



Minutes of the January 21, 2025 Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees of Community College District 535

The 806th meeting of the Board of Trustees of Community College District 535 was conducted on January 21, 2025 at the Des Plaines campus of Oakton College, 1600 East Golf Road, Des Plaines, Illinois.

Closed Session – Call to Order and Roll Call

Vice Chair Burns called the meeting to order at 5:26 p.m. in room 1502. Trustee Stafford called the roll:

Trustee Marie Lynn Toussaint	Chair	Absent
Trustee Martha Burns	Vice Chair	Present
Trustee Theresa Bashiri-Remetio	Secretary	Absent
Trustee Gail Bush		Present
Trustee Benjamin Salzberg		Present
Trustee William Stafford		Present
Trustee Wendy Yanow		Present
Trustee Franklin Ocaña	Student Trustee	Present

Also present in room 1502 were Dr. Joianne Smith, President; Johanna Fine, Chief Human Resources Officer; Dr. Ashley Knight, Interim Vice President for Student Affairs; Dr. Ileo Lott, Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs; and Michele Roberts, Vice President for Administrative Affairs.

Vice Chair Burns asked for a motion to go into closed session under the exceptions to the Illinois Open Meetings Act, with the purpose of reviewing closed session minutes of December 10, 2024; and considering the appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance or dismissal of specific employees, collective negotiating matters, and pending litigation.

Trustee Salzberg made the motion, seconded by Trustee Stafford. Trustee Stafford called the roll:

Trustee Burns	Aye
Trustee Bush	Aye
Trustee Salzberg	Aye
Trustee Stafford	Aye
Trustee Yanow	Aye
Trustee Ocaña	Aye

At 5:40 p.m., Trustee Burns made a motion to adjourn the closed session meeting which was seconded by Trustee Salzberg. A voice vote was called and the closed session was adjourned.

Open Session – Call to Order and Roll Call

Vice Chair Burns called the regular meeting of the Board of Trustees to order at 6:02 p.m. in room 1506.

Trustee Bashiri-Remetio called the roll:

Trustee Marie Lynn Toussaint	Chair	Absent
Trustee Martha Burns	Vice Chair	Present
Trustee Theresa Bashiri-Remetio	Secretary	Present
Trustee Gail Bush		Present
Trustee Benjamin Salzberg		Present
Trustee William Stafford		Present
Trustee Wendy Yanow		Present
Trustee Franklin Ocaña	Student Trustee	Present

Also present in room 1506:

Leadership: Dr. Joianne Smith, President; Johanna Fine, Chief Human Resources Officer; Dr. Ashley Knight, Interim Vice President for Student Affairs; Dr. Ileo Lott, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs; Michele Roberts, Vice President for Administrative Affairs; and Katherine Sawyer, Chief Advancement Officer.

Administrators: May Alimboyoguen, Dean of Health Careers; Robyn Bailey, Director of Operations and Administration/Dean of Skokie Campus; Marc Battista, Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs; Dr. Matthew Boutilier, Director of Online Curriculum and Instruction; Steve Butera, Director of Communications and External Relations; Dr. Sebastian Contreras Jr., Assistant Vice President for Student Affairs/Dean of Student Success; Dr. Rick Daniels, Director of Institutional Equity and Inclusion; Sarah George, Associate Chief Information Officer; Tom Hicks Jr., Acting Director of Student Learning and Engagement; Dr. Ruben Howard II, Dean of Business and Career Technologies; Matt Huber, Dean of Enrollment Management; Dr. Jesse Ivory, Assistant Vice President of Workforce Innovation and College Partnerships; Jake Jeremiah, Dean of Library; Dr. Andrea Lehmacher, Director of Marketing; Dr. Alauna McGee, Assistant Vice President for Academic Affairs and College Transitions; Dr. Kanchana Mendes, Dean of Curriculum and Assessment; Christine Paciero, Director of Athletics; Dr. Jim Rabchuk, Dean of STEM; Delia Rodriguez, Dean of Adult and Continuing Education; Joseph Scifo, Director of Facilities; John Wade, Director of Systems and Network Services; Aaron Wernick, Chief of Campus Police and Emergency Management; Ella Whitehead, Assistant Director of Enrollment for Equity Outreach; and Andy Williams, Controller.

