

Mr. Brent Haken said, “Yeah, we call that — if you start a program in a high school, it’s a form 2 process. And then we have a program approval process for technology centers as well. We didn’t, but that is new again this year, because of the funding formula. When we implemented the funding formula, now we’re implementing program approvals and audit potential as well from the agency. Ties into this request, but that was part of the reason why we built a new funding formula that you guys approved — to make sure if we’re spending the money, it’s going where it’s needed. It’s being implemented right now. So there are a few that are, ‘Oh no, they’re looking at what we’re doing.’ Which is OK. It’s all right because we’re having good communication about what we need to do.

“One thing I’ve been adamant about is we will not spend money on programs that cannot be filled. There are programs that you can’t fill because they’re kind of outdated. And so that rolls off the funding formula. With AI coming into a lot of different businesses, it will take over some of our, especially like, accounting and things like that. A lot of that — you’ll need a foundation, but a lot of those jobs will go away because they’re moving to AI.

“So we’re going to have less programs in those areas, but we’ll need more programs on the technician side. This will drive that funding formula to be reliable for those tech centers to update programs when they need new programs. The world’s always changing around us, and it’s our job to keep up with it.

“Good questions. So again, very draft, nothing that we need to do, no action we need to take. These are initial thoughts. I will now be following up with our technology center superintendent. We have a Zoom call tomorrow, and then we have a meeting in September to talk about their needs. They’ll be getting some surveys in between those two times to make sure I’m understanding what the needs are in the local areas. I’ll also start touring schools again like I do each fall to see how it’s going and where the dollars are being used. That will all go well. September you’ll be getting a final review.”

Mr. Leonard McCullough asked, “I had a quick question on, like, I think it would relate to workforce training, but so for instance, you know Google just announced the big thing in Pryor. Do they look towards CareerTech immediately, or do they talk to other agencies? Because I’m envisioning that they’re going to need a lot of employees and trained employees, and so if they needed more than they actively see available, are we the first stop? Or do we need to do something with funding or marketing or communication to become the first stop?

“Because I know there are lots of agencies out there that deal with economic development and all that kind of stuff. So I’m just curious, because it seems like our agency does really well. We have great performance, great accountability, but then when you see some of the news out there, you know, it’s not always the first thing that comes to mind. So I’m just curious when a giant company comes to Oklahoma, who are — where are they making the phone calls?”

Mr. Brent Haken said, “That’s a great question. One of the initial contacts that any company coming to Oklahoma will make is with Commerce. That starts navigating the process. The good news is we have an embedded person in Commerce, and we partner with them to bring any company in. We present what training opportunities we provide. That’s been built into the state system for business recruitment for a long time now.

“That is our great foot in the door to say, ‘Hey, CareerTech is different here than it is anywhere else in the country.’ So that’s good. So like when Google came in, one of their first people on board was Northeast Tech. ‘What can you provide?’ Tulsa Tech is another one that’s going to be brought in. Several others.

“And then as it comes to Stillwater, too, as they’ve announced that they’ll be building a data center in Stillwater, Meridian (technology center) will be involved in that and probably Ponca City (Pioneer Technology Center) as well. So, yes, we are one of their first stops. Many times, they don’t know that though until they start talking in the processes and they learn. Like I go down to Oklahoma City, and I present probably two or three times a month about, ‘OK, this is what we offer as a system,’ and then we bring the superintendents into that discussion and say ‘OK, this is how we can serve that capacity.’

“So many times, it will start with what we call WED, or Workforce Economic Development, and they will do short-term training to train current people in that area, and then we will build out full-time training that will be a pipeline for them. The WED division, which oversees, is our quick and nimble arm that, ‘Hey, we can jump-start this for you.’ A great example, Google will be similar, but they’ve already got some presence here. So we’ll be working on that.

“But back in Burns Flat areas, we’re starting a WED program that will serve some aerospace training needs, and then we will build that into a full-time program if it looks sustainable. So

that's a great example of how we do that. Yes, we are at the forefront of most discussions, but it depends on the job type that they need, too.

"A lot of people see the headlines and don't realize what the job type is that will be needed. So like for Google, they're going to need electricians and HVAC technicians probably more than anything else from us. We don't do engineers and things like that. They'll go to the universities for that, which is great.

