



## **Career and Technical Education Committee**

Maine State Board of Education

Meeting Minutes for June 26, 2025

The Career and Technical Education (CTE) Committee held a meeting on June 26, 2025, virtually via Zoom. The following were present: Committee Chair Edmond Morin, Wendy Ault Committee Member, Erica Tompkins State Board Office Specialist, Victoria Cohen State Board Member, Dwight Littlefield, State CTE Director (Department of Education), Melissa Sherwood, CTE Perkins Grant Manager (Department of Education), Shawn Legasse, CTE Data/Program Approval Manager (Department of Education)

Guests: Mercedes Pour, Director of College Access and Secondary Partnerships (Maine Community College System), Joan DeCosta, Academic Program Coordinator (Maine Community College System), Dave Keaton, Executive Director of MACTE, Amanda Peterson, Director, United Technology Center and President of MACTE; Bobby Deetjen, Director, Mid-Coast School of Technology, Kevin Lavoie, Director, St. John Valley Technology Center, Kate Howell, Deputy Director (Educate Maine)

Absent: Paulette Bonneau Committee Member

**I. Call to Order:** Edmond Morin, Committee Chair, called the meeting to order at 10:03 AM under the State Board's remote meeting policy.

**II. Committee Chair Overview:** (*Edmond Morin*) Ed welcomed all members and guests to the meeting and reviewed the agenda.

**III. Adjustment to the Agenda:** (*Edmond Morin*) Ed stated he wanted to add a discussion about the Perkins Reserve Funds and what those funds can cover.

**IV. Acceptance of Minutes:** Motion by Wendy with a possible amendment and seconded by Edmond to accept the minutes of 05/29/2025 with discussion. Wendy stated that she would like to see a reference of the presentation from Kate Howell from Educate Maine. Erica took roll call vote and it was unanimous to accept the minutes with a minor amendment.

**V. Public Comment:** No public comment.

**VI. Standing Reports/Updates:**

## **A: Financial Reports**

**Briggs Trust/Perkins V (Melissa Sherwood):** DOE's CTE Perkins Grant Manager Melissa Sherwood stated that there have not been any changes with the Briggs Fund, it is the same as the last meeting. There has been some work with MACTE contract using Briggs Funds, but they are waiting to hear back from MDOE Procurement.

Melissa stated that Perkins is closing out the 2025 fiscal year as it is almost the end of the 4th quarter at the end of the month. By the next committee meeting or the following one, that quarterly report will be available to present to the State Board. FY. 25 funds are looking good. Schools are spending down their funding well, at a faster rate than previous years, which is great. That's been a huge goal to make sure schools spend down their funds, so they don't lose them because Perkins has a 15 month period of performance grant. They have an additional 3 months to spend down their remaining funds, till the end of September. They are in the middle of FY. 26 Perkins applications in the grant system and most of the secondary CTEs are working hard to get those submitted by July 1, and they're hoping to get those approved by July 15, so that schools can start spending down those funds. As this has been little bit of an abnormal year, estimates from OCTAE from the Feds came later than usual, but those allotments went out as quickly as they could get those applications open. Schools are working hard, it's a busy time of year, and with summer starting, so they appreciate everyone's work on their applications.

Dwight added that Melissa did a great job really getting schools to spend down their funds and that has been a big focus for them. Heading into next year they are zeroing in on how State level funds are being utilized. The goal is to maximize those funds to the best of their ability. The hope is that the more that is learned, the more opportunities may come up.

Melissa stated Last year the State Board decided to use those funds FY. 25 Perkins Reserve funds are also being spent down very well. That's the last year the State Board decided to use those funds for equipment technology supplies for the schools. Schools are using those funds, which is great, and that leads into a discussion on FY. 26 Perkins reserve funds, and how the State Board would like to use those funds this year. The State Board has the same amount as last year, \$400,806 in secondary Perkins Reserve funds, and it is up to the State Board on how they would like to spend those funds.

Ed said that he would like to wait for Paulette before that is discussed but asked about following a notice from ACTE, and advanced CTE, there has been a proposal to move Perkins from the Us. Department of Education to the Department of Labor, and a proposal to eliminate post-secondary Perkins funding.

Melissa stated that that is currently a proposal, so nothing has happened yet, but that it is being monitored. Dwight added that they will continue advocating that neither happens.

## **B: Updates**

**1) State Director's Update:** CTE Director Dwight Littlefield reported that they are currently in a holding pattern right now on the proposals and they are doing as much advocating on those as

they can. They also have been working on the Perkins applications and getting those through as fast as possible as there is a tight timeline. Bonds have gone out and they are working with schools as they start purchasing things with the funds.