Union Leaders: Jennifer Crowley, Classified Staff Association; Mary Hope Griffin, Adjunct Faculty Association; Suzanne Ziegenhorn, Full-Time Faculty Association.

Faculty: Keenan Andrews, Business; Tracy Fulce, Management and Marketing; Ashley Jackson, Paralegal Studies; Zoran Miodragovic, Chemistry; Kayla Mitchell, Economics; Naga Potluri, Mathematics; and Prashant Rawal, Accounting.

Staff: Mindy Finnigan, Human Resources; Ernest Gest, Facilities; Kelsey Kapolnek, Marketing and Communications; Amanda Krause, Facilities; Mike Loveday, Marketing and Communications; Ewa Lyczewska, Marketing and Communications; Vinita Shah, Media Services; Beatriz Sparks, Office of the President; and Terrance Stevenson, Emory Williams Academy.

Students: Marga Martinez.

Guests: Michele Hays, Danielle Norman and Nathan Norman.

Pledge of Allegiance – Trustee Bashiri-Remetio led the pledge.

Land Acknowledgment – Trustee Bush read the Land Acknowledgment.

Approval of Minutes

Vice Chair Burns asked a motion for the approval of the minutes of the December 10, 2024 regular meeting of the Board of Trustees. Trustee Stafford made the motion. Trustee Yanow seconded the motion. A voice vote was called and the minutes were unanimously approved.

Statement by the President

Condolences

- To the family of adjunct faculty member Julie Pardun who passed away on Jan. 10.
- To Beatriz Sparks, Special Assistant to the Board, on the passing of her father-in-law, Raymond Sparks, on Jan. 19.

Congratulations

- To Director of Major and Planned Giving, Jessi Moon who welcomed baby boy Ezra on Dec. 26.
- The Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE) recognized Oakton College as one of 371 institutions with valid STARS ratings worldwide. The Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System (STARS) is a transparent, self-reporting framework for colleges and universities to measure their sustainability performance. President Smith recognized Naturalist Amanda Krause, Director of Facilities Joe Scifo and student employee Marga Martinez for their efforts in helping Oakton earn this recognition. Former sustainability specialist, Charmaine Johns was also instrumental in this effort.

Athletic Recognitions

- The Oakton College women's basketball team continues to be undefeated. Their hard work and determination earned them the No. 22 ranking in the national NJCAA Division II poll.

Happenings

- Thank you to everyone who helped with our Spring 2025 Opening Day kick-off on Jan. 6. The spring semester started on Jan 13.
- The "Up to the Challenge" art exhibition runs through Jan. 27 at the Koehline Museum. It features art produced during the Great Depression and World War II.
- The College was closed yesterday in observance of Martin Luther King Jr. Day. The Black Student Success Program hosted "MLK Art and Activism" in the CCID at the Des Plaines Campus and tomorrow at the Skokie Campus.
- The College's Black History Month programming will begin on January 30. The B.L.A.C.K. Student Success Program and the Oakton Library will host Black History Month book discussion series featuring "The Negro Baseball Leagues: Tales of Umpiring Legendary Players, Breaking Barriers, and Making American History" by Byron Motley. It will conclude with a film screening of the League on February 27.
- President Smith closed her remarks by sharing a quote by Martin Luther King Jr: "The arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends toward justice." Let us continue to work toward that justice.

Educational Foundation Liaison Report

Trustee Stafford shared that the Educational Foundation has raised over \$1 million with a strong response to the end of year appeal campaign which has increased over 20% from last year.

Latest gifts include a \$1,000 donation for the general scholarship fund, a \$500 donation toward the Caring Closet from Professor Michael Farquhar, \$5,000 from the Women's Club in Evanston to establish a new scholarship to support tuition, books and fees for students enrolled in the Early Childhood Education program, and a \$2,500 donation toward the general scholarship endowment from Dr. Jane Wilson.

The Educational Foundation's quarterly meeting will be on March 5.

Student Trustee Report

Student Trustee Ocaña shared that the SGA team had the opportunity to meet Chief of Police, Aaron Wernick. The spring semester started, and Welcome Weeks were sponsored and facilitated by the Office of Student Life and the Campus Activities Board. SGA is meeting bi-weekly on Wednesdays and they will be supporting the basketball teams on their current success. Monetary prize for the essay scholarship contest has been increased, and Student Trustee Ocaña encouraged students to participate by sharing how community college has changed their lives.