"But, you know, as an example, which Rob (Mr. Rob Secman) would know this probably better than I, but you need a pilot, you need 10 mechanics. Usually I need a lot more people to work on it than I do to fly it. So it's the same way with AI. You're going to need intellectual knowledge and property, but you're going to need more technicians to maintain that. Same thing with everything that we do in manufacturing.

"So us and the regents are usually first at the table, and then they tell us what's your forecast, what are you going to need, and we start building for that. It's a great process, works really, really well. We do need the funding. That's what I'm advocating for and have been advocating for. We can't make sure the sustainable pipeline is there. We can do the quick upstart, but the sustainable pipeline of technicians that you need, there's no capacity for that right now, unless we, with these businesses coming in, so to speak.

"So we're going to have to grow in order to meet that need. When you talk about thousands and thousands of employees that these companies need, that's a shift. That's a change. So we're going to have to take more and more people that spent some time in other education opportunities, and now they're going to have to come and get some training for real world work. So that's becoming more and more prevalent.

"It's going well for us. But we have to have these dollars if we want to ramp up. The growth demand we are seeing for CareerTech is near 40%. We need to grow. Now we've covered some ground, but ad valorem dollars, which we have relied on as a state, will not cover that. It grows 3% a year. We're going to be waiting a long time if we want to get there, and we'll get behind. So it's going to have to take state injections of cash to make sure that we can ramp up where we need to be to serve that need.

"That's why we have an appropriations request. And those are really good questions. So please ask those questions. It helps on the efficacy process as well as building out a budget. So very, very important questions. Make sure you ask those.

"Any other questions about the appropriations request where it is currently? We'll keep moving forward, and we'll add in input from the field as well and staff members here, and we will bring this back next board meeting, and we'll be ready to talk about it again."

### **3.02 Update and Possible Discussion on the Teach to Teach Apprenticeship – Mr. Max McKnight, Director of Workforce Training.**

Mr. Max McKnight said, "My name is Max McKnight. I'm the director of workforce training at the state agency. That title maybe sounds a little more all-encompassing than it really is, because truly everything we do is workforce training whether it's on the full-time side, the WED side or even down into TAP with the sixth and seventh grade programs. We're all in workforce training. "The divisions I oversee, just as a reminder for some of you and for those who are new, include a group called OkAPEX. That's a bit of an anomaly in our system because the acronym doesn't actually stand for anything. But it's a group of 11 or 12 coordinators across the state who work with business and industry to secure government contracts — state, federal, tribal. Lana Knott oversees that group and does a great job with it.

"I also oversee our Workforce and Economic Development division. That's the team that works with existing businesses in the districts on their training needs. A lot of safety training, customized training for business and industry and adult career development programs — the kind of courses you see in the catalogs from your local tech centers. Lori Broyles oversees that team of regional coordinators. That's also where we have a coordinator embedded in the Department of Commerce. He's actively involved in those big projects, things like Project Goose or other code-named initiatives, where we get the job numbers, pay rates and job descriptions. We build out proposals to provide training. We often partner with higher ed on these projects. For example, maybe engineers aren't part of our piece, but HVAC or production positions are, so we put that into the proposal. That then gets handed off to superintendents and WED directors at the schools.

"Another division I oversee is Strategic Workforce Partnerships. That group works with TANF programs, Jobs for America's Graduates and our Adult Education and Family Literacy programs. At the moment, I'm directly managing that division myself, which has made for an interesting season. Earlier this summer, our AEFL program funding was unexpectedly paused on June 30. We spent about a month in limbo. Tense times and a few sleepless nights until funding was finally released at the end of July. We're now getting those agreements back in place and working through that process while also advertising to fill that manager position.

"Now, on to the main thing I came up here to talk about, apprenticeships. Specifically, our Teaching to Teach Apprenticeship.

"Justin Siler was our manager in this division. He did such a great job that he parlayed it into a position at a technology center. We're trying not to hold that against him. But Justin, along with Joe Cox, apprentice specialist, and Jill Reavis, who oversees all of our ARPA-funded projects, laid much of the groundwork for this initiative.

"This project was funded through ARPA dollars that came via the Oklahoma Workforce Commission. Different agencies applied, including us. We first submitted our application in late February. About a month later, all applicants were rejected and asked to make corrections. We adjusted, resubmitted, and by early May we were notified we'd been awarded \$1.125 million to move forward.

