

Carbon Career & Technical Institute
Joint Operating Committee Minutes

Regular Meeting
October 16, 2025

The Carbon Career & Technical Institute Joint Operating Committee met **Thursday - September 18, 2025** for its Regular meeting. The meeting, held in the dining room of the School, 150 West 13th Street, Jim Thorpe, Pennsylvania, was called to order by the Chairman, Mrs. Renee DeMelfi, at 6:08 PM with the Secretary being present.

	Present	Absent
Mr. Gerald Strubinger, Member	☒	☐
Ms. Heather Neff, Vice-Chairman	☒	☐
Mrs. Alyson Krawchuk-Boschen, Member	☒	☐
Mrs. Renee DeMelfi, Chairman	☒	☐
Mr. Thomas Connors, Member	☒	☐
Mr. David Reinbold, Administrative Director	☒	☐
Ms. Michele Connors, Principal	☒	☐
Mrs. Christine Trovato, Facilitator of Special Education	☒	☐
Mr. Jeffry Deutsch, Bus. Administrator/Treasurer	☒	☐
Mr. Nate Rinda, Director of Technology	☒	☐
Mr. Ken Walters, Supervisor of Bldg. & Grounds	☒	☐
Mrs. Francine Kluck, Adult Education Site Supervisor	☐	☒
Mr. Rich Flacco, Alternate Member	☐	☒
Mr. Sean Gleaves, Alternate Member	☐	☒
Mrs. Erin Snyder, Alternate Member	☐	☒
Mr. Pat Leonzi, Alternate Member	☐	☒
Mr. Kenneth Jacoby, III, Alternate Member	☐	☒
Mr. Jason Moser, Superintendent of Record	☒	☐
Attorney Robert T. Yurchak, Solicitor	☒	☐
Ms. Christina A. Graver, Secretary	☒	☐

Others present: CCTI Students: Gabryelle Barnett, Graphic Design Senior (Lehighton ASD) and Leah Knappenberger, Graphic Design Junior (Palmerton ASD); Members of the Public: Amanda Knappenberger, parent; CCTI Staff: Mark Barthel, Graphic Design Instructor, Henry Woods, School Police Officer; Media: Jim Logue, Times News

The Committee met in Executive Session prior to the meeting to discuss personnel, litigation, and negotiation items.

Approval of Minutes

- A. MOTION by Mr. Strubinger, SECONDED by Ms. Neff to approve the Minutes of the September 18, 2025 Regular Meeting.

VOTE: YES - 5 NO - 0 ABSENT - 0 ABSTENTIONS - 0

Motion carried.

Courtesy of the Floor to Visitors

NONE

Approval of Treasurer's Report (September 2025)

- A. MOTION by Mr. Strubinger, SECONDED by Mr. Connors to approve the Treasurer's Report for September 2025 showing a final balance of \$4,331,658.57 in the General Fund, and \$106,521.46 in the Student Activities Account.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

	Yes	No	Absent	Abstain
Mr. Connors – Weatherly	☒	☐	☐	☐
Mrs. Krawchuk-Boschen – Palmerton	☒	☐	☐	☐
Ms. Neff - Lehighnton	☒	☐	☐	☐
Mr. Strubinger - Jim Thorpe	☒	☐	☐	☐
Mrs. DeMelfi - Panther Valley	☒	☐	☐	☐

Motion carried.

Approval of Payment of Bills

- A. MOTION by Ms. Neff, SECONDED by Mrs. Krawchuk-Boschen to approve Payment of Bills - General Fund and Other Accounts.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

	Yes	No	Absent	Abstain
Mr. Connors – Weatherly	☒	☐	☐	☐
Mrs. Krawchuk-Boschen – Palmerton	☒	☐	☐	☐
Ms. Neff - Lehighnton	☒	☐	☐	☐
Mr. Strubinger - Jim Thorpe	☒	☐	☐	☐
Mrs. DeMelfi - Panther Valley	☒	☐	☐	☐

Motion carried.

