

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE
STATE BOARD OF CAREER AND TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION
2500 NORTH LINCOLN BOULEVARD,
OLIVER HODGE BUILDING, ROOM 1-20
OKLAHOMA CITY, OKLAHOMA**

February 19, 2026

The State Board of Career and Technology Education began its regular meeting at 9:10 a.m. Thursday, February 19, 2026, at the Oklahoma State Department of Education, 2500 North Lincoln Boulevard, Oklahoma City, OK, and the meeting was also streamed on YouTube. Notice of the meeting and the final agenda were posted in accordance with the Oklahoma Open Meeting Act. posted prior to 8:59 a.m. on February 18, 2026, in accordance with 25 O.S. § 311(9).

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

- Mr. Lindel Fields, superintendent of public instruction and chair of the board
- Mr. Brent Haken, state director, ex-officio nonvoting member
- Mr. Brian Bobek, Oklahoma City
- Mr. Ryan Deatherage, Kingfisher
- Mr. Randy Gilbert, Tecumseh, entered at 9:15 a.m. during agenda item 2.01
- Mr. Leonard McCullough, Tulsa

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

- Mr. Michael Brown, Lawton
- Mr. Peter Dillingham, Enid
- Ms. Shaelynn Haning, Tulsa
- Mr. Rob Seeman, Morris

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

See Attachment A.

1.01 CALL TO ORDER

Superintendent Fields called the meeting to order at 9:10 a.m. A quorum was not present at that time. The board proceeded with non-action items until a quorum could be established.

1.02 PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE, SALUTE TO THE OKLAHOMA STATE FLAG

AND A MOMENT OF SILENCE

The Pledge of Allegiance, Salute to the Oklahoma State Flag and a moment of silence were led by Superintendent Fields.

1.03 OPENING COMMENTS

Superintendent Fields welcomed those in attendance and stated that the minutes should reflect that a quorum was not present at the time the meeting was called to order. The board proceeded with presentations and items not requiring action.

No action was taken.

1.04 DIRECTOR COMMENTS

The director welcomed those in attendance and noted a strong audience presence.

The director announced the induction of a new class into the Oklahoma CareerTech Hall of Fame: Athena Frank, Donna Metcalf, Virginia Sasser, Billy Scott, Dr. Fred Schultz, Eddie Smith and Ron Vandever. This represents the largest class inducted to date. Information regarding the upcoming Hall of Fame recognition ceremony will be shared with Board members.

The director reported that CareerTech student organization activities are ongoing, including student participation at the state Capitol for various CTSO and Career and Technical Education Month events.

An update was provided regarding the legislative session. The director shared that several bills related to CareerTech have advanced through committee, including legislation addressing accreditation standardization and apprenticeship initiatives. Additional legislative updates will be provided as the session progresses.

No action was taken.

2 Recognitions and Presentations

2.01 GOVERNOR'S PROCLAMATION RECOGNIZING CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION APPRECIATION MONTH FOR FEBRUARY 2026 PRESENTATION WITH POSSIBLE DISCUSSION – MR. TONY CROFF AND MS. BRENNALONG, COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING.

During the presentation of the Governor's Proclamation recognizing February as Career and Technical Education Appreciation Month, Mr. Randy Gilbert entered the meeting at 9:15 a.m., and a quorum was established.

Following the presentation, roll was called at 9:20 a.m., and a quorum was confirmed.

Brenna Long, communications and marketing coordinator, and Tony Croft, multimedia producer, provided an update on the agency's social media and marketing strategy during Career and Technical Education Month.

Ms. Long reported that the strategy focused on building upon prior successful efforts, emphasizing storytelling that highlights students, educators, industry partners, divisions and CareerTech student organizations. Divisions collaborated to share accomplishments and announcements, including recognition of a Teacher of the Year finalist and the election of Michael Cowell to national ACTE leadership.

Mr. Croft presented video initiatives developed to increase awareness of the CareerTech system, including a "Did You Know" social media campaign and a television commercial featuring Director Haken. The videos highlighted workforce training opportunities and student impact statewide. Footage included actual CareerTech students and facilities.

Ms. Long provided social media analytics for February 1–18, reporting more than 25,000 total followers across platforms, more than 22,000 content engagements (an 18% increase from the previous year) and more than 1 million impressions during the reporting period. She noted that average monthly impressions typically exceed 2 million.

Board members expressed appreciation for the presentation and the reported results. No action was taken.

