

**LOWER COLUMBIA COLLEGE  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

# MINUTES

October 15, 2025

---

**1. CALL TO ORDER (DETERMINATION OF QUORUM)**

Chair Silva called the regular meeting of the District 13 Board of Trustees to order at 5:01 p.m. on Wednesday, October 15, 2025, in MAIN 119 in the Main Building of Lower Columbia College. The LCC Board of Trustees meeting was also offered virtually via Zoom. When the meeting was called to order, the following individuals were present, ensuring a quorum.

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES:** Marc Silva, Chair  
Bogi Kim, Vice Chair  
Liz Cattin  
Alice Dietz  
Mike Karnofski

**COLLEGE PRESIDENT:** Matt Seimears

**2. INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS**

Others in Attendance: Nolan Wheeler, Kristen Finnel, Kendra Sprage, Kimberly Witherspoon(AG), Dan Ruiz, Mara Slabu, Alex Brehm, Wendy Hall, Niccolai Bishop, Firaol Fekadu, and Tracy Powell.

Virtual Attendees: Josh Hanson, Kim Witherspoon (AG), and Laura Sampson.

**3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

**MOTION:** By Trustee Karnofski, seconded by Trustee Kim,  
The agenda be approved as presented

**MOTION CARRIED unanimously**

**4. CONSENT ITEMS**

The following consent items were offered for the Board's consideration. When Chair Silva asked if there were any corrections to the minutes, Tracy Powell stated that one correction was needed and provided revised minutes to the Board.

- a. Minutes of the September 17, 2025, Special Board Meeting
- b. Minutes of the September 17, 2025, Regular Board Meeting

**MOTION:** By Trustee Karnofski, seconded by Trustee Dietz  
The consent agenda be approved as corrected.

**MOTION CARRIED unanimously**

**5. COLLEGE INPUT (REPORTS)**

Vice President of Effectiveness and College Relations - Wendy Hall

- Enrollment is currently up for the fall quarter, with increases of nearly 6% for State and almost 9% for Total FTE. Annually, FTE is up over 10% for State and over 12% for Total FTE.
  - Following up on the question from the September meeting, enrollment in LCC's Bachelor of Science in Computer Science program for fall 2025 is as follows:
    - 5 females
    - 23 males
    - 28 total
- Our Year 7 Evaluation of Institutional Effectiveness accreditation visit with the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities is underway. It will conclude on Friday, with an exit meeting at 11:00 am in HSB 101. The entire campus is invited to the exit meeting.
- LCC's mascot refresh launch campaign (Flare) was named a finalist for a Medallion Award from the National Council for Marketing and Public Relations.
- Pursuant to Washington's DEI legislation for community and technical colleges, LCC will conduct listening and feedback sessions for faculty, staff, and students this year. This collaborative effort is between Institutional Research and the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.
- LCC's digital marketing campaign ran from late July to early September and resulted in over 750,000 ads and nearly 16,000 visits to LCC's apply page. At \$0.69 per click, this is significantly lower than the global average of \$3 to \$ 4. The most reached demographic with the campaign: males 25-44.
- LCC's social media channels gained nearly 400 followers despite retiring the X account. With an average engagement rate of over 4%, this exceeds the industry average of 2.9% in higher education.
- Year over year (May through August, 2024 compared to 2025), visits to LCC's apply page increased by nearly 50%.

### Vice President of Administrative Services - Nolan Wheeler

- The Spokane mascot, Sasquatch, bears a resemblance to Flare.
- Fall Athletics:
  - Volleyball – LCC’s league record is 5-1, tied for 1st place in the west with Centralia and Highline, with big matches in the next few weeks with both teams.
  - Soccer – LCC is 3-3-3 in league play. Despite losing most of the team to our former coach, they have been very competitive this fall.
- Baseball Field:
  - The grandstand project team met earlier this week to review the updated design, which looks amazing. We received a cost estimate based on the design and will work to adjust the design to fit our budget. Our request to participate in the State Treasurer's Office COP program has been included in the SBCTC Supplemental Budget Request.
- Softball Facility:
  - The contractor is slowly progressing on completing the building, and staff contacted a netting contractor to begin the order and installation.
- CVTS:
  - The contractor's kickoff meeting was held two weeks ago, and work has begun. Fencing has been installed around the parking lot, and the lighting system will be disassembled tomorrow. On Friday morning, we will meet with the City of Longview staff and the Longview School District to address issues related to the water main replacement and street access during the project.
- Parking:
  - With the closure of two parking lots for the CVTS project, we have been working to create more parking options for students and staff. We have contacted the City of Longview regarding the adjustment of parking on Maple Street and received an immediate response. At last week’s Longview City Council meeting, a plan to add more angled parking to Maple Street was approved, and work began today to make those changes. Father’s House has also approved student parking in their lot during the morning rush.
  - Open the DVT parking lot to accommodate the CDL program.