Administrative Reports

Mr. Reinbold introduced the following for their individual monthly report:

- A. Director's Report – Mr. David Reinbold, Administrative Director
- a. Mark Barthel, Graphic Design Instructor with students Gabryelle Barnett (Lehighnton ASD Senior) and Leah Knappenberger (Palmerton ASD Junior)
- Longwood Gardens Educational Trip
- On Thursday October 2, 2025 CCTI's Graphic Design Class ventured to Longwood Gardens in Kennett Square, PA. Fifteen (15) students, Instructor Mr. Mark VG Barthel and Facilitator of Special Education, Mrs. Christine Trovato attended the Educational Field Trip.

Each of the students utilized the school's professional DSLR Cameras to take high-resolution photographs which they then use as part of their portfolios. Principles of Photography and Composition were taught prior to the field trip as well as observation and action on-site.

The students and staff had an exceptional time on the trip. On average each student took over 700 photographs throughout the beautiful, historic gardens.

Upon return from the Educational Field Trip, the Graphic Design students were tasked with not only comping and editing their photographs- they then created promotional trifold pamphlets about Longwood Gardens, showcasing their outstanding photography and design skills.

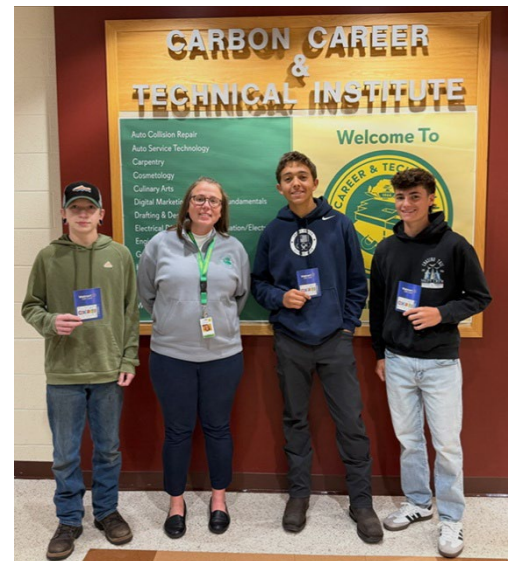
The kids, Mr. Barthel & Mrs. Trovato would like to thank the JOC and everyone who made this field trip possible. It truly was an unforgettable experience and will become a yearly staple Educational Field Trip for the Graphic Design students at CCTI!

Gabryelle and Leah spoke of their experience of both taking photos on the trip as well as editing the photos to the finished products, some of which were shared with the members attending this evening's meeting.

- B. Principal's Report – Ms. Michele Connors, Principal
Ms. Connors shared the following prepared report:

September - National School Attendance Awareness Month

In honor of National School Attendance Awareness Month in September, we held a CCTI Student Attendance Challenge: all students with no unexcused absences received 1 entry into a drawing and all students with perfect attendance received 2 entries into a drawing. At the end of the month, we drew 3 names at random, and the following students won Walmart gift cards: Vincent Cuddeford (10th, Weatherly), Anthony Fister (10th, Panther Valley), and Wyatt Spalding (11th, Palmerton). Additionally, each Monday in September, I emailed our building staff a professional development article/resource related to the importance of positive school attendance. On Fridays, I posted a statistic/fact about the importance of regular school attendance on our CCTI social media pages, and they were also read on the morning announcements. Some of the statistics that were shared included: "absenteeism the first month of school can predict poor attendance throughout the school year. Half the students who miss 2-4 days of school in September go on to miss nearly a month of school" (from the Attendance Works organization) and "research shows that missing 10 percent of the school year, or about 18 days in most school districts, negatively affects a student's academic performance. That's just two days a month and that's known as chronic absence" (also from the Attendance Works organization). Congratulations to our attendance challenge winners (pictured above), and thank you to all of our students, staff, and families for helping us maintain positive school attendance.



