

**GREATER LAWRENCE TECHNICAL SCHOOL**  
**57 River Road, Andover, Massachusetts 01810**

**PROGRAM ADVISORY COMMITTEE**  
**MEETING MINUTES**  
**November 4, 2021**

The last Greater Lawrence Technical School Program Advisory Committee meeting was held on November 4, 2021, at Greater Lawrence Technical School via Zoom.

*The following members were in attendance:*

<b>Facilitator:</b> Colleen Moran	<b>CTE Program:</b> Information Technology
<b>Recorder:</b> Fatma Ekim / Mark Evans	
<b>Materials Manager:</b> Colleen Moran	
<b>Dialogue Monitor:</b> Charlie Chandler	
<b>Timekeeper:</b> Charlie Chandler	
<b>Faculty Present</b>	
Colleen Moran	
Charles Chandler	
Mark Evans	
Fatma Ekim	
<b>Advisors Present</b>	<b>Name of Business / Population Represented</b>
Jay Termini	Northern Essex Community College
Adolfo Acevedo	Glidefast Consulting
Chris Meehan	Northern Essex Community College
Michael Walsh	Neutral Physics Corporation
Yori Kasprzak	Brandywinetech.com (President)
Jo Ann Brothers	Xfinity
Chris Perez	Father of Student and IT Rep - Works in IT
<b>Guest Present</b>	
Lisette Perez	Senior Student
Alessia Barbara	Senior Student

**Agenda Item #1: Call to Order**

- a. Welcome/Introductions

**Status report:** Mr. Termini called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

**Agenda Item #2 Verification of committee members' contact information, phone numbers, and emails.**

- a. Please verify the e-mail address for each member.
- b. Please distribute and collect information sheets for new members and members with pending paperwork. Please return the paperwork to Sue Ouellette.
- c. Solicit representation for all **representative populations** listed on the Program Advisory membership forms.

**Status Report:**

- a. Email Addresses have been verified for each member.
- b. All paperwork from present members has been obtained.
- c. Confirmed that Chris Meehan and Jay Termini are part of a union.

**REPORT OF OLD BUSINESS**

**Agenda Item #3: Minutes**

- a. Review minutes from the last advisory meeting, and voice comments, questions, or concerns (Minutes are posted on the GLTS website).
- b. Solicit a motion to approve minutes, 2<sup>ND</sup> the motion.

**Status Report:**

- a. Advisory board members shared how COVID-19 affected their workforce.
- b. Solicit a motion to approve minutes, 2<sup>ND</sup> the motion.

**Recommendation:** A recap of the previous minutes was held and a motion to accept the meeting minutes from April, 2021 was made.

**Motion:** Jay Termini made a motion to approve minutes from April of 2021

**2ND:** Chris Perez 2nd the motion.

**Vote:** Unanimous

**NEW BUSINESS**

**Agenda Item #4: CTE Program Facilities Review**

- a. **Discuss shop facilities and equipment.**
  - i. Update advisory board on the progress and response to previous recommendations..
  - ii. Considering the impact of the Pandemic on the Industry and workspaces, please share how the industry has adapted to meet the current safety guidelines and standards.  
Have day-to-day operations changed?  
Are there any operational adjustments that GLTS should consider implementing?

- a. **Discuss shop facilities and equipment.**

- i. Update provided on previous recommendations.
  1. GLTS IT shop ended up heavily using VMs during the pandemic. In Colleen's class, some VMs don't work correctly either resetting or other technical issues. This causes an issue because students have trouble working on it at night or on the weekends.
  2. Charlie needs new computers to create a sandbox for cyber security and virus interaction. He is having more hands-on activities and students appreciate it. He will have senior students practice batch file programming because they haven't practiced it since 9th grade.
  
- ii. Industry practices in response to the Pandemic.
  1. Day-to-Day Operations:
    - a. Colleen: Everything is great.
    - b. Charlie: Waiting for the internal networking to be completed in his house. The CompTia labs are great so that students can work from home. In the past, CompTia moved away from using server builds to online labs that are self-graded.
    - c. Mark: Back to normal as students are able to build their PCs, install operating systems and create VMs. The students schedule has changed where Sophomore and Freshman have more concentrated time.
    - d. Fatma created more video tutorials that she uploaded to YouTube.

