

**LOWER COLUMBIA COLLEGE  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

# MINUTES

**November 19, 2025**

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

Chair Silva called the regular meeting of the District 13 Board of Trustees to order at 5:00 p.m. on Wednesday, November 19, 2025, in the Heritage Room 100 in the Administration 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:** Mindy Leasure and Kathryn Harlan

Others in Attendance: Nolan Wheeler, Kristen Finnel, Kendra Sprague, Shelley Williams (AG), Dan Ruiz, Mara Slabu, Wendy Hall, Tracy Stanley, and Tracy Powell.

Virtual Attendees: LCC Chat Moderator and (1) Anonymous participant.

**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.

- Minutes of the October 15, 2025, Regular Board Meeting

**MOTION:** By Trustee Cattin, seconded by Trustee Dietz

TP/PRESOFC/12.11.25/ADOBE ACCESSIBILITY CHECKER

The agenda be approved as presented.

**MOTION CARRIED unanimously**

**5. COLLEGE INPUT (REPORTS)**

President's Report - Matt Seimears

Presentations:

- Toutle School Board - Invited by the Superintendent to present LCC's Mission and Vision.
- AACCT Conference in New Orleans, where LCC presented the New Orleans Trustee Cookbook.

Community Engagement:

- Lunch with community members, Ben Thomas, and Mark McCrady to discuss the new Vocational Building.
- Kelso Rotary
- Squirrel Fest, Coming August 21-23, 2026
- Superintendent Chamber Luncheon - 11/18

Campus Engagement:

- 10/10 Veteran's Day Flag Raising Ceremony & Bake Sale
- 10/17/25 - Attended the LCC Family Campaign Sweet Send-Off Celebration
- 10/17/25 - met with the Seniors Pottery Students who use the LCC ceramics lab. They plan to train me on the ceramic wheel in two weeks.
- Donated neuroscience equipment to the Automation Instrumentation Robotics team for use with prosthetics.
- 10/27 - Dia de los Muertos
- 10/28 - Harvest Fest
- 10/29 - Blind Date with a Book
- On 10/29, I worked out at the fitness center and then watched LCC go 3-0 against Pierce.
- On 10/30, I was invited to a Biology class to observe students using an agar medium to grow glow-in-the-dark bacteria with Professor Tonn.
- 10/30 - Scholarship Workshop
- 10/30 - Community Conversations - "Silent Pleas - The Making of a Mystery"
- 10/31 - Volleyball Tacoma game on the 31st which was Sophomore Night.
- 11/12 - Foundation Donor Wall Reception
- 11/14 - The Thanksgiving Play
- 11/15 - Women's Basketball game
- 11/17 - Meet the Devi's Night - Student Athletes

Governance & Communication:

- UMCC - 10/28
- Operations Council - 11/3
- Governance Council - 11/12

- Quarterly Conversations with Exempt and Classified Employees - 11/13

WACTC Events:

- Amy Morrison won the national CEO Award. I was asked to write a letter of support.
- WACTC Wednesdays
- WACTC President's & Business Meetings

In Closure:

- My parents will be in town next week. My dad will join me at the Red Devils game.
- PeaceHealth Gala