Student Spotlight

Marga Martinez is an international student working on an associate's degree in Facilities Management and Engineering at Oakton. She works part-time as a peer advisor for the Office of the Advising, and as a sustainability researcher for the maintenance office. Marga finished her Bachelor's degree in business in the Philippines in the year 2008.

Marga grew up in a business-oriented family where it was encouraged to continue growing the business, and she even started her own company while pursuing her education goals. She took some short courses that would complement her business degree while engaging in dragon boating as a hobby.

Marga left the Philippines due to the political climate, and she enrolled at Oakton in 2023. She has been recognized as a President's Scholar, and maintains a GPA of 3.75. She was hired as a sustainability researcher in May 2024; her work collecting data helped Oakton achieve the STARS rating and be recognized for its sustainability accomplishments and plan on an international level. Marga suggested to Professor Keenan Andrews that sustainability should be included in the curriculum, and she was given the opportunity to present the proposal to her fellow students. Professor Astrid Duran also helped Marga share her advocacy.

Marga thanked Oakton for the support she has received, and asked instructors to invite her to their classes to share her advocacy for sustainability.

Comments by the Chair

Trustee Burns shared that Chair Toussaint is currently traveling. On a personal note, Trustee Burns expressed her regrets about good colleagues and college leadership who have left the College, but she believes Oakton is a family and we will always work together.

Trustee Burns also shared that she attended the Spring 2025 Opening Day and enjoyed the keynote speaker's message, and recognized the importance of providing students with the support they need with the appropriate flexibility and accommodations. She also indicated that it was a proud moment when she heard stories from students from the Prison Education Program who graduated, and students engaged in the Service Learning program.

Trustee Comments

Student Trustee Ocaña thanked Marga Martinez for sharing her sustainability advocacy efforts. Trustee Yanow also praised the Prison Education Program and the accomplishments of the students.

Public Participation

Trustee candidate Michele Hays shared information about the Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights (ICIRR) Family Support Network & Hotline. Individuals who require assistance related to immigration can contact 855-435-7693.

Board Report: Marketing and Communications Update and Impact

Director of Marketing, Andrea Lehmacher and her team provided an update on the current Marketing and Communications work done at Oakton including campaigns, district-wide mailers, the Early College catalog, athletic door wraps, social media posts, etc.

The goals of the advertising strategy are to strengthen awareness and relevance, generate leads, drive enrollment and focus on programming. Media utilized is traditional and digital, and there is an expanded focus on video ads. The College continues with its brand theme "Connect to Opportunity."

Advertising is done through different channels including direct mail, website landing pages, social media platforms, broadcast TV, bus tails, bus shelters, Google search, display ads, and streaming radio. TV commercials focus on student stories, and a few of them were played during the meeting.

Web enhancement include a brand-new interactive map which students can utilize to navigate both campuses

Communication strategies include:

Advocacy at State & Federal level

- \$800k Congressionally Directed Spending award to support Evanston Health Careers Center
- \$5.9 million (2%) increase in operating funds for community colleges in FY25 Illinois Budget
- \$10 million statewide increase in Monetary Award Program Funding

On Campus

- Elected Official's Open House
- Event partnership, keynote speaker invitations

Communication

- First Reading Legislative Newsletter
- Coordinated Communication with Illinois Community College Marketing Collaborative

Internal Communications

- Leadership Update
 - Data focused monthly video message
 - Bytes and Insights sessions

- Oakton Weekly
 - Weekly Employee Newsletter
 - 360+ article requests
- Construction Communication
 - Bi-weekly Employee Newsletter
 - Construction Page on Oakton's Website
 - Campus Signage
- Institutional Event Production and Support
 - Learning Commons
 - CDL Open House
 - Fall/Spring Opening Day Kick-Offs
 - Employee Recognition Dinner
 - Commencement

What's Next?