1.05 MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 30, 2026, SPECIAL MEETING

A motion was made by Mr. Leonard McCullough and seconded by Mr. Brian Bobek to approve the minutes of the January 30, 2026, special meeting.

Voting Results:

Mr. Brian Bobek, yes
Mr. Ryan Deatherage, yes
Mr. Randy Gilbert, yes
Mr. Leonard McCullough, yes
Superintendent Fields, yes

Motion carried.

2.02 PRESENTATION AND POSSIBLE DISCUSSION OF WED AND OKPACE INCLUDING PROJECT OVERVIEWS FROM THE 2025 ACTE PACE VISION AWARD WINNERS – MR. MAX MCKNIGHT, DIRECTOR OF WORKFORCE TRAINING; MS. LORI LAUFER, ODCTE; MS. LORI LYONS, METRO

**TECHNOLOGY CENTERS; AND MR. DALE LEWIS, CADDO-KIOWA
TECHNOLOGY CENTER.**

Mr. Max McKnight, Director of Workforce Training, provided an overview of the Workforce and Economic Development division and its programs, which serve adult and postsecondary students. He reviewed responsibilities within the division, including apprenticeships, OkAPEX (assisting businesses in securing government contracts), Strategic Workforce Partnerships, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families initiatives, Adult Education and Family Literacy, Jobs for America's Graduates and Workforce and Economic Development programs. He also noted collaboration with technology centers statewide to provide adult career development and industry training.

Mr. McKnight recognized recipients of the 2025 ACTE PACE Vision Awards, presented at the national ACTE conference. He noted that award recipients first compete at the state level through OkACTE's Postsecondary Adult and Career Education division before advancing to the national level.

Ms. Lori Laufer, regional workforce and economic development coordinator with ODCTE, provided an overview of her professional career within the CareerTech system and her role supporting 10 technology centers in western Oklahoma. She also described her involvement with the PACE professional organization and its professional development activities for postsecondary and adult career education professionals.

Ms. Lori Lyons, workforce development coordinator at Metro Technology Centers, presented her ACTE PACE Innovation Award-winning project. She described the development of an annual fraud prevention conference, created through collaboration with state, federal and local partners. The initiative provides no-cost, hybrid-access education to address emerging fraud trends affecting Oklahoma citizens and businesses. The project includes partnerships with law enforcement, regulatory agencies and financial institutions and serves participants statewide.

Mr. Dale Lewis, industrial coordinator and director of truck driver training at Caddo Kiowa Technology Center, presented his ACTE PACE Award of Excellence-recognized program. He provided an overview of the Southwest Oklahoma Truck Driver Training program, established in approximately 1990 and expanded through regional partnerships with multiple technology centers. He reported that the program trained approximately 250 drivers in the past year and highlighted recent facility and equipment upgrades supported through grant funding. The program operates in collaboration with industry partners to meet regional workforce needs.

Mr. McKnight concluded by recognizing WED partners statewide and noting that similar workforce training initiatives are taking place across Oklahoma technology centers.

Board members expressed congratulations and appreciation to the award recipients and presenters.

No action was taken.

2.03 RECOGNITION OF MS. JOANNE DEWALD FOR 42 YEARS OF DEDICATED SERVICE TO OKLAHOMA CAREERTECH, WITH OPPORTUNITY FOR BOARD COMMENT AND DISCUSSION. – MS. LISA BATCHELDER, CFO.

Ms. Lisa Batchelder, chief financial officer, recognized Ms. Joanne Dewald for 42 years of dedicated service to the Oklahoma Department of Career and Technology Education.

Ms. Batchelder provided an overview of Ms. Dewald's tenure with the agency, noting that she began her career in the Purchasing Division and subsequently served in numerous roles across the agency, including positions within Graphics/Word Processing, Planning, the Multi-State Academic Curriculum Consortium, Strategic Planning and Policy Research, Guidance, Information Management, Workforce and Economic Development and Adult Education and Family Literacy.

Most recently, Ms. Dewald has served in the Finance Division, where she has worked closely with technology center business managers on financial reporting, cost per program reporting, funding formula calculations, revenue reports and budget processes.

Ms. Batchelder noted that during her 42-year tenure, Ms. Dewald served under multiple state directors and contributed to numerous divisions and initiatives throughout the agency.

Ms. Dewald addressed the board and expressed appreciation for the opportunity to serve the agency and the CareerTech system.