Vice President of Administrative Services - Nolan Wheeler

- Financial Aid - During the first four weeks of fall quarter, 1,483 LCC students received over \$4.8 million in federal and state financial aid, scholarships, and other support funding. This reflects:
  - A 5% increase in total funding compared to the same period in fall 2024
  - A 23% increase (or a little over \$1MM) compared to fall 2023
  - A 9% increase in the number of students receiving some type of funding over fall 2024
  - A 19% increase compared to fall 2023
- We're also seeing continued growth in enrollment and in the number of current students accessing financial aid. So far this year, FAFSA applications are up 22.3% compared to the same time last year. This success is the result of joint efforts between LCC and the community to improve FAFSA completion rates in our service district.
- Beginning with the 2026–27 FAFSA year, federal direct loans will be prorated based on enrollment level. Currently, students enrolled at least half-time (6+ credits) can receive their full quarterly loan amount. Starting July 1, 2026, students enrolled less than full-time will receive a prorated amount.
- We will begin communicating these upcoming changes in the new year to current part-time students who are enrolled and taking out loans, to ensure they receive early assistance and can plan ahead to explore other funding options.
- CVTS - We recently met with both the Longview School District and the City of Longview to coordinate the upcoming water-main replacement, which will take place within the city easement located on school district property. Our goal is to minimize the impact on bus routes and access to Mark Morris High School during this work. During excavation in the parking lot, a substantial layer of buried concrete was discovered

beneath the asphalt—at some points nearly two feet thick—necessitating a change order to address the added effort and materials required. In more positive news, the Art in Public Places Committee has approved the initial design concept for artwork in the new building, and I'm pleased with the direction the concept is taking.

- Longview/Kelso Chamber Newsletter – Kirc Roland and I co-wrote an article in the November chamber newsletter highlighting the two NWAC Champion-winning programs and coaches (Softball & Men's Basketball), as well as the two athletic facility capital projects.
- Softball Facility – The contractor is awaiting the delivery of insulation before installing the roof of the building. It appears that the insulation was delivered today, so we should see the roof installed soon.
- Baseball Grandstand – The initial cost estimate for the project came in at \$ 10.9 million, so obviously, the scope of the project needs to be significantly reduced. We've worked with the architect to break the project up into four smaller pieces, with the grandstand and lights comprising the base bid and the remainder of the project separated into three or four bid alternates. The project is still on schedule for an early spring bidding.
- State Revenue Forecast - Washington state's latest revenue forecast projects a \$66 million drop in expected revenue through 2029, adding pressure to lawmakers ahead of the 2026 supplemental budget session. The long-term outlook is weaker: projected revenue for 2027–29 is down \$185 million, driven by softer economic indicators such as fewer housing permits, slower job growth, and lagging personal income.
- Gov. Ferguson acknowledged the outlook is better than feared but said it does not alter the “scale of the problem,” emphasizing that his supplemental budget will protect core services while addressing rising caseloads and higher maintenance costs. The reduced forecast heightens the likelihood that lawmakers will need to consider cuts, efficiencies or new revenue sources to keep the four-year budget balanced.
- CERT- Janel Skreen and I presented information regarding our LCC CERT Program to the LEPC last week. Several attendees expressed interest in our program and are considering sending staff to our basic training, which is scheduled to start next year.

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

##### Capital Campaign Update:

- Campaign Progress: As of 11/14/25, we've reached 98.59% of the campaign goal (totaling \$14,789,045).
- Family Giving Campaign:
  - The Family Giving Campaign wrapped up on October 17th.
  - A friendly participation challenge was held between current employees and retirees as part of the campaign. The results were

- 42% of employees and 27% of retirees participated, helping us raise more than \$69,000 during the Family Giving Campaign.
- Industry Partners: We are currently focusing on industry partners, with numerous meetings, lunches, letters, and calls—some very promising meetings with major gift prospects.
- Our year-end appeal for the community phase of the campaign features a student story, that of Courtney, who spoke at the donor wall event. Two mailings & radio ads will run from after Thanksgiving to year-end.

Facility Namings: The Foundation Board approved two naming's in the Vocational Building:

- Dan Evans Classroom
- Fibre Federal Credit Union Computer Lab

Benefactor of the Year: The Benefactor of the Year was selected by the Foundation Board. There were 10 very worthy nominations, and they selected Dr. Richard Nau. He believes in the college. Over \$600,000 in lifetime giving, and we are named in his estate plan with a gift of over \$1 million.

Donor Wall Event: Last week's event was a big success. Record crowd of over 160 people.