Advisory Members responses to Day-to-Day Operations

Have day-to-day operations changed? Are there any operational adjustments that GLTS should consider implementing?

1. Michael Walsh company now has 80% of his personnel work in the office and 20% remote.
2. Adolfo works for a consulting organization where 80% of his co-workers work remotely.
3. Yori shared the impact of Covid on his business. Specifically, how Covid actually resulted in more business for this company. Care was taken to wear masks for customers that requested it, but overall Covid didn't reduce IT requests for cabling and other computer system setups.
4. Jo Ann changed her role at work. In Comcast, they are piloting WFH. 20k people started working from home within 3 weeks. Most start to WFH permanently now. One of the challenges that come with WFH is engaging employees. It also changed the hiring process. The distance is no longer an obstacle. Other challenges are employee's home Internet connections.
5. Impact on Students: Alessia stated that Covid's impact on students resulted in them having a very hard time connecting with each other when remote. The social emotional impact was the largest effect on students. Lisette confirmed this as well. Lisette said that the social interaction was limited and the lack of hands-on material was challenging. Grades in the shop were also lower. Lisette noted that students are still getting used to the old way of in-person learning but this is happening slowly.
6. Impact on College Students: Chris said their college students' experiences were similar to high school. He said that the majority of the students prefer to be in person because it is more effective.
7. Jay confirmed what Chris said. Jay said the school wanted to target the students with as much face to face interaction. Jay noted many students did come back, but many opted to not take classes until Covid "ended".

Enrollment this year seems fine. Some students take online only because they have to. 90% of students prefer face to face.

2. Physical Layout.

- a. Charlie's room: 2 power cables from the ceiling so students can connect from the ceiling. Issue is students getting caught up in the cables. Ventilation is still needed in the networking room. Still gets too hot.
- b. Mark: needs to have ethernet connections for his computers so we don't have to rely on the WIFI
- c. Move PCs and network access for computers onto the table near Mark's room. Need new network access points for these.
- d. Yori asked the question about letting students run data/cable lines. Colleen and Mark explained that students in co-op get that opportunity to run cables in the school.

3. Tools and Supplies:

- a. Mark noticed a huge price increase in the cost of CPUs and GPUs. We need to replace broken/faulty processors and Graphics cards. He would like to order more RAM sticks to increase performance.
- b. If the VM is not working, Colleen will need new PCs.

3. Alessia took a help desk course from NECC and it really helped her working in the ticket system and customer service.

**Recommendations:** Jay and the other members agreed that the discussed facility / layout and hardware/tools changes should be implemented.

**Motion:** Alessa made the motion to make the needed facility changes and layout changes.

**2nd Motion:** Adolfo 2nded the motion

**Vote:** Unanimous

**Agenda Item #5:(FALL ONLY) Reviewing Proposed Budget for the upcoming school year (SY22/23):**

**a. Review SY21/22 Budget**

- i. Review Spring Minutes and Proposed Department Budget (for SY21/22) Is the proposed budget for FY22/23 budget inclusive of equipment and supplies recommended by the Advisory Program Committee at the last Advisory meeting?

**Status Report:**

1. Reviewed the budget
  - a. Charlie continues to need certification vouchers, labs and more cables and certs and some computers.
  - b. Colleen and Fatma need certifications and a stable VM environment.
  - c. Mark needs certifications, labs and more hardware for computer building.

**Recommendations:** Add "Service Now" training and certification for help desk support.

**Motion:** Jay made a motion to accept the budget

**2nd Motion:** Alessia seconded the motion

**Vote:** unanimous vote (voted carried)

**Agenda Item #6: Curriculum**

- a. Is there any new technology or techniques that we should be teaching our students?
- b. Are there any additional certifications that are valuable for students to have in the Industry?

**Status Report:**

- a. The IT shop is continuing to look for additional technologies to include in our curriculum.
- b. Teaching students how to use Ticketing Systems is needed.
- c. Free Javascript Development environment for an open source ticketing systems - <https://developer.servicenow.com/dev.do>
- d. Service Now Certifications - how much does that cost? Need to discuss how we add that into our curriculum based on team frameworks.

**Recommendations:** Adolfo recommended that our students learn help desk & ticketing systems. Adolfo is a former student and loves our program of studies.