"Our partners on this project are the Workforce Commission and the Regional University System of Oklahoma. That includes East Central, Northeastern, Northwestern, Southeastern, SWOSU and UCO.

"The program provides up to \$10,000 for tuition, books and certification exams for individuals currently employed in a local school district, tech center or early care center who are working toward a teaching degree. Remember: Apprenticeships are earn while you learn. These aren't people looking for jobs; they already have jobs, usually as paras or teachers' aides. They're working while also taking courses at one of the participating universities.

"I'd also like to highlight the cooperation with higher ed here. We often hear that we're in different lanes, but this project is a great example of genuine collaboration. The RUSO universities were all in from the start. They've been great partners and advocates.

"The process moved very quickly. We got agreements finalized at the end of June, had them returned by July 17, and pushed applications out by July 21 with a deadline of Aug. 5. Joe Cox and Jill Reavis reviewed every application. We received 103 applications. No small task, as each was three to four pages long and required sign-offs from the local school district and the university. Of those, we approved 90. Since then, one applicant has taken another job, so we're now at 89 apprentices in this program.

Minutes of the Meeting of the State Board of  
Career and Technology Education  
August 21, 2025

“Joe Cox, being that initial point of contact, has shared a number of emails, phone calls, and things he’s gotten with stories of, ‘This will change my life.’ You know, ‘I was not going to be able to go this semester. Kids and cars and work and all the things... but for this, I wouldn’t be able to keep going.’

“I was at an event in Clinton a week or two ago and got to meet some of those individuals and heard some of those same stories. So when you think about it, it’s not just changing that person’s life, it’s changing the lives of those they will teach.

“We hear the big numbers about emergency certified teachers, but we’re putting more teachers in the pipeline that will be certified and able to teach in our schools. That’s just a quick overview of the program.

“Early on, the director and I were thinking, ‘Man, if we get 40 or 50 of these, that’ll be a big win.’ And now, to end up with 89 going through it — we’ve been in contact with the Workforce Commission. That’s a pretty simple math problem, right? If everybody maxed out their grant, we could use up to \$890,000 of that \$1.125 million. We know we won’t use each one. These are people taking three or six hours. It doesn’t include fees and some of those things, but the Workforce Commission has said they’d be willing to work with us if we need more funds.

“We do intend to carry the project forward into the spring semester as well. That’s the way it was written.”

Mr. Brent Haken said, “Questions you might have for Max? I would just add a little bit. He did a great job covering the program. But for those of you who don’t know, your typical school employee in this situation, someone in an aide-type position who doesn’t yet have a degree but would like to pursue one makes less than \$20,000 a year. They usually don’t have the opportunity to pay for it. Many times, they don’t qualify for federal assistance because of life circumstances where eligibility has passed. If you start your application for Pell or loans and then forgo that opportunity, you can miss your eligibility window. So usually, they have no other choice. If we’re going to support people who will make a difference in classrooms, those aides and paraprofessionals are the ones who will really make a significant impact. It’s a great opportunity, and the team has done a really good job carrying it out. To roll out a grant in May and have students enrolled by August is pretty incredible.

“I’m proud of the team and what they’ve done. It’s a small dent, but it’s still a dent in the number of certified teachers we need. Hopefully, it becomes a model the state can see as successful. It’s a relatively small investment that makes a huge difference. When you think of \$1 million helping 100 people versus a quarter-million given to a vet school to help two large animal vets next year, you see the impact. We can make bigger dents if we spend money where it needs to be spent, and I don’t mind being a little bit better about those things.”

Mr. Leonard McCullough asked, “I had a quick question: Is there a reason it’s not rolled out to OU and OSU?”

Mr. Max McKnight said, “The big reason is the lion’s share of our teachers and teacher training comes through these universities.”

Mr. Brent Haken said “The RUSOs have the largest enrollment in teacher prep programs. It was easier to work with a small group in this pilot. I would hope it could expand to all teacher prep programs in the future, but for such a small grant, really, just \$1 million, it made more sense to hit the target where we could get the most bang for our buck.