Student Success Fund: LCCF Board agreed to increase funds available to LCC students by \$100,000 this year, based on expected need due to SNAP benefits and the federal shutdown. The board will reevaluate the amount in January.

Scholarships: The second cycle is underway. \$450,000 in scholarship opportunities for applicants. Weekly scholarship workshops were held on campus during October's application cycle. More than 117 students participated in those workshops. A total of 441 students have completed their applications (an increase from last year), and the committee will review applications through November 21st. Awarding will commence in early December.

Audit: The 2024-2025 onsite audit, conducted in September 2025, went smoothly, with no major errors or discrepancies reported as usual. The final audited financial statements are scheduled to be presented at the January 2026 meeting.

Retiree Holiday Luncheon: The 2024 Retiree Holiday Luncheon will be held on Tuesday, December 16th, on campus in the Rose Center for the Arts lobby. Retirees will have an opportunity to reconnect and hear about campus and LCCF Campaign updates.

HR:

- Open Enrollment this month.

- Gearing up for faculty recruitments, which won't be too burdensome this year due to only two full-time recruitments
- Our Title IX team is completing our fall Title IX Trainings for student athletes, ASLCC & students involved in other clubs that travel. We will be providing training for the faculty and the Instruction Division meeting on Friday.

Vice President of Instruction, Kristen Finnel

- It's that time of year again for faculty to submit their equipment and personnel needs for next year.
- We have received over \$150,000 in equipment requests and are working collaboratively to secure funding for as many projects as possible.
- There were numerous faculty positions requested, but unfortunately, we are only moving forward with two tenure-track faculty positions for next year: Math and Substance Abuse Disorder. It was a tough decision, but considering the data and future expansion, those two options make the most sense.
- Two of my Deans participated in the Annual Behavioral Health Career Pathways Convening as part of our exploration of behavioral health as a potential new degree option. The event was hosted in partnership with the WA State Allied Health Center of Excellence. It provided valuable policy updates, workforce and education initiatives, innovation highlights, and networking to inform future program development
- With the retirement of our Criminal Justice faculty member and not replacing that position, we will discontinue the Criminal Justice AAS degree and CJ certificate as of July 1, 2026. We will still maintain the AA-DTA Criminal Justice focus. There are only 4 students currently in the CJ AAS degree, and none in the CJ certificate. We will continue to offer CJ courses as there are many students enrolled in the AA-DTA with a CJ focus. The advisory committee supported this decision and stated that CJ-specific topics can be taught during the academy. The students they're hiring need skills in communication, critical thinking, and other soft skill areas. The advisory also shared that student don't necessarily need a degree in criminal justice to be hired in the field.
- Dual Credit: LCC is partnering with ESD 112 and Clark College to apply for a multi-year "Big Blur" regional grant led by Jobs for the Future (JFF), SBCTC, and OSPI. The initiative provides up to \$150,000 over three years for technical assistance and a statewide community of practice to strengthen CTE Dual Credit.
- College and Career Prep: LCC ranked 4th in Washington for Measurable Skills Gains (MSGs) in the 2024–2025 academic year—an indicator directly tied to state and federal performance funding. MSGs reflect students' academic progress through testing gains, high school credit completion, GED progress, postsecondary transitions, and success in I-

BEST courses. Much of LCC's strong performance was driven by I-BEST students, with over 99% achieving an MSG, alongside solid gains in College & Career Preparation and ELL.

- The Gallery hosted a successful opening reception and student workshop last week. Peipei Wallace, ceramics faculty, and 5 other artists (mostly 3D) are featured in the show.
- This weekend marks the final weekend for The Thanksgiving Play, presented by our Drama department.

