

**SUMMARY MINUTES ARE DRAFT UNTIL APPROVED AT THE NOVEMBER 2025
MEETING**



**CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION (CTE)
ADVISORY COMMITTEE SUMMARY**

MAY 7, 2025

ATTENDANCE: Sen. Jimmy Higdon, Alisher Burikhanov, Beth Engle, Commissioner of Education Robbie Fletcher, Lauren Graves, Cathy Hoehn, Beth Hargis, Hope Harp, Mike Hesketh, Harmony Little, Brian Perry, Chris Smith, Mike Stone, Stacey Thompson, Tom Thompson, Mike Yoder

ABSENT: Bobby McCool, Max Wise, Heather Elder, John Phillips, Mark Martin, Pam Todd, Ana Muse, Janae Allen

Agenda Item: Roll Call

Little confirmed members who were present and noted the absence of a quorum at the start of the meeting.

Agenda Item: Welcome and Introductions

Presenter: Harmony Little, Committee Chair and Executive Director of Credentialing Strategies, Kentucky Community and Technical College System

Summary of Discussion:

Little called the meeting to order at 9 a.m. ET and welcomed the committee.

Agenda Item: Greetings from Commissioner Robbie Fletcher

- **All In for Ag Week:** Fletcher discussed the success of the All In for Ag Week, highlighting the participation of over 67% of counties and the integration of agriculture into daily learning, emphasizing the involvement of entire counties rather than just school districts. He explained how agriculture was integrated into daily learning, with examples such as comparing the digestive systems of humans and various animals to make learning relevant and engaging for students.

- **Freight Box Challenge (Container Clinics):** Fletcher mentioned the Freight Box Challenge, where students at North Hopkins converted freight boxes into medical offices for communities in Liberia, Africa, showcasing the practical application of their learning and the impact on global communities. Fletcher highlighted the hands-on involvement of students in the project, including using nail guns and making structural changes based on community feedback. He noted the pride and ownership students felt in their work and the educational impact of the project, including learning about the history of Liberia, the civil wars, and the differences between their community and Liberia. The project also included teaching trigonometry as part of the construction process.
- **Accountability Framework:** Fletcher mentioned the progress on the next accountability framework, emphasizing the importance of transition readiness and local accountability in career and technical education. He discussed Framework 4.0, the development of the next accountability framework, referred to as Model Framework 4.0, which is moving into the advocacy phase. Fletcher highlighted the significance of transition readiness within the federal accountability model, noting the importance of certifications, dual credit opportunities, and the investment from districts, the state, and the legislature. He explained the focus on local accountability, particularly vibrant learning experiences that are relevant to students, with career and technical education playing a large part in this aspect.
- **Reimagining High School Experience:** Fletcher announced that Kentucky has been invited to participate in the Reimagining the High School Experience initiative, highlighting the state's innovative career and technical programs. Kentucky is one of six states invited to participate in the Reimagining the High School Experience initiative by the National Association for School Boards (NASB), focusing on innovative career and technical programs. The initiative's goals include expanding successful programs, identifying barriers and ensuring all students have access to similar opportunities across the Commonwealth. The involvement of various stakeholders, including the Kentucky United Council, will provide input and collaborate on the initiative's goals and implementation.

Agenda Item: Office of Career and Technical Education (OCTE) Staffing Updates

Presenter: Beth Hargis, Ed.D., Associate Commissioner, Office of Career and Technical Education (OCTE), Kentucky Department of Education

Summary of Discussion:

Hargis shared OCTE staffing updates with the committee and they are as follows:

NEW Staff

- Sarah Johnson—Systems Consultant, Infinite Campus
- Alexa Morrison – Budget Specialist
- Roger Taylor – Engineering Consultant
- Otis Hooper - Director of Army Instruction NCOIC (Non-Commissioned Officer in Charge)
- Douglas McKinney - Military Property Specialist
- David Jackson – Military Property Specialist

Position Changes

- Kelsey Ruble– Fiscal Branch Manager
- Amy Tracy – Data Manager
- Lea Lewis – CTSO Branch Manager
- Nathan Lyttle – Media Arts/Computer Science Consultant/OCTE Marketing
- Coy Hall – Administrative Consultant

Agenda Item: Middle School Guidance for Exploration

Presenter: Beth Hargis, Ed.D., Associate Commissioner, Office of Career and Technical Education (OCTE), Kentucky Department of Education

Summary of Discussion

Hargis discussed the partnership with the Council on Postsecondary Education (CPE) to develop middle school guidance for career exploration, aiming to create a seamless transition to secondary education through a grant. The short-term grant supporting this initiative includes collaboration with four other states with a final deadline in December. The grant is aimed at compiling resources and best practices for middle school career exploration in middle schools to help students start their career pathways early.