October Happenings at CCTI

We are halfway through October, and it has been and continues to be a busy month for our students and staff! Our school guidance counselor, Mr. Colosimo, started recruiting by visiting our sending schools to present on the opportunities available at CCTI as well as the application/admission process. For each visit, he brings along one of our technical area teachers and an outstanding student to assist with the presentations.

In honor of Breast Cancer Awareness Month, many of our technical areas and student organizations are working to raise funds for the American Cancer Society. Our Graphic Design students offered face painting in the cafeteria on October 7th-8th, and our Cosmetology students offered pink makeup, hair, and nail polish on those days as well. On October 27th, our Student Council is planning a pink color run and will also host a school-wide pink out day.

Speaking of “spirit”, in the spirit of autumn and Halloween, DECA is hosting its annual pumpkin decorating contest among the technical areas from October 10th-15th. Judging will take place on October 15th and includes a new category this year - “People’s Choice”, in which guests attending our open house event will have an opportunity to vote for their favorite pumpkin. Additionally, our Student Council is planning a spirit week from October 27th-31st. They are planning some fun dress-down and dress-up days throughout the week, and we’ll have a Halloween walk around on October 31st for students to show off their costumes.

Mr. Reinbold spoke briefly of last evening’s Open House & Car Show with photos from the event displayed.

He also mentioned that the first 5th grade presentation will be tomorrow (10/17) at the Lehigh Area School District. Students will rotate through four technical area stations set up at their school – Drafting and Design Technology, Electrical Distribution and Automation, Automotive Service Technology, and Engineering Technology/Technician and will meet with the Digital Marketing teacher and the Cooperative Education Coordinator with general information about the school. Panther Valley School District presentation will most likely be the week of November 17th with another school possibly in December. All 5 districts will be visited. CCTI continues recruiting through 8th and 9th grade tours, as well.

Mr. Reinbold reminded members that CCTI welcomes and encourages students interested in attending ½ time and will work with the schools to make this happen for those students.

C. Business Administrator’s Report – Mr. Jeffry P. Deutsch, Business Administrator
Mr. Deutsch shared the following prepared report:

- Update on 2026-2027 Budget:
 - IMPORTANT NOTE:
There will be no overall increase in the 2026-2027 CCTI Operating Budget year for the five participating Carbon County school districts.
 - 2026-2027 will mark the 13th consecutive year with no overall increase.
 - Please contact the CCTI Business Administrator, Jeffry Deutsch, with any questions regarding the 2026-2027 Budget.

D. Building and Grounds Report – Mr. Ken Walters, Supervisor of Building and Grounds
Mr. Walters shared the following prepared report:

Capital Plan Updates

A few items are requested to be added to the capital plan in this evening's agenda:
A merchandiser cooler for Marketing and a soda machine for the Restaurant, both currently leased from Pepsi, are being added to the capital plan due to ongoing vendor performance issues. In addition, a combi oven for Culinary was identified for replacement during the recent OAC meeting. Additionally, I will bring forward a motion next month to include a forklift replacement in the capital plan. The existing unit, dating to the early 1990s, has accumulated over 13,000 operating hours and is no longer cost-effective to maintain given the frequency of repairs.

Jim Thorpe Borough Drainage Project

We are currently awaiting the execution of the agreement by Jim Thorpe Borough (JTB) and the Executor. I will continue to provide updates as this process moves forward.

Staff Acknowledgment

I'd like to take a moment to acknowledge Meg Arnold, who has submitted her resignation after 9.5 years of dedicated service as a full-time custodian here at CCTI. Prior to that, Meg also served nearly a year as a substitute before officially joining the team. Meg has been a valued and reliable member of our maintenance staff. Her strong work ethic, attention to detail, and steady presence have played an important role in keeping our facilities safe, clean, and running smoothly for both students and staff. On behalf of the entire district, we sincerely thank Meg for her commitment and years of service. We wish her nothing but the best in whatever comes next.

Mr. Walters then turned the floor over to Meg for a moment to speak.

She briefly thanked everyone, stating that it has been a privilege to work for CCTI all of these years.