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

- DEI
  - Chill and Chat for students in the Diversity and Equity Center
  - Completed Listening Sessions with Faculty with Wendy and the IR Team
  - Planning for International Women's Day Event-March 2-8, 2026
- Housing
  - Thanksgiving Dinner-Tuesday, Nov 25th
  - Field Trip-International Students-Washington Square
- Outreach
  - Continues to work with K-12 partners to ensure student success
    - Assisted high school students with FAFSA and enrollment forms
      - Signed up 21 RA Long students
    - Faculty are helping with outreach
      - Visiting HS to promote their programs
        - Computer Science
        - Engineering
        - Welding
- International programs
  - International Education Week, November 17-21, Cross-cultural exchange
  - LCC was selected to participate in the CIBER Consortium for Education Abroad (CC/FEA) Initiative, which provides training and mentorship to enable us to expand our campus's study abroad capacity. The team, consisting of two faculty and two staff, attends a series of monthly virtual workshops and networking and receives a year-long mentor to provide customized support for LCC's development of a 12-18 month action plan.
- Student Stories

- Lexi K. played Outside Hitter and Opposite Hitter (played on both sides of the court) for the Red Devils Volleyball team. She was a contributor to the team, becoming a co-champion of the West Region for NWAC Volleyball, and making it to the regional championships.
- Covenant A. won multiple first-place awards with the Fighting Smelt Speech and Debate team – in three different categories (Prose, Impromptu, and Editorial Commentary). Covenant was third place in standings for the Marshall Award, which recognizes the top novice/junior competitors at the Lindfield University tournament.
- Jane W. achieved an excellent score on the TEAS test and is currently awaiting notification regarding her admission to the Associate in Nursing (AN-DTA/MRP) Registered Nursing program.
- Maritza Y. reported that she earned the highest score in her class on both the Math and Biology midterm exams.

Vice President of Effectiveness and College Relations - Wendy Hall

- Enrollment is holding fairly steady. As a reminder, total FTE includes both state and contract FTE. Our most significant source of contract FTE is Running Start.
  - State FTE for the Fall quarter is 2,332, compared to 2,134 on the same calendar day last year (+9.3%).
  - Total FTE for the Fall quarter is 2,910, compared to 2,732 on the same calendar day last year (+6.5%).
  - 2025-26 Annual State FTE is 1,106, compared to 981 on the same calendar day last year (+12.8%).
- 2025-26 Annual Total FTE is 1,331, compared to 1,206 on the same calendar day last year (+10.4%).
- We concluded our Year 7 accreditation report on October 17th, and the peer evaluation report is now posted on our accreditation webpage.
  - We received two commendations and one recommendation from our peer evaluators. Note: these are not finalized until the NWCCU takes formal action.
  - Commendations:
    - “The peer evaluation team commends the institution for creating and maintaining a welcome and supportive

environment in the Library and Learning Commons to support student learning and engagement.”

- “The peer evaluation team commends the institution for its demonstrated commitment to a broadly inclusive culture of assessment, reflecting institutional support for continuous improvement in teaching and learning.”
- Recommendation:
  - “The evaluation team recommends that the institution strengthen, clarify, and publicly document decision-making structures and processes to ensure that the views of faculty, staff, administrators, and students are considered in shared governance (NWCCU Standard 2.A.4).”
- Next step in the process, required after all year 7 visits: the president and Accreditation Liaison (ALO) appear before the Commission in late January.
- Following the meeting, we will receive a formal communication from the Commission with the final recommendation (or recommendations, as the Commission may revise the peer evaluators’ recommendations) and the corresponding category. “Substantially in compliance” recommendations typically require a response within the usual accreditation cycle. In contrast, “substantially out of compliance” recommendations usually depart from the cycle and may require an ad hoc report and/or visit.
- Several actions are already underway in response to the draft recommendation, including drafting two new administrative policies, multiple policy revisions, plans for additional employee orientation and training around shared governance, review of bylaws for different governing bodies, including Operations Council, planning for further opportunities for planning and budgeting input and feedback from various campus constituencies, new tracking systems for review of our administrative policies and procedures, etc.
- The Red Devil “Flare” mascot refresh campaign received a Bronze Medallion award from the National Council for Marketing and Public Relations.
- We are in the process of implementing an AI chatbot feature on our website, powered by our Student Success Software, Navigate 360. The

bot is intended to help students quickly get answers to simple questions, freeing up staff time in the One-Stop Center for more complex questions, such as questions regarding financial aid and paying for college.