### Vice President of HR, Legal Relations, and Foundation - Kendra Sprague

- Foundation:
  - Capital Campaign Update:
    - Campaign Progress: As of 9/30/25, we've reached 97.63% of the campaign goal (totaling \$14,644,809). Several large gifts in the work have not yet been accounted for.

- Family Giving Campaign:
  - The Family Campaign is in full swing with prize patrols, wear your support Wed., weekly trivia & more.
  - The campaign wraps up with a Red Devil Cupcake celebration on Friday afternoon at 2:30.
- Industry Partners: We now focus on industry partners through meetings, letters, and calls.
- No Regrets Solicitations
- Working on our year-end appeal for the community phase of the campaign
- Donor Wall Event: Wed., Nov. 12th, 5:30 - 7:00 PM; we will honor Max Anderson, Alumnus of the Year, and the Estate of Charles Klawitter - benefactor of the year; and all of our lifetime donors of \$10,000 or more.
- Scholarships: The second cycle is underway and will close at the end of this month, offering \$450,000 in scholarship opportunities to applicants. Trustee Kim inquired about scholarships and where students can locate application information. Vice President Sprague advised that a scholarship page is available on the LCC website, which includes a link to the scholarship application and information about workshops, among other resources. Students may also visit the Foundation office for additional assistance.
- The Athletic Booster letters went out to 1,092 athletic supporters. As of September 30, the appeal has raised \$17,900.
- Audit: The audit team remotely audited the Foundation's books for the fiscal year 2024-2025 during the week of September 22–26, 2025. To date, no significant errors or discrepancies have been identified. We are currently waiting for any additional requests or follow-up from the auditors.
- HR:
  - HR Diversity Data: Over the summer, we compiled our HR diversity data for applicants, hires, and employees. The NeoEd system allows us to access and analyze a variety of interesting data points. We are seeing some exciting progress. We recently shared the information with President Seimears and Dan Ruiz and will share it with all of ELT next week, as well as with the D&E Committee and the entire campus at the December All-Staff meeting.

Vice President of Instruction, Kristen Finnel

- LCC to Host State Council Meetings: LCC will host both the Baccalaureate Leadership Council and Workforce Education Council on campus next week (October 22nd-24th).
  - Also hosting the Washington Association of Colleges for Teacher Education regional meeting on Oct. 23rd, which includes Clark College, Centralia College, The Evergreen State College, WSU-V, ESD 112, and St. Martin's College.
- AIR Program Update:
  - LCC successfully launched the new AIR program this fall with a cohort of ten students.
  - A new lab space has been created in the Health and Science Building, providing students with a modern learning environment until the completion of the new building.
  - The AIR program collaborates with numerous industry and training partners to identify new equipment and training aids to enhance instruction. Current industry partners include: 34 local businesses, as well as representatives from the Workforce Development Council and the Center of Excellence for Semiconductor and Electronics Manufacturing.
- Curriculum Committee approved the adoption of the new Computer Science AA-DTA. The degree will now go to SBCTC and NWCCU for approval.
- Faculty member, Armando Herbelin, is taking eight chemistry students to the Pauling Medal Symposium in Seattle this weekend. The last time a group made the trip, students met and heard from a Nobel Prize winner in Chemistry.
- Counseling services have launched year two of Suspenders4Hope suicide prevention and awareness trainings. With significant participation, they offer the training in person and online for students, staff, and faculty.
- Dual Credit Updates:
  - Running Start has over 500 students enrolled and will host extended hours (until 7 pm) next week for winter advising.
  - College in the High School is working on the next phase of NAEYC accreditation – additional documentation needed by Nov. 11<sup>th</sup>.
  - The Open Doors partnership with Kelso High School was renewed in September, and currently, we have approximately 25 students enrolled.
- The Early Learning Center will apply for a \$1.5 million grant through the Department of Commerce's Early Learning Facilities (ELF) program. If awarded, the funding would cover all Pre-development costs (x: architect, permits, etc) for an upgraded Early Learning Facility. Chair Marc Silva asked when LCC would learn the outcome of the grant application. Kristen Finnel said she is hopeful the notification will arrive in early January. Nolan Wheeler reminded the Board that the grant funds may be used only for design work.

