



Minutes of the February 18, 2025 Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees of Community College District 535

The 807th meeting of the Board of Trustees of Community College District 535 was conducted on February 18, 2025 at the Des Plaines campus of Oakton College, 1600 East Golf Road, Des Plaines, Illinois.

Closed Session – Call to Order and Roll Call

Chair Toussaint called the meeting to order at 5:26 p.m. in room 1502. Trustee Bashiri-Remetio called the roll:

Trustee Marie Lynn Toussaint	Chair	Present
Trustee Martha Burns	Vice Chair	Present
Trustee Theresa Bashiri-Remetio	Secretary	Present
Trustee Gail Bush		Present
Trustee Benjamin Salzberg		Absent
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.

Chair Toussaint 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 January 21, 2025; and considering the appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance or dismissal of specific employees, collective negotiating matters, and pending litigation.

Trustee Stafford made the motion, seconded by Trustee Bush. Trustee Bashiri-Remetio called the roll:

Trustee Bashiri-Remetio	Aye
Trustee Burns	Aye
Trustee Bush	Aye
Trustee Stafford	Aye
Trustee Toussaint	Aye
Trustee Yanow	Aye
Trustee Ocaña	Aye

At 6:03 p.m., Trustee Stafford made a motion to adjourn the closed session meeting which was seconded by Trustee Bush. A voice vote was called and the closed session was adjourned.

Open Session – Call to Order and Roll Call

Chair Toussaint called the regular meeting of the Board of Trustees to order at 6:12 p.m. in room 1506.

Trustee Bashiri-Remetio called the roll:

Trustee Marie Lynn Toussaint	Chair	Present
Trustee Martha Burns	Vice Chair	Present
Trustee Theresa Bashiri-Remetio	Secretary	Present
Trustee Gail Bush		Present
Trustee Benjamin Salzberg		Absent
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; and Michele Roberts, Vice President for Administrative Affairs.

Administrators: Marc Battista, Assistant Vice President for Academic Affairs; Dr. Matthew Boutilier, Director of Online Learning and Curriculum; Steve Butera, Director of Communications and External Relations; Dr. Rick Daniels, Director of Institutional Equity and Inclusion; Sarah George, Associate Chief Information Officer; Thomas Hicks Jr., Director of Student Success and Academic Interventions; Dr. Ruben Howard II, Dean of Business and Career Technologies; Dr. Jesse Ivory, Assistant Vice President for Workforce Innovation and College Partnerships; Jake Jeremiah, Dean of Library; Nathan Norman, Senior Director of Workforce Development; Dr. James Rabchuk, Dean of STEM; John Wade, Systems and Network Services; Aaron Wernick, Chief of Campus Police and Emergency Management.

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

Faculty: Jayne Blacker, Mathematics; Christy Carter, Speech and Theater; Bob Gynn, Speech and Theater; Safa Hamed, Mathematics; David Nadolski, Speech; Michelle Oh, Library; Gabriel Porrata Vallejo, Mathematics; Naga Potluri, Mathematics; Katherine Schuster, Education; Toni Surdo, Psychology; George Vail, Automotive Technology; Hanna Wierzchowski, Health Information Technology.

Staff: Ernest Gest, Facilities; Krissie Harris, Student Life and Campus Inclusion; Janeen Jackson, Black Student Success Program; Ewa Lyczewska, Marketing and Communications; Kushal Patel, Information Technology; Vinita Shah, Media Services; Francisco Sosa, Information Technology; Beatriz Sparks, Office of the President.

Students: Gideon Apantaku, Jernone Smith.

Guests: Cheryl Brown, Michele Hays, Rene Mandin.

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

Land Acknowledgment – Trustee Stafford read the Land Acknowledgment.

Approval of Minutes

Chair Toussaint asked a motion for the approval of the minutes of the January 21, 2025 regular meeting of the Board of Trustees. Trustee Yanow made the motion. Trustee Bush seconded the motion. A voice vote was called and the minutes were unanimously approved.

Statement by the President

Condolences

To Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost, Dr. Ileo Lott on the passing of his father Fred on Jan. 29.