Mr. Reinbold described her and her work as "top shelf" – always reliable. He expressed that she will indeed be missed.

- E. Facilitator of Special Education Report – Mrs. Christine Trovato, Facilitator of Special Education
Mrs. Trovato shared the following prepared report:

2025-2026 Special Population Update

CCTI's special population projected numbers are as follows.

Students with IEPs- 84 students

Students with 504 Service Plans- 26 students

Students with Gifted IEPs- 2

ELL students- 3 students

Homeless/Unaccompanied- 3 students

Field Trip Learning & Fun

On Thursday, October 2nd, Graphic Design students attended an educational field trip to Longwood Gardens. Longwood Gardens can be described as a living showcase of landscape design, floral beauty, and garden attractions. Our Graphic Design students had a great time exploring, admiring, and taking pictures of the breathtaking gardens, fountains, **horticultural displays** and each other! Mr. Mark Barthel, CCTI's Graphic Design Instructor has planned for students to edit their pictures and use them for various Graphic Design projects.

English Language Learners and Instructional Strategies

During this month's faculty meeting, staff participated in a presentation titled *Strategies for English Language Learners (ELLs)*. The session highlighted a variety of effective instructional approaches designed to support ELLs in developing language proficiency and accessing academic content. Recommended strategies included the use of visuals and graphic organizers to enhance comprehension, promoting social interaction to build communication skills, incorporating read-alouds and repeated readings to improve fluency, and providing explicit vocabulary instruction with frequent review. Additional techniques such as modeling the final product and offering creative alternatives for assessments were also discussed to ensure equitable opportunities for demonstrating understanding.

Overall, the presentation emphasized the importance of inclusive instructional practices that foster engagement, accessibility, and success for all learners.

McKinney Vento Conference

On October 8, 2025, I attended a McKinney-Vento Conference titled *"Monitoring 2025: Changes and Requirements for Monitoring."* The purpose of the conference was to update Region Seven's Homeless Liaisons on the new monitoring process, review the monitoring guide, and outline the required documentation necessary for compliance with the updated procedures.

Every three years, Pennsylvania school districts participate in a monitoring process to ensure their Homeless Education Programs remain in compliance with the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act. This process also provides quality assurance and helps districts strengthen their support systems for students experiencing homelessness.

Overall, this conference effectively communicated important updates to the new monitoring process and provided clarity on expectations and preparation. The information gained will assist in ensuring CCTI remains fully compliant with McKinney-Vento requirements and continues to provide meaningful support to homeless and foster youth.

F. Technology Report – Mr. Nate Rinda, Director of Technology

Mr. Rinda shared the following prepared report:

- Google Admin Console - Mass updates to 3rd party apps and permissions. Account cleanup and security features reviewed/modified.
- Website - Continued updates and modifications to the website.
- Adult Education - Pearson VUE computer lab updates.
- Open House - Various tech needs through the entire building.
- New staff member technology training/account transitions.
- WiFi - additional wireless access points and mass updates to existing units.
- Continued daily technology support/service - For all of CCTI

Mr. Rinda gave a brief eSports update, as well.

G. Superintendent of Record Report – Mr. Jason Moser, Lehigh Area School District Superintendent

Mr. Moser reflected on the continued budget impasse.

Mr. Reinbold shared that the Occupational Advisory Committee (OAC) meetings were held October 17th. These are meetings where local tradespeople are invited to share advice and information to assist instructors in improving their equipment and areas for our students. Approximately 130 people were in attendance. The meetings were very successful. Graphic Design will most likely be meeting sometime next week as its members were unavailable on the 17th.