Plans have been moving forward with directors and trainings. There has been an agenda put together and it will be different than previous times. It will be open to everyone who wants to stay all day or not. There will be a focus on specific works and in the afternoon, it will be a safety work as they are going to be at the Commerce Center. As that has been a long-standing relationship and they have helped a lot with the schools and staying up on safety. The goal is to take the relationship to the next level in getting several of our school's shape award. There will also be a pick up of the work on chapter 232. That work was interrupted due to COVID and funding but now that things have settled down and funding is there, it is time to work on that again as it has not been updated in 40 years. They will keep everyone posted as they bring that through the stages.

**2) Community College Update:** (Mercedes Pour and Joan DeCosta): Mercedes started with one of her things this summer is working on the credit limit for early college, and she has been getting emails from student services, and it has made things easy to understand. For most students it is 18 credits, but that CTE has 24 credits and they need to perfect it in their system.

Mercedes also stated that everyone has heard that the Appropriations Committee was not able to find room for free college in the upcoming budget. This says that it is clear that the joint work with the CTE schools and CTE students really needs to continue and make sure students can see their paths. That the lack of free college doesn't deter them as there are still Pell Grants. This just re-energizes some of the work they do.

**3) MACTE Director's Update:** (*Dave Keaton*): MACTE Executive Director Dave Keaton reported that this was his last meeting as he is retiring. He wanted to give his perspective from the years he had been in education and what has developed.

First the government created the Carl Perkins Funding. The federal Government changed from vocational education to career and technical education. Maine voters approved the first Maine CTE Bond back in the late nineties which lead to the creation on the Maine Briggs Vocational Endowment. Maine Legislature passed the common calendar which made everyone scratch their heads but we all got through it and made it work. The end of Maine CTE Association. The teachers group that was in the latter part on the 1990's folded. MACTE's name changed from MAVIA but with the vocational drop, so did our name. In that we had a 2 State Tri-State CTE directors collaboration for 3 summers. Melmac began offering Maine CTE Grants instead of just High Schools. Maine CTE funding reimbursement formula changed. CTE bill was approved. MACTE was invited to participate in MDOE Commissioners Education Organization meetings. Maine State School Board Funds, The Rachel Mann Future of CTE Studies happened. Maine

Legislature passed LD 436. Congress passed the Social Security Fairness Act which was a game changer for so many CTE's and educators in Maine. Maine CTE enrollments exceeded 10,000 students. MACTE expanded their excellence awards to recognize more of the contributing folks. That's just what came to mind, and he will miss being a part of CTE and MACTE as it has been a large part of his life.

Ed thanked Dave for all his work and all the information he has been able to provide over the years and he will be missed.

#### **4) Reports from the Field:**

- a) Amanda Peterson, director of United Technology Center in Bangor, reported that there are a bunch of projects happening in the school as it is summertime. She said that there are two more CTE exploratory programs opening up and that the maintenance teams are giving up their space to host these programs. They are moving all their supplies into Connex boxes and sheds to open up their shops for the students.
- b) Kevin Lavoie, Director of the St. John Valley Technology Center reported from SkillsUSA. He reported that they have summer camps in full swing, a boiler system that needs some replacement, some capital improvements and the hiring of staff. He heard that LD 1764 did not make the cut for this year's legislation but hopeful it will make the next session.

**5) Kate Howell (Educate Maine)** Educate Maine's Kate reported that they have been watching a lot of the same things as others in legislation. She also reported that they had 16 CTE based pre apprentices complete the programs in June and all of them received certificates from the State. They will be working with those folks to identify their next steps.

Kate also reported that their annual symposium is still open for proposals for another 2 weeks and it will be held in Bangor this year.

#### **VII. Old Business – none**

**VIII. New Business:** Ed brought up the discussion about the Perkins Reserve Funds and what they might be used for as in the reference guide it states that the Perkins Secondary funds may not be used for course fee or materials and as some directors might have used the funds for those things and how that may affect the CTE budgets.

Dwight Littlefield responded that they have attended trainings and dug into what the Perkins Funds can cover, and it is very specific by program that's the intent of the Federal funds portion of it. The example of a welding instructor that maybe doesn't have a type of certification and it was wanted that the instructor be certified in that extra area, those funds could cover that. This

being that it is specific to the welding program. This is something to consider moving forward is what the State Board wants to do with those grants.

Melissa added that a majority of CTE's do not use their Perkins funds to fund Maine DOE certifications

Amanda Peterson added that they do not use their funds for that, but that flexibility is important. Some use it for that, and others do not. Amanda said she would poll the directors to find out how many are using the Perkins funds for certifications.

There was group discussion on points to think about moving forward on what these funds can be used for and how to make things work for the better of CTE programs.

**This meeting was adjourned at 10:58 A.M.**