

**HARFORD COUNTY**  
**CITIZENS ADVISORY COUNCIL**  
**ON CAREER AND TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION**  
**MINUTES OF MEETING**

**April 30, 2025**

**8:30-10:00 a.m.**

**Attendees:** Joe Connolly, Jeanne Donlick, Matt Johnstone, Shawn Krout, Rob Limpert, Erin Mock, Becky Pensero, Andrew Thomson, Wade Sewell, Katie Eckstein, Savannah Feist, Austin Hill, Erica Bertoli for Mikale Brutus

Mr. Connolly welcomed everyone and convened the meeting at 8:30 AM. Ms. Mock moved, and Mr. Sewell approved the minutes from the March meeting. Mrs. Eckstein motioned, Ms. Feist approved the current meeting's agenda.

**Apprenticeship Update:** Mr. Johnstone shared that we had over 250 students at career fair, with 50+ companies represented. From this event, students are being hired in childcare, from MD Golf & Country Club, etc. Swan Creek provided space in gym and cafeteria, worked well.

There are currently 304 students in apprenticeships, putting us first in the state. NHHS GIS students will present their heatmap work on the 5/19/25 BOE meeting; they have created heatmaps for Cecil, Frederick, and Caroline counties, and will virtually teach Anne Arundel students how to create their own. MSDE's intermediary is surveying apprenticeship students, and we will receive the data next fall. Our newest apprenticeship opportunity is a lab tech position within HCPS, prepping labs for teachers at 3 schools.

**Workforce Investment Update:** Ms. Pensero said that 12-15 students attended HCC spring break events per day, which included virtual career exploration and financial literacy. 126 students participated in the dual enrollment program this year. 71 certificates have been earned, with more once exams are completed. A lottery for next year's students will be conducted once funding is secured.

**HCC Updates:** Dr. Hill shared that the spring semester is wrapping up, and they are preparing for a potential programming expansion, due to additional funding being provided by the county for a workforce training center. They are still trying to hire a new workforce director. Enrollment is strong at the Water's Edge Center, especially in Welding. Automotive classes have been halted by leadership, hopefully returning in 2027.

**MSDE/Perkins Plan Updates:** Mr. Connolly explained that MSDE needs individuals to review and provide feedback on various programs of study to determine industry standards. They are also requiring school systems to provide impact reports by June that provide information on

successful recruitment for underserved populations, successful marketing campaigns, etc.  
Updates required for completer information:

Phase One (SY24-25): Transcript will include CTE endorsement for the completer pathway (passing 3-5 classes in a pathway), which is visible to potential employers.

Phase Two (SY26+): CTE endorsement can be earned through passing two or more program-related courses and earning the IRC or high school-level apprenticeship. The credential will also be on the transcript, but MSDE has not provided guidance yet on what this looks like.

Capstone and Senior Recognition events will take place in May. The PTECH program hosted a signing event last week at HCC for 31 incoming students and their families, where attendees heard from C-COM, HCC, and HCPS leaders, as well as former PTECH graduates. Mr. Connolly and Ms. Kutcher attended an internship debriefing event at APG, with 9 students presenting their projects for HCC, APG, & HCPS leadership.

50 TAM students are taking the ParaPro exam to earn their IRC at HCC on the 30<sup>th</sup> and 1<sup>st</sup>.

**Harford Tech Construction Update:** Ms. Mock explained that on June 21<sup>st</sup>, renovations will begin in the CADD, CAMM, Welding, Culinary, and Sports Med areas. All will be completed by the next school year, except for Culinary. Capital funds will provide new equipment, as many items are outdated, and rooms will be reconfigured to provide larger workspaces. Culinary is projected to be completed by November; the school cafeteria will function in the auxiliary gym during this time. All classrooms will get fresh paint. The entire renovation is expected to be completed by Spring 2027.

Mr. Connolly shared that Dr. Bayne created Six Sigma curriculum modules, implemented at EDHS. They are now available to all our high schools through Canvas. He also presented this information at CTE Department Chair meetings, and 178 students earned the credential.

HCPS grew 7% in North Star graduate outcomes.

Mr. Thomson explained that Project Based Learning will be implemented across all disciplines in middle schools, entering Phase 1 next year. He created curriculum with some of our computer science teachers; professional development is coming to our teachers in June.

The Javascript Rollout for 8<sup>th</sup> grade has gone well this year, with positive teacher response. This program will also get a PBL project, where students will design an app to improve their community. Python 7th grade program has been approved and the curriculum has been written. A Swan Creek teacher successfully piloted this. He is currently working with elementary media specialists on computer science-related curriculum, to start teaching the concepts in elementary school and better prepare them for technology classes in middle and high school.

Mr. Connolly shared that the Child Development Associate Program is in its third year since the program changeover, with three schools doubling up on program certifications. All 6 CMHS students who have taken the CDA exam have passed, with one more student there to take it.

Mrs. Eckstein explained that three high schools to take exams, have observations: ABHS, BAHS, CMHS. She has been working with several offices to figure out some logistics along the way. The exam cost has increased from \$485 to \$525, and we are no longer given vouchers from the state; the CTE department pays the full exam cost. Only two HCPS specialists are currently certified to conduct observations (this is a 4-hour process, with applications time-stamped so that only one can be observed at a time). Students have 6 months to take CDA exam; we need to discuss our policy/practice to ensure that exams are not paid for with students not taking the exam.

This year, 20 students sat for the exam and observation; we expect about 100 students next year, though many may choose an apprenticeship rather than CDA certification. One student apprenticing at Celebree asked for an elementary school internship placement to compare experiences; other students also taking similar initiatives.

Some teachers expressed concerns about PBL curriculum for special needs students. Our 6<sup>th</sup> graders are doing block chain coding currently and will decide what programming looks like over the next few years, once HCPS determines its position on AI.

Mrs. Eckstein expressed that we need to take inventory of what we have been doing and how to share content with students regarding non-traditional enrollments. For example, reorganizing engineering curriculum from math/logical/structured content to caring and nurturing (designing someone's home) to engage middle school girls.

The CTE department is part of a group that is working on how to measure North Star achievement. The committee has teachers at all levels, in all content areas, developing "I Can \_\_\_" statements for measurement standards (Reader, etc.)

Mr. Connolly shared that the Perkins grant application is due May 16th, which includes requests from teachers based on our SMARTIE goals from the Needs Assessment we completed last year. MSDE will review and ask for revisions. Currently, we are still waiting for the final list of approved IRCs from MSDE.

Ms. Feist gave the Erosion & Sediment Control exam to her students, which 69/86 students (80%) completed. Mr. Stevens will give the exam the following week, and that data will be uploaded to the TSA application.

After allowing time for an open forum, Mr. Connolly called for a motion to conclude the meeting. Mr. Limpert motioned; Ms. Feist seconded.