#### Associated Students of LCC, Mara Slabu

- Past Events:
  - Blind Date with a Book
  - Paint & Sip
  - Pokemon Tournament
  - Bouquet Making
  - Tin Wallet Making
  - Journal Decorating
- Upcoming Events:
  - Tote Bag Decoration
  - Clash Royale Tournament
  - Wicked For Good on Friday (free tickets & snacks for LCC students!)
  - Fluff-a-Stuff
  - Finals Survival Bags
- Big Quarterly Event:
  - Harvest Fest!! October 28th, 5 pm - 8 pm
    - Partnered with vendors to provide students with a variety of fun activities and games. Carnival games, face-painting, electronic games, henna art, caricatures, pumpkin decorating, candle-making, and much more
    - A few hundred attendees, approximately 90 students, along with their friends, relatives, children, and community members. It was a huge success!!
  - Upcoming: Masquerade Ball on February 27, 2026
- Student Engagement:
  - 227 total students checked in at events in the last month. This is a similar amount as first month, even without Welcome Weeks
- Other:
- Halloween Candy Grab
  - DEC, HR, and Early Learning Center collaborated on it
  - Students visited various departments on campus to learn about what they do and get candy.
- Accreditation
  - ASLCC had a meeting with the Accreditation team to share about the work we do on campus
  - Some ASLCC members also attended the Student Forum to hear what other students had to share and take note of common concerns or frustrations
- Meeting with Senator Jeff Wilson

- Senator Wilson was a guest at our Executive Board meeting on Monday. We had the opportunity to discuss leadership with him and ask questions about the work. Great educational opportunity that we are hoping to continue
- Established Tech Fee Committee that meets monthly
- Student Clubs
  - Still have 15-20 active clubs that are meeting regularly
  - Speech & Debate team has traveled to two more tournaments over the past month
    - McPherson Classic @ Whitworth University
      - Top Community College
      - 2nd place overall sweepstakes
    - Mahaffey Memorial @ Linfield University
      - Top Community College
      - 4th place overall sweepstakes
    - 12 students participated; 10 won at least one award (17 total awards)
  - SAGA club helping out with Trans Day of Remembrance on Thursday
- Looking Ahead:
  - Planning Winter Quarter Welcome Weeks
  - Starting to plan Winter Quarter big event (Masquerade Ball)
  - Marketing Director, Rayelynn, is working with Cassondra Rosales to create an ASLCC social media account for more promotion
  - Outreach Director, Eden, is working on sending out a survey to students to collect more information about the types of events they would like to see on campus
  - Starting to discuss Legislative Day & DC Trip in February

#### Faculty Association of Higher Education/LCC - Lucas Myers

- Faculty Activities
  - 1. LCC CCP program rated 4th in the state in 2024-2025 for Measurable Skills Gains (MSGs)!
  - Why is this important? Well it shows that our students are making gains in ways that are measured and directly tied to how we receive funding. Many MSGs overlap with Student Achievement Initiative (SAI) Momentum Points measures, which as you can see from the formula below, is very important to our funding model. In addition, as a state we are required to meet certain performance targets in order to continue to receive WIOA funds. When we meet our targets, or exceed them as we did this year, we help ensure the state meets theirs!