- Media Outreach - Utilize new Oakton College Experts Guide
- Oakton Ambassador Program - Surveyed employees and stakeholders in November 2024 to help prioritize community partnerships. Preparing to recruit and mobilize an initial team of Oakton Ambassadors in 2025
- Brand Refresh and SEM Plan - Awareness and Relevance
- College App - Advertising Content Strategy - Expanded Need for Video Content Creation
- Health Careers Education Center Opening - Continued Support
- Continued Website Enhancements - Interactive Campus Map-Virtual Tour

Impact

- 23% increase to overall web traffic
- 16% increase in new web visitors
- 87% increase in clicks on the Apply button
- 111% increase in clicks on Ads
- 3X increase in digital click through rate to engage with our content and colleagues
- 560+ media outlets mentions
- 7% increase in Oakton Weekly open rate

NEW BUSINESS

1/25-1a Approval of Consent Agenda

Trustee Bush offered: "Be it resolved that the Board of Trustees of Community College District 535 approves adoption of the Consent Agenda."

Trustee Salzberg seconded the motion. A voice vote was called and the motion passed unanimously.

1/25-1b Approval of Consent Agenda Items 1/25-2 through 1/25-9

Trustee Bush offered: "Be it resolved that the Board of Trustees of Community College District 535 approves the following items 1/25-2 through 1/25-9 as listed in the Consent Agenda."

1/25-2 Ratification of Payment of Bills for November 2024

"Be it resolved that the Board of Trustees of Community College District 535 hereby ratifies expenditures and release of checks by the Treasurer of Community College District 535 in the amount of \$6,692,705.46 for all check amounts as listed and for all purposes as appearing on a report dated November 2024."

- 1/25-3 Acceptance of Treasurer’s Report for November 2024**
- “Be it resolved that the Board of Trustees of Community College District 535 receives for filing as a part of the College’s official records, the report of the Treasurer for the month of November 2024.”
- 1/25-4 Ratification of Payment of Bills for December 2024**
- “Be it resolved that the Board of Trustees of Community College District 535 hereby ratifies expenditures and release of checks by the Treasurer of Community College District 535 in the amount of \$7,388,962.74 for all check amounts as listed and for all purposes as appearing on a report dated December 2024.”
- 1/25-5 Acceptance of Treasurer’s Report for December 2024**
- “Be it resolved that the Board of Trustees of Community College District 535 receives for filing as a part of the College’s official records, the report of the Treasurer for the month of December 2024.”
- 1/25-6 Acceptance of Quarterly Report on Investments**
- “Be it resolved that the Board of Trustees of Community College District 535 accepts the Quarterly Report on Investments for filing.”
- 1/25-7 Supplemental Authorization to Pay Professional Personnel – Fall 2024**
- “Be it resolved that the Board of Trustees of Community College District 535 approves an adjustment of \$36,201.39 to the total amount of part-time teaching salaries paid during the fall 2024 semester. The revised total payment amount is \$3,801,864.39.”
- “Be it further resolved that the Board of Trustees of Community College District 535 approves an adjustment of \$157,180.92 to the total amount of faculty overload salaries paid during the fall 2024 semester. The revised total payment amount is \$882,417.95.”
- 1/25-8 Authorization to Pay Professional Personnel**
- “Be it resolved that the Board of Trustees of Community College District 535 hereby authorizes the Treasurer of the College to pay 2025 spring semester part-time faculty and adjunct faculty on January 31, 2025, and full-time overload payments on February 14, 2025, with ratification at the February Board meeting.”
- 1/25-9 Approval of Clinical Practice Agreements**
- “Be it resolved that the Board of Trustees of Community College District 535 approves the following cooperative agreements:
- Basic Nursing Assistant (6)
Basic Nursing Assistant/Nursing (1)
Early Childhood Education (1).”
- Trustee Salzberg seconded the motion. Trustee Bashiri-Remetio called the roll:
- | | |
|-------------------------|-----|
| Trustee Bashiri-Remetio | Aye |
| Trustee Burns | Aye |
| Trustee Bush | Aye |
| Trustee Salzberg | Aye |
| Trustee Stafford | Aye |
| Trustee Yanow | Aye |
- The motion carried. Student Trustee Ocaña favored the resolution.