Board members expressed appreciation and congratulations for Ms. Dewald's years of service.

No action was taken.

2.04 RECOGNITION OF MS. SHELLEY DAWSON FOR 36 YEARS OF DEDICATED SERVICE TO OKLAHOMA CAREERTECH, WITH OPPORTUNITY FOR BOARD COMMENT AND DISCUSSION. – MS. LANA KNOTT, PROGRAM COORDINATOR.

Ms. Lana Knott recognized Ms. Shelley Dawson for 36 years of dedicated service to the Oklahoma Department of Career and Technology Education.

Ms. Knott provided an overview of Ms. Dawson's career, noting that she began her service with the agency in 1989 and initially worked in the Graphics Department before transitioning to the Oklahoma APEX Accelerator program (formerly OAN), where she has served in multiple roles, including administrative assistant, document specialist, research specialist and program coordinator.

Throughout her tenure, Ms. Dawson supported government contracting initiatives assisting Oklahoma businesses with state, local and federal procurement opportunities.

Her responsibilities included preparation of federal reports, data collection and analysis, conference planning and provision of technical assistance to business and industry partners. Ms. Knott noted Ms. Dawson's long-standing contributions to workforce and economic development efforts across the state.

Ms. Dawson addressed the board and expressed appreciation for the opportunity to serve the CareerTech system.

Board members expressed appreciation and congratulations for Ms. Dawson's years of service and contributions to the agency.

No action was taken.

Superintendent Fields exited the meeting at 9:48 a.m. At that time, a quorum was not present.

3. MANAGEMENT INFORMATION

3.01 DISCUSSION AND REVIEW OF THE STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS- MR. BRENT HAKEN, STATE DIRECTOR OF CAREER AND TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION.

Superintendent Fields reentered the meeting at 9:50 a.m.

Mr. Brent Haken, state director, provided an update on the agency's strategic planning process. He reported that initial key findings have been received and that the process will move into the next phase, which includes a series of meetings with senior staff to review findings, assess implications and determine next steps.

Mr. Haken outlined preliminary themes identified in the report:

- **Agency Quarterback Role:** Findings indicate the agency plays a strong coordinating and enabling role in supporting local schools. Opportunities for strengthening this function were also identified.
- **Expanding the Talent Pipeline:** While K-12 programming remains foundational, findings suggest opportunities to strengthen services for adult learners, including adult career development programs, microcredentials and apprenticeships.
- **Public Perception:** Survey responses indicate continued need to improve public awareness and understanding of CareerTech programs and services statewide.
- **Organizational Capacity and Innovation:** While positive changes in culture and leadership were noted, findings suggest opportunities to accelerate innovation and ensure adequate capacity and alignment within the agency to support expanded initiatives.

Mr. Haken reported that surveys remain open through Feb. 27, and additional analysis will continue over the coming months. He stated that updates will be provided to the board as the process advances.

No action was taken.

**4.01 DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON THE FULL
POSTSECONDARY ACCREDITATION FOR HIGH PLAINS TECHNOLOGY
CENTER SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 24 – MR. JOEY VANEK,
ACCREDITATION MANAGER**

Mr. Joey Vanek, Accreditation Manager, presented the feedback report for High Plains Technology Center in Woodward, Oklahoma, including its sites in Beaver County. The hybrid accreditation review was conducted Oct. 7-9, with a team of 24 examiners interviewing 24 stakeholders.

Key highlights from the report include:

- HPTC plays a vital role in its sending schools, with high participation rates among juniors and seniors, including one school exceeding 95%.
- The HPTC TAP program effectively prepares middle school students for future success.
- Advisory committee members are actively engaged through multiple channels, ensuring meaningful input and collaboration.

During the review, three areas of noncompliance were identified. HPTC submitted a corrective action plan and has since corrected all three areas. No additional corrective actions were identified. The corrective action plan is included at the end of the feedback report. Based on these findings, the Accreditation Division recommended that the board grant full accreditation status to HPTC.

Mr. Holt, superintendent of HPTC, addressed questions regarding the “Not Met” items related to strategic planning and performance review. He clarified that while the items were initially marked as not met, corrective actions were submitted and accepted, and all issues have been resolved. Mr. Vanek confirmed that the report documents both the initial findings and the corrective actions submitted by the school.