- Drama Program Update
  - On October 18th, 18 members of the Drama Club (along with Betsy Richard and Robert Cochran), traveled to Seattle to see playwright Larissa FastHorse (who wrote our Fall production, The Thanksgiving Play) perform in the world premiere of her new play, Fancy Dancer, at the Seattle Repertory Theater. After seeing FastHorse's moving performance, the Club had the incredible opportunity to meet with FastHorse. She answered questions and signed autographs for the 18 excited students. Having the opportunity to meet with the playwright of the play we are currently performing was an experience none will soon forget!
    - FastHorse's The Thanksgiving Play, LCC Drama's Fall production, opened Friday November 14th after 7 weeks of rehearsals and preparation. We performed last weekend to large and enthusiastic audiences. We have three more performances this week, including our Friday morning quarterly student matinee performance, where students from area high schools attend the performance for free. Don't miss the show: Thursday, 11/20, and Saturday, 11/22 at 7:30 PM, Friday morning at 11:00 AM.
- Gina Challed and Rob Davis - Music Program
  - Gina took a student to compete in the National Association of Teachers of singing (NATS) classical contest this past weekend and won first place in her category and will be going on to regionals. Gina has taken singers to compete on four separate occasions, and in every case, they have had 1-3 singers advance to regionals & in most cases, semi-nationals.
  - LCC alum Jeffrey Meyers is currently pursuing an advanced program in music composition for media and has composed a piece for the LCC Symphonic Band that will premiere at our concert this coming Friday (Nov 21) evening. The piece is entitled "New Beginnings."
- Jessica Kooiman - Nutrition Program
  - Nutrition department faculty member Jessica Kooiman created a new Nutrition course - Lifespan Nutrition that is officially being offered in the Winter Quarter.
- Drama Position and Program Concerns

- Faculty leadership would also like to let you know of our concern regarding the potential decision not to rehire the full-time Drama faculty position. While we recognize and acknowledge the historically low enrollment trends in Drama amidst the backdrop of some budgetary concerns at the state level, the Faculty Association remains uncomfortable with the prospect of fully eliminating this position and, by extension, diminishing one of our long-standing academic and cultural programs at LCC.
- We appreciate that Vice President Finnel and our instructional deans are actively exploring alternative approaches and funding options to support the position and activities that align with the drama program. Their willingness to examine creative solutions is encouraging. However, our hope is that the College will commit to developing a long-term, sustainable plan that preserves this faculty position and reinvigorates the Drama program.
- LCC has exceptional theatre facilities, strong community goodwill, and a proud history of performing arts. With intentional revitalization efforts—such as updated curricular pathways, enhanced recruitment strategies, stronger connections with local schools, and modernized program design—we believe Drama can once again become a vibrant contributor to enrollment, student engagement, and community visibility.
- The Faculty Association is eager to collaborate on reimagining a modern, forward-looking Drama program that leverages these assets, brings new excitement to campus, and supports the College’s broader mission.
- Conference Presentation
  - Earlier this month, President Dr. Matt Seimears, Board Member Bogi, and Lucas Myers had the privilege of presenting at a national higher education conference in New Orleans. Our presentation focused on how Lower Columbia College has intentionally rebuilt and strengthened its shared governance structures in recent years.
  - The session drew an almost full audience, and participants were deeply engaged and impressed by what we are developing here at LCC. Many attendees expressed that our work represents a model for what authentic, transparent shared governance can look like in practice. It was a proud moment for our college to be recognized nationally for this collaborative progress.
- Accreditation Recommendation on Shared Governance
  - During our recent NWCCU accreditation visit, the evaluation team provided one formal recommendation:

- “The evaluation team recommends that the institution strengthen, clarify, and publicly document decision-making structures and processes to ensure that the views of faculty, staff, administrators, and students are considered in the shared governance process.”
    - *(Standard 2.A.4)*
    - Standard 2.A.4 further states:
    - *“The institution’s decision-making structures and processes, which are documented and publicly available, must include provisions for the consideration of the views of faculty, staff, administrators, and students on matters in which each has a direct and reasonable interest.”*
  - This recommendation affirms and validates the direction our campus has been intentionally pursuing. It directly aligns with the work the Faculty Association, College President, and other governance bodies have been undertaking to strengthen the clarity, inclusivity, and accountability of our shared governance model.
- Progress and Growth in Shared Governance:
  - Over the past two years, Lower Columbia College has undergone a meaningful transformation in how shared governance is practiced and valued across the institution. Under Dr. Seimears’ leadership, shared governance has evolved from a concept largely discussed in theory to an
  - active, transparent, and functional part of our college culture. This process has been uncomfortable for many and has also opened the door to voices sharing that haven’t in the past and it has unearthed systemic issues in our college regarding communication, governance, and collaboration.
  - In contrast, prior to this leadership transition, the college faced significant challenges that hindered effective shared governance:
  - Meetings between the Faculty Association President and College President were irregular and unproductive, to the point where faculty presidents discontinued them because little progress could be made, and it often felt as if the College President was placating faculty leadership and withheld information on a regular basis.

- The campus wide shared governance team, which included faculty leadership, classified staff leadership, and administration, had been disbanded—eliminating a vital forum for cross-group communication and problem-solving.
- Faculty frequently felt that their voices were not genuinely heard or considered, with decisions often perceived as being predetermined.
- Governance meetings sometimes felt perfunctory; faculty often described the tone as disengaged, with limited interest in true collaboration or follow-through.
- As a result, faculty confidence in the institution’s governance culture had eroded, and discussions of potential votes of no confidence were becoming increasingly common in regards to the former President of the College and some Vice Presidents.
- Cultural Shift and Current Collaboration
  - Today, that dynamic has changed dramatically. Under Dr. Seimears, the college has begun to establish a culture moving towards mutual respect, transparency, and shared responsibility and with that process comes some bumpy growth, but it is necessary for future growth and shared governance.
  - Key improvements include:
    - Governance Council Revitalization: Processes for policy review and approval have been redesigned to include clear feedback loops, ensuring all constituencies understand how and why decisions are made.
    - Instructional Council Empowerment: Faculty input in academic planning and new position prioritization is now a consistent and valued part of the process. Discussions around faculty hiring have become more open, data-informed, and collaborative.
    - Restoration of Cross-Group Meetings: Regular joint meetings now occur between the Faculty Association President, the College President, and the Classified Staff Steward. These meetings have re-established healthy communication channels across all employee groups, allowing issues and ideas to be addressed before they escalate.

- Recognition of Faculty Voice: A faculty member recently remarked after a Governance Council meeting, *“You can tell Dr. Seimears really listens to us and respects our input.”* Such comments reflect a substantial cultural change—where faculty now feel their professional expertise is both sought out and valued. In our most recent governance council faculty expressed concerns regarding communication around budget and budget cuts and President Seimears and I have decided we will tackle that in December and faculty are working on alternative messaging, etc. that can be used next time we face budget cuts to alleviate stress, etc. It is not perfect but we are having tough conversations and working through the hard topics on our campus.
- Faculty Engagement and Shared Governance Education
  - In addition to these structural improvements, faculty have been engaging in intentional professional learning around what effective shared governance looks like. Through Faculty Association meetings, we have been:
    - Developing a Shared Governance Flowchart that visually maps the proper channels for campus issues and decisions, ensuring that topics move through the right processes in the right order.
    - Holding educational sessions to clarify what shared governance is—and what it is not—to help maintain integrity and consistency in participation.
    - Encouraging faculty to model collaborative engagement and accountability within their departments and committees.
  - These efforts have deepened understanding and improved the campus wide culture of communication and collaboration.
- Alignment with Accreditation and Future Vision
  - The accreditation team’s recommendation is not a criticism—it is a confirmation of the very work we are already advancing. It reinforces our commitment to strengthening and documenting the shared governance practices that have been revitalized over the past two years.
  - The Faculty Association and Dr. Seimears are now collaborating on a forthcoming publication that will outline our shared governance evolution—highlighting both the challenges of the past and the strategies that have brought us to this point of national recognition.