Items of Business

Personnel

MOTION by Mr. Connors, SECONDED by Mr. Strubinger that the following motions be approved:

Substitutes Approved

- A. that the below listed individuals be approved to substitute for the 2025-2026 school year at the established rates, as follows:

Amber Everett - Volunteer/Chaperone*
Casey Hill - Van Driver*
Kristen Powis - Tutor**

Note: *through August 2026
** retroactive to October 1, 2025

Part-Time Technology Assistant Substitute Approved

- B. to approve the following individual as a substitute part-time technology assistant (on an as-needed basis) at a rate of \$175.00/day for the 2025-2026 school year:

Corey Rinda

Extra Help Instructors Approved

- C. to appoint the following individuals as Extra Help Instructors in conjunction with the after-school program at \$30 per hour on an as needed/ scheduled basis:

Christopher Bavlinka
Austin Lauchnor
Kristen Powis

Letter of Resignation Accepted

- D. to accept the letter of resignation received from Margaret (Meg) Arnold, Custodian/Maintenance/ Groundskeeper/Cleaner, effective January 2, 2026.

Culinary Arts Instructional Aide Appointment Affirmed

- E. to affirm the appointment of Christopher Bavlinka Culinary Arts Instructional Aide, effective September 22, 2025 at a step 1 salary per the current Agreement between the Carbon Career & Technical Institute (CCTI) Joint Operating Committee and the CCTI Educational Support Personnel Association.

Note: Christopher has over 10 years' experience as owner and operator of a catering company and restaurant. Christopher also has over 10 years' experience as an executive chef for Muhlenberg and Lehigh Universities.

Instructional Aide Mentor Appointed

F. to appoint the following individual as Instructional Aide Mentor at the established pro-rated stipend:

Salvatore LoPresti (Chris Bavlinka, Culinary Arts Instructional Aide)

Building Substitute Approval Affirmed

G. to affirm the approval of the following individual as Building Substitute effective September 22, 2025 through the close of the 2025-2026 school year at the approved daily rate:

Kristen Powis

Note: Kristen has a Bachelor of Science degree in chemistry and has experience as a technical expert in chemistry with St. Luke's University Health Network – Minors Campus.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

	Yes	No	Absent	Abstain
Mr. Connors – Weatherly	☒	☐	☐	☐
Mrs. Krawchuk-Boschen – Palmerton	☒	☐	☐	☐
Ms. Neff - Lehighton	☒	☐	☐	☐
Mr. Strubinger - Jim Thorpe	☒	☐	☐	☐
Mrs. DeMelfi - Panther Valley	☒	☐	☐	☐

Motions carried.

Education

NONE

Budget & Finance

MOTION by Mrs. Krawchuk-Boschen, SECONDED by Ms. Neff that the following morions be approved:

Equipment Items Added

A. to add the following equipment items to the current CCTI Capital Plan:

- Slide Door Refrigerator w/LED Lighting*, \$6,500 – Digital Marketing & Business Fundamentals
- Drop-In Beverage Dispenser w/ Associated Equipment*, \$6,500 – Culinary Arts
- Double-Stack Combi-Oven, \$40,000 – Culinary Arts

Note: *Units will replace contract with Pepsi Co.

Out of County or Charter School Tuition Rates (non-Special Education)

- B. to approve the following out of county or charter school student tuition rates (non-Special Education) for the 2026-2027 school year:

Half Year – Half Day	\$ 5,175	(\$ 57.50 per day)
Half Year – Full Day	\$10,350	(\$115.00 per day)
Full Year – Half Day	\$10,350	(\$ 57.50 per day)
Full Year – Full Day	\$20,700	(\$115.00 per day)

Note: Rates reflect no increase from previous year.

Out of County or Charter School Tuition Rates (Special Education)

- C. to approve the following out of county or charter school student tuition rates (Special Education) for the 2026-2027 school year:

Half Year – Half Day	\$ 6,075	(\$ 67.50 per day)
Half Year – Full Day	\$12,150	(\$135.00 per day)
Full Year – Half Day	\$12,150	(\$ 67.50 per day)
Full Year – Full Day	\$24,300	(\$135.00 per day)

Note: Rates reflect no increase from previous year.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

	Yes	No	Absent	Abstain
Mr. Connors – Weatherly	☒	☐	☐	☐
Mrs. Krawchuk-Boschen – Palmerton	☒	☐	☐	☐
Ms. Neff - Lehighton	☒	☐	☐	☐
Mr. Strubinger - Jim Thorpe	☒	☐	☐	☐
Mrs. DeMelfi - Panther Valley	☒	☐	☐	☐

Motions carried.