Mr. Meehan found free ticketing systems that are open source - he found 41 open source systems that our students can modify (ex: <https://www.predictiveanalyticstoday.com/top-free-open-source-helpdesk-software/>). Adolfo agrees as it would open up more job opportunities.

Mr. Perez agrees. Suggested: Servicenow - <https://www.servicenow.com/services/training-and-certification.html>

Link to the free developer environment: [developer.servicenow.com](https://developer.servicenow.com). Work toward JavaScript programming strengths.

**Motion:** Alessia made the motion to make adjustments to the curriculum to include more help desk training and including soft skill training.

**2nd Motion:** Adolfo 2nded the motion

**Vote:** Motion carried.

**Agenda Item #7: Cooperative Education/Industry Trends**

1. In thinking about recent and/or new hires at your company or in your industry, what are the skills they are lacking?
2. What is your biggest challenge when hiring new employees?
3. What skills are essential for new hires at your company/in your industry?
4. Have you hired any of our students (coop or recent grads) and if so, what are their strengths and what skills/understandings are they lacking?
5. What should we be doing as teachers to help our students be prepared to be successful at your company and/or in our industry?
6. What other companies in your industry can we partner with to place our students on Coop?

**Status Report:**

1. None of the Advisory members has hired any of our students into a co-op job.
2. Softs skills are still a weakness (nearly unanimous) and Covid caused people to lose a sense of schedules and commitment to work times.
3. Mr. Acevedo said it is hard to find people with solid programming skills. Mr. Perez said he is looking for MAC technicians and it is a skill that is difficult to find.

4. Mr. Kasprzak said interviewing skills are very important. Student attitude should be to sell themselves. He loves gamers as they have critical thinking skills. Young people need to set expectations and understand they need to understand entry level work.
5. Mr. Kasprzak is looking for the “Show me what you have done” projects. Students who can show what they have done have better marketable skills and are more impressive in an interview. Chris Meehan confirmed what Mr. Kasprzak said and agreed that projects are what matter.
6. The overall message is interview skills and soft skills, critical thinking, problem solving & show me projects are the big topics companies care about.
7. Mr. Perez said students need to know how to use public transportation. Perhaps field trips to Boston or Cambridge to learn how to use the systems. This is huge as Cambridge and Boston are in need of talented students.  
Look at the [Year Up program](#) - Students learn for free. It offers a stipend and internship. The age limit is 18 to 26 years old.

**Recommendations:** Educate heavily in soft skills, critical thinking, problem solving & help desk skills and teach our students how to use public transportation.

**Motion:** Mr. Meehan made a motion to accept the recommendation

**2nd Motion:** Adolfo 2nded the motion

**Vote:** Motion was carried

#### **Agenda Item #8: Elect Advisory Chair:**

- The General Advisory Meeting will take place in January, 2022 at 5 pm.
- Are there any nominations for the Program Advisory Chair for the 2021-2022 school year (take nominations)?
- All those in favor?

#### **Status Report:**

- A. Mr. Meehan offered to become the new Program Advisory Chair

**Recommendations:** Chris Meehan to be the new Chair.

**Motion:** Adolfo made the motion

**2nd Motion:** Jo Ann 2nded the motion

**Vote:** Motion Carried

#### **Agenda Item #9: 5 Year Strategic Plan**

GLTS will be looking at creating a 5-year strategic plan for the school. We would like you to consider the following for the program:

- What is the future of the industry and job outlook? (5 years, 10 years)
- Is there new technology/equipment that we should be looking at or investing in?
- Will the industry be sustainable in its current practices or will we need to expand for future industry trends? (Ex- New charging bays/stations for electric cars)

#### **Status Report:**

Invest in MAC training - Software, OS, imaging, MS Office on the MAC, troubleshooting, etc.

Linux OS Knowledge

Skills, Help Desk & Customer Service

**Recommendations:** Investing in MAC Software, OS and basic troubleshooting

**Motion:** Adolfo put forward the motion

**2nd Motion:** Alessia 2nded the motion

**Vote:** Motion Carried

**ADJOURNMENT** at 7:30 PM.

**Motion:** Alessia motioned to adjourn

**2<sup>ND</sup>:** Chris Meehan 2nded the motion

**VOTE:** Unanimous

Next Meeting: April 28, 2022

Respectfully Submitted: Colleen Moran