- Our goal is for Lower Columbia College to become a regional and national leader in shared governance excellence—a model for how a small college can successfully build trust, collaboration, and transparency among all employee groups.
- Conclusion
  - Lower Columbia College has come a long way in a short time. Through intentional leadership, open communication, and a renewed commitment to shared governance, we are building a culture where every voice will matter and every process will be as transparent as possible.
  - The progress we have made under Dr. Seimears' leadership—combined with the thoughtful engagement of faculty, staff, and administration—positions our college to not only meet the accreditation recommendation but to exceed it.
  - Together, we will continue to refine our decision-making structures, foster a culture of trust, and ensure that Lower Columbia College remains a place where collaboration leads to excellence.

Washington Federation of State Employees/LCC - Tracy Stanley

- Tracy Stanley provided a verbal report, highlighting increased member involvement.

Head Start/ECEAP/EHS Written Report, Budget Status, and Program Report  
Bi-Annual Head Start Report

- Mindy Leasure presented the Bi-Annual update on the Head Start Program, including self-assessment results, budget, community assessment, strategic plan, and education outcomes. Topics included School Readiness Data, Goals, Program Goals Progress, Monitoring and Audits, and Advocacy.
- The Board had no questions. Chair Marc Silva offered to write an advocacy letter of support.

**5. PUBLIC COMMENT - None**

**6. BOARD BUSINESS/INFORMATION ITEMS**

- a. 2026 Board of Trustees Meeting Schedule
 

The proposed 2026 Board meeting schedule was reviewed at the October 15, 2025, meeting to identify any potential conflicts. Two options were presented for the May Board meeting, and the Board selected May 20, 2026, at 4:00 p.m. to accommodate members who wish to attend the LCC Outstanding Student Awards at 5:00 p.m. The Board also discussed possible conflicts related to the July Board Workshop, but ultimately agreed to keep the July 29, 2026, date.

**MOTION:** By Trustee Cattin, seconded by Trustee Dietz  
That the 2026 Board of Trustees Meeting Schedule be  
approved as presented with the May 20, 2026 option.

**MOTION CARRIED unanimously**

**7. POLICY GOVERNANCE (ACTION)**

a. [Policy 2.07 - Board Members' Code of Conduct](#)

**MOTION:** By Trustee Karnofski, seconded by Trustee Kim, to approve  
Policy 2.07.

**MOTION CARRIED unanimously**

**8. INSTITUTIONAL MONITORING**

a. Quarterly Budget Report  
Vice President Nolan Wheeler presented the Quarterly Budget Status Report  
to provide an update of the College's financial status.

**9. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

At 6:15 p.m., Chair Silva called for an Executive Session to receive and  
evaluate complaints against a public officer or employee, and to discuss with  
legal counsel representing the agency, litigation, or potential litigation to which  
the agency or the Board is likely to become a party. The Executive Session was  
anticipated to end at 6:45 p.m.

At 6:45 p.m., Chair Silva announced the Executive Session would be extended  
until 7:05 p.m.

At 7:05 p.m., Chair Silva announced the Executive Session would be extended  
until 7:25 p.m.

**10. ADJOURN EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Chair Silva reopened the public meeting at 7:25 p.m. No action was taken during  
the Executive Session.

**11. ACTION AS A RESULT OF EXECUTIVE SESSION**

No action was taken as a result of the Executive Session.

**12. ADJOURNMENT**

With no further business, at 7:26 p.m., Chair Silva called for a motion to adjourn.

**MOTION:** By Trustee Kim, seconded by Trustee Karnofski,  
the meeting be adjourned.

**MOTION CARRIED** **unanimously**

**On December 10, 2025, the Board of Trustees of Community College District 13 approved the minutes of the November 19, 2025, Regular Meeting.**



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C. Matt Seimears, Secretary to the Board