The Heights CareerTech Institute
Meeting Minutes

The School Board of The Heights CareerTech Institute met in regular session on Monday, August 24, 2026 at 5:30 PM

Also present: Kalynn Peters, Deb Mathinos

I. Call to Order – Ms. Wilkinson
Time: 5:31

II. Roll Call

Chuck Ketteman – *present*
Tom Lytton – *present*
Kathryn Kelly – *present*
Penny Wilkinson - *present*

III. Public Comments
None

IV. Executive-Ms. Wilkinson

i. Ms. Wilkinson asked Ms. Peters to share her professional history with the Board.
ii. Recommend approval of the 2026-2027 Instructional Calendar

Motion by Mr. Ketteman, seconded by Mr. Lytton to approve the 2026-2027 Instructional Calendar. The Board reviewed the proposed 2026–2027 instructional calendar and discussed how the calendar relates to the Lee County School District calendar. There being no further discussion, vote was taken and the motion unanimously carried.

iii. Recommend approval of the 2026-2027 Board Meeting Schedule

Motion by Ms. Kelly, seconded by Mr. Ketteman to approve the 2026-2027 Board Meeting Schedule. The Board discussed establishing a regular meeting schedule during the school's first year of operation. Due to the amount of organizational and operational work currently underway, the Board agreed that more frequent meetings would be beneficial during the first several months.

The Board identified the following upcoming meeting dates which will be publicly advertised:

- *September 9, 2026 4:00pm*
- *October 8, 2026 4:00pm*
- *November 19, 2026 4:00pm*

- *December 10, 2026 4:00pm*

The Board also discussed the potential of meeting once a quarter beginning in January 2027, with flexibility to adjust meeting dates as necessary. There being no further discussion, vote was taken and the motion unanimously carried.

iv. The Board reviewed the required governance training. The training is completed online and is approximately four hours in length. Board members discussed the required completion timeframe and agreed to work toward completing the training prior to the September 9, 2026, Board meeting.

v. The Board reviewed the status of the organizational documents and bylaws. It was confirmed that the organizational documents have already been placed in permanent corporate records and no additional action is necessary at this time.

vi. The Board discussed its current membership and future Board composition. The Board currently consists of four members, and discussion was held regarding adding another member to provide additional expertise and support as Heights CareerTech Institute continues to develop. The Board also discussed officer responsibilities, organizational roles, terms, committees, and the distinction between Board officers and corporate officers.

vii. The Board discussed conflict-of-interest requirements and the importance of disclosing relationships or financial interests that could create a potential conflict when conducting Board business. Examples discussed included family members employed by the school and Board members who may have a business or vendor relationship with the school. The Board agreed that a simple conflict-of-interest disclosure form would be beneficial. A sample form will be obtained for future use.

viii. The Board discussed the future development of committees and advisory groups as the organization grows. The bylaws include provisions related to an Executive Committee. The Board discussed developing its committee structure as additional members are added and the governance needs of the organization become more established.

ix. The Board discussed the organizational and financial relationship between Heights CareerTech Institute and the separate entity associated with the school property. It was explained that the building and land are held through a separate entity and that Heights CareerTech Institute operates under a long-term lease arrangement. The Board discussed how the lease and related obligations will be reflected in the school's financial statements.

x. Recommend approval of the revised 26-27 Budget.
Motion by Mr. Lytton, seconded by Ms. Kelly to approve the Revised 26-27 Budget. The Board reviewed the revised 2026–2027 budget and discussed projected revenue, enrollment assumptions, operating expenses, fundraising, reserves, and the financial

ramp-up anticipated during the school's first several years. Discussion focused on closely monitoring the school's financial position as enrollment and programs increase. The Board emphasized the importance of comparing actual revenues and expenditures against budget projections. The Board also discussed changing and unanticipated expenses, including potential campus security/law-enforcement costs, and the impact these expenses could have on the operating budget.The Board further discussed the importance of receiving regular financial statements and budget-to-actual reports. At a minimum, quarterly balance sheets and income statements were recommended, with the possibility of more frequent reporting during the school's initial months of operation. There being no further discussion, vote was taken and the motion unanimously carried.