Building & Grounds

NONE

Administrative

MOTION by Mr. Connors, SECONDED by Ms. Neff that the following motions be approved:

School Activity/Fundraiser Approved

- A. to approve the following school activity/fundraiser:

Designer Purse Bingo, March 13, 2026 in the CCTI Cafeteria

Note: Snow date of March 20, 2026. Proceeds to benefit all participating CCTI CTSO's (Career & Technical Student Organizations).

Second Reading and Adoption of Policy

B. to approve the second reading and adoption of the following CCTI policies, as presented:

#204 (PUPILS) – Attendance

Reviewed Policy Approved

C. to approve the following reviewed CCTI policies, as presented:

#525 (CLASSIFIED EMPLOYEES) – Dress & Grooming
#526 (CLASSIFIED EMPLOYEES) – Complaint Process
#528 (CLASSIFIED EMPLOYEES) – Salary Determination
#529 (CLASSIFIED EMPLOYEES) – Substitute Compensation
#530 (CLASSIFIED EMPLOYEES) – Overtime
#532 (CLASSIFIED EMPLOYEES) – Working Periods
#534 (CLASSIFIED EMPLOYEES) – Sick Leave
#536 (CLASSIFIED EMPLOYEES) – Personal Necessity Leave
#537 (CLASSIFIED EMPLOYEES) – Vacation
#541 (CLASSIFIED EMPLOYEES) – Benefits for Part-Time Personnel

ROLL CALL VOTE:

	Yes	No	Absent	Abstain
Mr. Connors – Weatherly	☒	☐	☐	☐
Mrs. Krawchuk-Boschen – Palmerton	☒	☐	☐	☐
Ms. Neff - Lehighnton	☒	☐	☐	☐
Mr. Strubinger - Jim Thorpe	☒	☐	☐	☐
Mrs. DeMelfi - Panther Valley	☒	☐	☐	☐

Motions carried.

Agreement Approved

D. MOTION by Ms. Neff SECONDED by Mr. Strubinger to approve the Administrative Director's Agreement, as presented.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

	Yes	No	Absent	Abstain
Mr. Connors – Weatherly	☒	☐	☐	☐
Mrs. Krawchuk-Boschen – Palmerton	☒	☐	☐	☐
Ms. Neff - Lehighnton	☒	☐	☐	☐
Mr. Strubinger - Jim Thorpe	☒	☐	☐	☐
Mrs. DeMelfi - Panther Valley	☒	☐	☐	☐

Motion carried.

Administrative Reports

- A. MOTION by Mrs. Krawchuk-Boschen, SECONDED by Mr. Strubinger to accept Administrative Reports from the following:

- a. Ms. Michele Connors, Principal
- b. Mrs. Christine Trovato, Facilitator of Special Education
- c. Ms. Francine Kluck, Adult Education Site Supervisor

VOTE: YES - 5 NO - 0 ABSENT - 0 ABSTENTIONS - 0

Motion carried.

Old Business

NONE

New and Miscellaneous Business

- A. MOTION by Mrs. Krawchuk-Boschen SECONDED by Mr. Connors to acknowledge receipt of the conference report submitted by Christine Trovato, Facilitator of Special Education after attending the McKinney Vento Workshop October 8, 2025.

VOTE: YES - 5 NO - 0 ABSENT - 0 ABSTENTIONS - 0

Motion carried.

Next Regularly Scheduled Meeting: Thursday – November 20, 2025

Adjournment

Ms. Neff moved, seconded by Mrs. Krawchuk-Boschen, that the meeting adjourn. By unanimous consent, the meeting adjourned at 6:45 PM.

Christina A. Graver
Joint Operating Committee Secretary