- Head Start is at 97% capacity in enrollments and is fully-staffed, except for one bus driver. Received the Child Nutrition Grant of \$ 30,000, which you approved last month. The dishwasher has been received and is just waiting for the demo and installation.
- AIR Business Partners: ASC Steel Deck, Bluescope Steel/Steelscape, Central Welding Supply, Columbia Cascade Company, Genentech, Georgia Pacific, JT Marine, Kalama Chemical, Lifeport, Miller Welding, Nippon, Randoco Tanks, R.D. Olson, Rightline, Selway Machine Tools, Topper Industries, USNR, EE Tech Group, Waite Specialty, Western Fab, Columbia Electric Supply, Weyerhaeuser, Norpac, Nucor Skyline Steel, Scot Industries, Steel Management Services, Interfor, Divert, Kyocera, Smurfit/WestRock, PUD, JH Kelly, Solvay, Columbia Steel Services.

Executive Director of DEI, Student Programming and Housing, and International Programs - Dan Ruiz

- DEI
  - Continue to develop programming for faculty.
  - Campus Programming
    - Say it Right, Take a Bite-DEI Peer Mentors
    - Dia do Los Muertos event-ASLCC/ DEI mentors
- Housing
  - Recognize the help of Campus Services in preparing student housing.
- Outreach
  - K12 events
    - Financial Aid nights at Kelso, Ilwaco, MM, and RAL
    - LCC application day-Hudson's Bay and Castle Rock
  - Since September 23, Outreach has interacted with over 300 high school seniors.
  - Preparing for the Brothers in Power conference
- International programs
  - There are 30 in-person and two online international students representing 16 countries.
    - LCC maintained IP enrollment when compared to other community colleges.
    - Declining VISA appointments, anticipate enrollment decline in 2026
      - Working with another partnership to ensure program sustainability
  - Sponsoring Atomi Short-Term Winter 2026 with 10 participants
- Disability Services
  - DAS conducted 61 new student intakes between July and September 2025, which is a 32% increase.
  - On September 25, 2025, DAS hosted an Assistive Technology Open House, during which seven student demonstrations of speech-to-text, text-to-speech, and magnifying technologies were performed.

- For Disability Awareness Month, DAS partnered with student programs and the office of DEI to bring Gillis Williams, an autism advocate, to campus on October 2nd. Eighteen staff, faculty, students, and community members attended Gillis' message to increase awareness and acceptance of people on the Autism spectrum.

#### Associated Students of LCC - Mara Slabu, Executive Director

- Welcome Week events:
  - Welcome, the first few days of the quarter
    - Partnered with staff/faculty to welcome students, answer questions, give directions, hand out LCC swag, etc.
  - Campus-wide resource bingo
    - Students were encouraged to visit different departments on campus and learn about the support they offer
  - Field Day
  - Clubs & Organizations fair
  - Bracelet making, origami, karaoke, patch & repair
- Working with other departments:
  - Clubs & Organizations fair
    - Invited students to explore the different clubs and resources available to them on campus
  - Learning Commons Open House
  - Answered questions about how ASLCC serves students, resources available to them on campus, and engaged with students through fun board games, video games, and a bingo event
- Governance Council
  - ASLCC representatives were invited to attend part of the Governance Council meeting and discuss with faculty and administrators how to collaborate to support students.
- Student Engagement:
  - 254 students checked in at events in the first month
    - Doesn't include some larger events like field day or Learning Commons Open House
  - Higher student engagement with ASLCC outside of fun activities and events
    - Students are coming into the office to ask questions, students are attending our meetings to see what we do, and ask questions or raise concerns they have
- Student Clubs
  - Seventeen student clubs participated in the Clubs & Organizations fair. Among them were Campus Christians, International Club, Multicultural Club, Saga Veterans' Alliance, and Rotaract. Vice Chair Kim asked about the difference between the International Club and the Multicultural Club. Mara Slabu noted that all LCC students are welcome to attend any of the clubs. The International Club's mission is to provide opportunities for all

students to learn about countries and share their cultures. The Multicultural Club's mission is to enrich the community by broadening the perspectives of its members and increasing awareness of and engagement with diversity.