xi. The Board discussed expenditures related to furnishing and equipping the instructional labs. Separate budgets were established for specialty lab equipment, and it was reported that purchases in each area have remained under budget, with some areas coming in significantly under budget. Donations of equipment have also resulted in savings compared with the original equipment projections.

xii. The Board discussed policies that will require future review and approval, including whistleblower and other governance-related policies. Applicable Lee County School District policies are being reviewed and used as a reference for policies needed by Heights CareerTech Institute. Required policies will be brought before the Board for future consideration and approval.

xiii. The Board discussed the timing of a future search for permanent campus leadership. The immediate priority is to successfully open the school, get all programs operational, transition staff and students into the facility, and complete the majority of remaining facility items. Once school operations are established, the Board will revisit the permanent leadership search and further define the qualifications and experience needed for the position.

V. Acting Campus Director Report – Ms. Peters

i. The Acting Campus Director provided an update on school operations, programs, and enrollment. Current enrollment was reported at 59 students, including 13 students enrolled in the Practical Nursing program. The Practical Nursing program remains pending final approval from the appropriate nursing authority. Minor revisions had recently been received and were expected to be addressed and returned by the end of the week. The Board was also updated regarding a change to the instructional program schedule. Due to student interest, Professional Culinary Arts was added with a planned

start date of August 31, 2026. Fundamentals of Food Service will remain available as a future cohort, anticipated to begin in February 2027.

ii. Student Services continues to work with prospective and enrolled students on testing, enrollment, and admissions activities. The school has conducted outreach to local high schools throughout the surrounding area. Presentations have been scheduled, and opportunities are being developed for prospective students and high-school representatives to tour Heights CareerTech Institute.

iii. The Board received an update regarding the school's Master School Identification number (MSID). The required information has been submitted to the Florida Department of Education, and the school is awaiting issuance of the number. Until the MSID is issued, Heights CareerTech Institute is unable to obtain full access to the district's Focus student information system and certain other required systems. As a result, attendance for the Electrician program is currently being documented manually until system access becomes available.

iv. The Board received an update regarding the school's industry accreditations and affiliations. Heights CareerTech Institute has received recognition through the National Center for Construction Education and Research (NCCER). The school is also affiliated with the American Boat & Yacht Council (ABYC) and the National Health Career Association (NHA). Staff have also begun preparing documentation required for future accreditation through the Council on Occupational Education (COE). Preparation is beginning early so that the required documentation can be submitted once the school reaches the applicable eligibility timeframe.

v. The Board received an update on staffing. The majority of positions necessary to begin school operations have been filled, with the remaining café/food-service staffing needs still being addressed. Required fingerprinting and personnel compliance requirements were also discussed.

VI. Additional Board Discussion – Ms. Wilkinson

i. The Board discussed the importance of developing relationships with local employers and community organizations to support student scholarships, recruitment, workforce development, job placement, and fundraising. A recent meeting with Shell Point was discussed. Potential opportunities include scholarships for employees interested in attending Heights CareerTech Institute, creating a workforce pipeline, and exploring collaborative fundraising opportunities. The Board also discussed the potential for additional partnerships with local businesses, private clubs, and other organizations interested in supporting students and workforce development.

VII. Action Items and Follow-Up – Ms. Wilkinson

i. The Board identified several items for follow-up:

- Complete required Board governance training prior to the September meeting.
- Continue identifying potential Board members.
- Obtain or develop a conflict-of-interest disclosure form.
- Present required governance policies to the Board for future approval.
- Continue monitoring the revised 2026–2027 budget, operating reserves, fundraising, and budget-to-actual performance.
- Establish regular financial reporting for the Board.
- Continue follow-up regarding the school's MSID and Focus access.
- Complete and submit requested Practical Nursing program revisions.
- Continue preparation for future COE accreditation.
- Continue student testing, recruitment, high-school outreach, and campus tours.
- Continue developing employer, scholarship, and community partnerships.
- Revisit the permanent campus leadership search once school operations are fully established.

VIII. Adjournment

Motion by Mr. Lytton, seconded by Ms. Kelly to adjourn the Board meeting. There being no discussion, vote was taken, the motion unanimously carried and the meeting adjourned at 6:47 pm.

Next regular meeting of the School Board – Wednesday, September 9, 2026 at 4:00 pm.