“I also want to highlight the teaching-to-teach apprenticeship program. When apprenticeships first came to CareerTech, everybody was afraid we’d lock those down for tech centers. That’s not the case at all. We want to serve the state. None of these students had to go through a tech

center. They could have, but they didn't have to. It doesn't matter. Just like many of our apprenticeships across the state, they don't have to come through us to benefit from the apprenticeship process. We're happy to foster that across the state."

#### **4. MANAGEMENT ACTION ITEMS**

##### **4.01 Discussion and Possible Action on Salary Administration Committee Policy and Procedure Changes – Mr. Brent Haken, State Director of Career and Technology Education.**

Mr. Brent Haken said, "That should be in your packet, and your packet will have highlights in it. Those are the changes that we have made. I want to point out an overview before you start looking through those changes, if you have not already. The purpose of most of this is simply to align with current operations within the agency.

"The salary adjustment committee policy had not been updated for board action No. 1, where you had changed it to say that if it's below a pay band 17, you don't have to be informed of that until quarterly, and I make those decisions. For 17s and above, we come to you. So we need to make that match in here.

"Also the structure of our leadership committee has changed, so we're making sure that is reflected as we are actually proceeding. We made changes to terminology to update positions that we currently have and then also updated the way that the board has made decisions on personnel so it's reflected in here.

"I'd be happy to go through it line by line if you want, but we might have to order lunch in. So look over that and ask questions that you may have. OK, we have a motion and a second for approval of the salary adjustment committee revisions. Is there any discussion?

"I'm taking my time just a minute in case you have something. And always, if you have discussion questions later, please let me know. We can bring those back to light at another board meeting. But I see no discussion."

A vote was taken to approve the Salary Administration Committee Policy and Procedure Changes. The results were as follows:

Motioned by Mr. Michael Brown

Seconded by Ms. Shaelynn Haning

Mr. Seeman, yes

Mr. McCullough, yes

Ms. Haning, yes

Mr. Dillingham, yes

Mr. Brown, yes

Motion carried.

**4.02 Discussion and Possible Action to Amend the Location of the Oklahoma State Board of Career and Technology Education Regular Meeting Scheduled for June 18, 2026 – Mr. Brent Haken, State Director of Career and Technology Education.**

A vote was taken to change the location of the June 18, 2026, meeting to Stillwater. The results were as follows:

Motioned by Mr. Leonard McCullough  
Seconded by Mr. Peter Dillingham

Mr. Brown, yes  
Mr. Dillingham, yes  
Ms. Haning, yes  
Mr. McCullough, yes  
Mr. Seeman, yes

Motion carried.

**4.03 Discussion and Possible Action to Amend the Location of the Oklahoma State Board of Career and Technology Education Regular Meeting Scheduled for July 16, 2026 – Mr. Brent Haken, State Director of Career and Technology Education.**

A vote was taken to change the location of the July 16, 2026, meeting to Stillwater. The results were as follows:

Motioned by Mr. Peter Dillingham  
Seconded by Mr. Leonard McCullough

Mr. Seeman, yes  
Mr. McCullough, yes  
Ms. Haning, yes  
Mr. Dillingham, yes  
Mr. Brown, yes

Motion carried.

**5. NEW BUSINESS**

There was no new business.

**6. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:32 a.m.

Ms. Shaelynn Haning moved to adjourn. Mr. Michael Brown seconded the motion. The motion had the following votes:


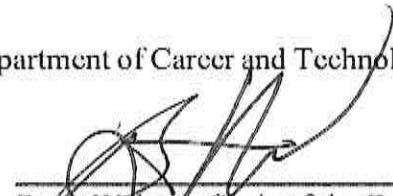
Minutes of the Meeting of the State Board of  
Career and Technology Education  
August 21, 2025

Mr. Seeman, yes  
Mr. McCullough, yes  
Ms. Haning, yes  
Mr. Dillingham, yes  
Mr. Brown, yes

Motion carried.

The next regular meeting of the State Board of Career and Technology Education will be held Thursday, September 18, 2025, at 10:00 a.m. The meeting will be held at Great Plains Technology Center Building, Lawton, Oklahoma.

A copy of the minutes is on file at the Oklahoma Department of Career and Technology Education.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Ashley Rink, Executive Assistant  
to the Career/Tech State Director and  
Secretary of the Career/Tech Board  
\_\_\_\_\_  
~~Ryan Walters, Chair of the Board or~~  
Brent Haken, State Director,  
Ex-Officio Nonvoting Member