- The Speech & Debate team has traveled to two large tournaments and has had a successful showing at both.
  - Re-established Board Game Club
  - Working to establish the Geology/Environmental Club with Morgan Salisbury
- Looking Ahead:
    - Implementing more systems for faculty & staff to engage with ASLCC so we can work together to support students
    - Working to raise awareness of the resources ASLCC can provide beyond just campus events
    - Finding new ways to recognize student needs that aren't being met
    - Working on establishing the G Tech Fee Committee
    - Planning for Harvest Festival, a quarterly event open to campus and community members on October 28, 2025, from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m.

#### Faculty Association of Higher Education/LCC - Alex Brehm

- The association has been actively working to support new faculty mentorship, meeting monthly with the latest full-time tenure-track faculty to build relationships and provide guidance as they navigate their first year at LCC.
- The association also ensures our contract is upheld at all levels through collaboration and consistent communication with our faculty, deans, VPs, and the President. To date, we have continued to achieve high-quality growth in our shared governance processes, ensuring excellence for our students on this campus.
- Activities to Report from Faculty:
  - Connie Ramos (Nursing Faculty): LCC hosted a Multicultural Health Fair on October 4th; nursing students from the 4th & 6th quarters participated. Also, ASLCC has been sponsoring the annual flu vaccine for students this week. One hundred forty vaccines were available when they started on Monday this week.
  - Josie Zbaeren: Early Childhood Faculty: Attended the Community Baby Shower at the Longview Library.
- The LCC Fighting Smelt speech and debate team finished first among community colleges in speech and debate, as well as in overall sweepstakes. They finished in third place overall out of all 38 colleges and universities, which is the first time in the tournament's history that a community college has placed in the top three overall. Whitworth University placed 2nd, and Boise State placed 1st.

- ASLCC Executive Director Mara Slabu has emerged as one of our region's top speech and debate competitors.
- A new student, Divaa Nchau, recently joined LCC after immigrating to the United States from Kenya earlier this year. Encouraged by her high school teacher to try competitive speech, she quickly excelled, winning state titles in two events. When deciding on a college, she used ChatGPT to find the best speech and debate program in Washington, discovered LCC, and chose to enroll after following the team on Instagram. Her story highlights the team's strong reputation and welcoming culture.

Washington Federation of State Employees/LCC

- No report

Head Start/ECEAP/EHS Report, Budget Status, and Program Reports

- Written report provided to the Board.

**6. PUBLIC COMMENT**

LCC student Niccolai Bishop provided public comment on parking constraints for industrial trade students whose classes are held in the Don Talley Vocational building.

While it is not standard practice to respond directly to public comment during this portion of the meeting, Nolan Wheeler shared that there was a miscommunication regarding parking; therefore, Parking Lot A will not be restricted.

**7. BOARD BUSINESS**

- a. Proposed 2026 Board of Trustees Meeting Schedule - The Board reviewed the proposed 2026 meeting schedule and will take action on this item at the November Board meeting.

**8. POLICY GOVERNANCE**

- a. Board Policy Review - At the July 30, 2025, Board meeting, Trustees agreed to review three policies per month to resume the regular review cycle.

Vice President Hall noted the proposed changes to policies 2.04 and 2.06 are minor and primarily for grammatical clarity.

Proposed changes to Policy 2.05 include minor grammatical corrections and the option to strike item 6, which currently requires the Board to consider policy reviews at two meetings unless a Board action waives this requirement. If the Board adopts the proposed changes in Policy 2.05, the new policy would be effective immediately.

- i. [Policy 2.04 - Chair's Role](#)
- ii. [Policy 2.05 - Board Planning and Agenda](#)
- iii. [Policy 2.06 - Board Committee Principles](#)

**MOTION:** By Trustee Cattin, seconded by Trustee Karnofski,  
waiving the two-meeting review process.

**MOTION CARRIED unanimously**

**MOTION:** By Trustee Cattin, seconded by Trustee Kim,  
The policies should be adopted as presented.

**MOTION CARRIED unanimously**

9. **EXECUTIVE SESSION-** No Executive Session

10. **ADJOURN EXECUTIVE SESSION -** N/A

11. **ACTION AS A RESULT OF EXECUTIVE SESSION -** N/A

**ADJOURNMENT** - With no further business, Chair Silva called  
for a motion to adjourn the meeting at 5:54 p.m.

**MOTION:** By Trustee Dietz, seconded by Trustee Kim,  
The meeting be adjourned.

**MOTION CARRIED unanimously**

**On November 19, 2025, the Board of Trustees of Community College District 13  
approved the minutes of the October 15, 2025, Regular Meeting.**



---

C. Matt Seimears, Secretary to the Board