Agenda Topic: Good News

Presenter: Beth Hargis, Ed.D., Associate Commissioner, Office of Career and Technical Education (OCTE), Kentucky Department of Education

Summary of Discussion

Hargis discussed All In for Ag and the Container Clinic Fletcher had previously mentioned. She also shared information regarding “Going Pro.” The Department of Education is thankful to partner with the Kentucky Community and Technical College System (KCTCS) to recognize high school students who have secured full-time positions following graduation. The Office of Career and Technical Education supports post-secondary education for all students but understands that it may happen in different ways. Regardless of whether students go to work first or directly to college, there is going to be post-secondary learning. KCTCS started the student recognition initiative last year and asked OCTE to join. OCTE is very thankful for this

opportunity and were able to recognize two students from area technology centers that had secured jobs with Toyota. OCTE is proud because it builds the workforce when a student gets a job while still in high school.

Agenda Topic: New Teacher Institute

Presenter: Chris Smith, Ed.D., Director, New Teacher Institute, Office of Career and Technical Education (OCTE), Kentucky Department of Education

Summary of Discussion:

Smith provided an overview of the New Teacher Institute (NTI), which supports new occupational-based teachers through training, mentorship, and professional learning communities.

- **Program Structure:** Smith outlined the structure of the New Teacher Institute (NTI), which includes a three-day introductory session, regional meetings, professional learning communities (PLCs) and mentorship for new occupational-based teachers.
- **Mentorship:** Smith emphasized the importance of mentorship in the NTI program, with mentor coaches and mentor teachers providing support and guidance to new teachers, helping them navigate classroom management and teaching procedures.
- **Collaboration:** Smith highlighted the collaboration with postsecondary institutions allowing NTI participants to receive college credit for their training, aligning the curriculum with higher education standards.
- **NTI Feedback and Suggestions:** Participants provided feedback and suggestions for improving the NTI program, including sharing best practices, collaborating with post-secondary institutions, and addressing challenges faced by new teachers. Higdon requested consideration to add an initial to the NTI program name to distinguish it from other NTI programs.
 - **Best Practices:** Participants suggested sharing best practices from successful CTE centers and experienced teachers to help new teachers learn effective strategies and techniques.
 - **Collaboration:** Feedback emphasized the importance of collaborating with postsecondary institutions to ensure a smooth transition for students and to share resources and expertise between high schools and colleges.
 - **Challenges:** Participants discussed the challenges faced by new teachers, such as compensation issues, classroom management, and the need for more hands-on training and support to help them succeed in their roles.

Agenda Topic: CTE Virtual Courses:

Presenter: Lauren Graves, Ph.D., Policy Advisor, Office of Career and Technical Education (OCTE), Kentucky Department of Education

Summary of Discussion:

Graves initiated a discussion on the potential benefits and challenges of implementing virtual courses in career and technical education, considering factors such as hands-on learning and Perkins funding requirements.

- **Benefits:** Graves discussed the potential benefits of virtual CTE courses, including increased accessibility for students in remote areas and the ability to offer flexible learning options.
- **Challenges:** Participants raised concerns about the challenges of implementing virtual CTE courses, such as the need for hands-on learning, ensuring high-quality instruction, and meeting Perkins funding requirements.
- **Hybrid Models:** The discussion included the possibility of hybrid models, where theoretical components could be taught virtually, while practical, hands-on training would be conducted in person to ensure comprehensive learning.

Agenda Item: Schedule Fall 2025 Meeting Date

Presenter: Harmony Little, Committee Chair and Executive Director of Credentialing Strategies, Kentucky Community and Technical College System

Summary of Discussion:

A doodle poll or date will be established and will be sent to members to schedule the next meeting for November 2025.

Agenda Item: Reflection and Adjournment

Presenter: Harmony Little, Committee Chair and Executive Director of Credentialing Strategies, Kentucky Community and Technical College System

Summary of Discussion:

- Minutes of the May 2024 meeting and the December 2024 meeting will be placed on the agenda for approval at the next meeting (November 2025).

- **Summer Program Development:** Mike Stone provided an update on the summer program development, including registration numbers, housing arrangements and the keynote speaker for the upcoming conference.

Follow-up tasks:

- **NTI Program Naming:** Higdon requested consideration to add an initial to the NTI program name to distinguish it from other NTI programs.
- **Retiree Work Groups:** Discuss the possibility of creating retiree work groups to inform them about teaching opportunities and the NTI program.
- **Virtual CTE Courses Feedback:** Email additional suggestions or questions regarding the implementation of virtual CTE courses.
- **Fall Meeting Scheduling:** Send out a Doodle poll after the summer to schedule the fall meeting in November 2025.
- **Agenda Item Suggestions:** Send suggestions for agenda items for the next advisory meeting to Hargis.
- **Approval of Minutes:** Determine if the approval of minutes can be done asynchronously via email.

The meeting was adjourned at 10 a.m. by unanimous acclamation.