Board members acknowledged HPTC’s efforts in expanding access, including the integration of Beaver County into the district and the success of the TAP program. Superintendent Holt highlighted ongoing initiatives to increase student participation, including construction, welding and diesel program expansions, as well as support for students obtaining their CDL licenses and maintaining a 100% LPN pass rate over recent years.

Board members also recognized HPTC for supporting the community during recent first responder events and praised the school for its hospitality and engagement with students and the local community.

A motion was made by Mr. Brian Bobek to approve the full postsecondary accreditation for High Plains Technology Center, as presented. The motion was seconded by Mr. Randy Gilbert.

Voting Results:

Mr. Brian Bobek, yes
Mr. Ryan Deatherage, yes
Mr. Randy Gilbert, yes
Mr. Leonard McCullough, yes
Superintendent Fields, yes

Motion carried.

4.02 DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON THE FULL POSTSECONDARY ACCREDITATION FOR METRO TECHNOLOGY CENTER SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 22 – MR. JOEY VANEK, ACCREDITATION MANAGER.

Mr. Joey Vanek, accreditation manager, presented the feedback report for Metro Technology Centers in Oklahoma City, including the Aviation, Downtown, South Bryant and Springlake campuses. The hybrid accreditation review was conducted October 21–23, 2025. The examiner team consisted of 37 examiners who interviewed 29 stakeholders.

Highlights from the feedback report include:

- The Practical Nursing program retention rate increased from 65% to 95%.
- Quarterly Innovation Hub meetings are hosted and open to all staff, providing consistent opportunities for employee input and process improvement.
- A comprehensive annual program review process is conducted to identify gaps and implement solutions effectively.

Examiners found no areas of noncompliance. The Accreditation Division recommended that the board grant full accreditation status to Metro Technology Centers.

Mr. Aaron Collins, superintendent of Metro Technology Centers, expressed appreciation to the Accreditation Division and staff for their partnership and support during the review process. He highlighted the district's focus on four pillars: students, employees, community and infrastructure. He also recognized Dr. Robin Miller for her assistance in coordinating accreditation efforts.

During board discussion, members inquired about program demand and growth areas. Superintendent Collins highlighted the aviation program and middle school exploratory programming as areas of strong demand and workforce impact. Board members also recognized Metro Technology Centers for its service to the community, including

support for adult education, family literacy and TANF participants to reduce barriers to workforce entry.

Due to a conflict of interest and the absence of a full board membership necessary to take action, a motion was made to table consideration of full accreditation for Metro Technology Centers until the next meeting.

A motion was made by Superintendent Fields to table the agenda item and was seconded by Mr. Ryan Deatherage.

Voting Results:

Mr. Leonard McCullough, yes
Mr. Randy Gilbert, yes
Mr. Ryan Deatherage, yes
Mr. Brian Bobek, yes
Superintendent Fields, yes

Motion carried. Consideration of accreditation will be brought back at the next meeting.

**4.03 DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON THE DIRECTOR'S
PARTICIPATION IN LEADERSHIP OKLAHOMA – MR. BRENT HAKEN,
STATE DIRECTOR OF CAREER AND TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION.**

Director Haken informed the board that he had been invited to participate in Leadership Oklahoma, a statewide leadership development program. He stated that participation would involve a time commitment and financial obligation and requested board approval prior to proceeding.

Board members expressed support for participation, noting the value of representation for CareerTech within statewide leadership initiatives.

A motion was made by Mr. Brian Bobek and seconded by Mr. Ryan Deatherage to approve Director Haken's participation in Leadership Oklahoma.

Voting Results:

Mr. Brian Bobek, yes
Mr. Ryan Deatherage, yes
Mr. Randy Gilbert, yes
Mr. Leonard McCullough, yes
Superintendent Fields, yes

Motion carried.

5 NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business requiring action.

6 ADJOURNMENT

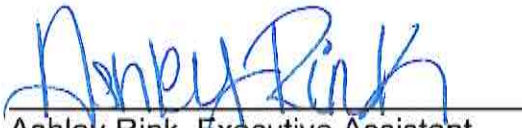
There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:15 a.m.

The next regular meeting of the State Board of Career and Technology Education will be held Thursday, March 26, 2026, at 9:00 a.m. The meeting will be held at the Oklahoma State Department of Education, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

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



Lindel Fields, State Superintendent
of Public Instruction and Chair of the Board



Ashley Rink, Executive Assistant
to the CareerTech State Director and
Secretary of the CareerTech Board