1/25-10 Authorization to Approve January Purchases

Trustee Stafford offered: “Be it resolved that the Board of Trustees of Community College District 535 authorizes the approval of the attached resolutions, as stipulated in the following agenda items, for the purchase of the following:

<u>Item</u>	<u>Pages</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Vendor / Location</u>	<u>Amount</u>
1/25-10a	1	Leica Microscopes	North Central Instruments, Inc Brooklyn Park, MN	\$45,722.52
1/25-10b	2	Travel for Men’s Baseball Team	Academy Bus, LLC Winter Garden, FL	\$7,000.00
			Southwest Airlines Dallas, TX	\$20,000.00
			Enterprise Rent-A-Car Orlando, FL	\$1,500.00
			Encore Resort Kissimmee, FL	\$12,500.00
			Springhill Suites Marriott Kissimmee, FL	\$1,000.00
			Russ Matt Baseball Stratham, NH	\$4,000.00
			Meals Per Diem	\$11,000.00
1/25-10c	1	Lattice Talent Management System – Three-Year Contract	Degree, Inc dba Lattice San Francisco, CA	\$100,800.00
1/25-10d	1	Classroom Projectors	JensenIT, Inc Des Plaines, IL	\$37,438.20
1/25-10e	1	Backup Software Support and Maintenance Renewal – Three-Year Contract	JensenIT, Inc Des Plaines, IL	\$141,354.00
1/25-10f	1	IP Telephony Annual Maintenance and Software Assurance	Telcom Innovations Group Itasca, IL	\$38,875.80
1/25-10g	1	Furniture for the Adjacencies Project – Phase 1	Forward Space, LLC Wood Dale, IL	\$369,876.86
GRAND TOTAL:				\$791,067.38.”

Trustee Salzberg seconded the motion. Trustee Bashiri-Remetio called the roll:

Trustee Bashiri-Remetio	Aye
Trustee Burns	Aye
Trustee Bush	Aye
Trustee Salzberg	Aye
Trustee Stafford	Aye

Trustee Bashiri-Remetio	Aye
Trustee Burns	Aye
Trustee Bush	Aye
Trustee Salzberg	Aye
Trustee Stafford	Aye
Trustee Yanow	Aye

The motion carried. Student Trustee Ocaña favored the resolution.

1/25-15 Approval of Emeritus Appointments

Trustee Bush offered: “Be it resolved that the Board of Trustees of Community College District 535 approves ten-year Emeritus appointments for Cheryl Brown, Doris Gronseth, Paul Johnson, Joseph Kotowski, and Joann Stavropoulos.”

“Be it further resolved that the Board of Trustees of Community College District 535 approves ten-year Emeritus re-appointments for George C. Klein and Helen B. Ward Page.”

Trustee Bashiri-Remetio seconded the motion and called the roll:

Trustee Bashiri-Remetio	Aye
Trustee Burns	Aye
Trustee Bush	Aye
Trustee Salzberg	Aye
Trustee Stafford	Aye
Trustee Yanow	Aye

The motion carried. Student Trustee Ocaña favored the resolution.

1/25-16 Approval of a New Unit of Instruction

Trustee Stafford offered: “Be it resolved that the Board of Trustees of Community College District 535 approves the following new unit of instruction: ECE Endorsement for IL Professional Educator License Holders Certificate.”

Trustee Bush seconded the motion. Trustee Bashiri-Remetio called the roll:

Trustee Bashiri-Remetio	Aye
Trustee Burns	Aye
Trustee Bush	Aye
Trustee Salzberg	Aye
Trustee Stafford	Aye
Trustee Yanow	Aye

The motion carried. Student Trustee Ocaña favored the resolution.

1/25-17 Notification of Award of Grants

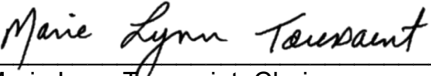
Funding has been made available to Oakton College:

- a. ICCB Mental Health Early Action on Campus Support Expansion\$100,280.00
(Manager: Dr. Mark Kiel / Administrator: Al Grippe)
 - b. Increased Allocation ICCB Adult Education and Family State Performance ... \$15,070.00
(Manager: Elena Smoukova / Administrator: Delia Rodriguez)
- TOTAL:..... \$115,350.00**

Adjournment

Vice Chair Burns announced that the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board of Trustees of Oakton Community College, District 535, will be held at 6 p.m. on Tuesday, February 18, 2025 at the Des Plaines Campus.

Vice Chair Burns asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Trustee Stafford made the motion, which was seconded by Trustee Salzberg. A voice vote was called and the meeting was adjourned at 7:16 p.m.



Marie Lynn Toussaint, Chair



Theresa Bashiri-Remetio, Secretary

Minutes recorded by:
Beatriz Sparks
1/2025