Congratulations

To our Nursing faculty and students. The Oakton 2024 pass rate for the National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX): RN 100%; LPN 100%

Athletic Recognitions

Oakton inducted two distinguished athletes, Alexios Fronimos and Alex Crinigan, into the prestigious NJCAA Region 4 Hall of Fame. Both alumni have left an indelible mark on their respective sports here at Oakton and are now being recognized for their remarkable athletic careers. The induction ceremony took place on February 13, 2025 at halftime of the men's basketball game.

Happenings

- Oakton is honoring Black History Month with events – free and open to the public – highlighting this year's theme, "African Americans and Labor." Through workshops, discussions and showcases, explore mental health, career growth and cultural pride while celebrating Black resilience, achievements and enduring strength.

- Jane, Monologues from the Underground will be performed in the Footlik Theater on Feb. 19. Jane was the code name for an underground service in Chicago, run by a collective of housewives and students, that brought safe and affordable abortions to 11,000 women from 1969 to 1973.
- AAPI Book Club: "Everything I Learned, I Learned at a Chinese Restaurant" by Curtis Chin on Wednesday, February 26, 12-1 p.m. at Skokie Campus, and Thursday, February 27, 12-1 p.m. at Des Plaines Campus.

Educational Foundation Liaison Report

The Foundation's fundraising activity has remained strong through January and February to date, tracking more than 40% ahead of efforts from the same time last year.

Notable commitments received since the last update to the Trustees include:

- A \$300,000 gift from Rivers Casino, renewing their support for student scholarships and other supportive programs such as the Success Fund for Student Emergencies, Student Technology Fund, and the Oakton Caring Closet.
- A \$6,000 gift from the Seabury Foundation to renew support for a scholarship in their name that assists non-traditional adult learners who seek to complete an associate's degree at Oakton or transfer to complete a bachelor's degree.
- A \$3,000 from Erol Munuz to launch a scholarship in memory of his late sister, Florence Munuz, who served as a faculty member in Oakton's Early Childhood Education program for many years.
- A \$15,000 gift from supporters Greg and Carol Korak to grow their endowed scholarship for student in accounting, engineering or manufacturing.

Four Foundation Directors traveled to Washington DC at the end of January with Katherine and President Smith to attend the AGB Foundation Leadership Forum. Oakton led a conference session on best practices in board development in conjunction with colleagues from Monroe Community College Foundation in Rochester, NY. The session was well attended and received high marks for content and delivery in reviews from attendees.

The Foundation approved a new Board Director in January for a 3-year term. Karen Demorest is an Evanstonian and retired recently having served as the Executive Director of the Youth Job Center for many years. The Foundation is thrilled to have her join our volunteer leadership group as an advocate and ambassador for Oakton.

The Board's next quarterly meeting will take place on March 5, 2025.

Student Trustee Report

Mr. Franklin Ocaña shared that he attended the ACCT Legislative Summit in Washington, DC. He also thanked the faculty present in the room for their work with students, and talked about upcoming events for students including the African Diaspora Market Night and Commencement.

Student Spotlight

Gideon Apantaku is a Computer Science major at Oakton. He said that his time at the College has been life-changing both academically and personally. Oakton has provided a supportive and inclusive environment that has guided his career aspirations and personal growth. Through the Oakton Experience, Gideon has gained a solid foundation in his field of study, developed significant relationships with faculty and peers, and obtained valuable experiences that will prepare him for the future.

Gideon chose Oakton because of its strong academic reputation, affordability, and commitment to student success. The College's emphasis on equity and personalized learning path made it an ideal place for him to start his higher education journey. Oakton's programs and resources allow him to balance his education with professional and personal responsibilities.

He has actively participated in the Student Government Association, he is the vice president of the Black Student Union, a member of the Black Student Success Program, and a member of the Emory Williams Academy for Black Men. This involvement has enriched his experience by allowing him to connect with like-minded individuals, helped him develop leadership skills, and enhanced his sense of belonging while reinforcing the importance of collaboration and team work.

Gideon thanked Janeen Jackson, Terrance Stevenson and Princess Escudero who have been instrumental in his academic and professional development. Their mentorship has deepened his understanding of his field, and provided invaluable career guidance and encouragement.

Gideon's goal is to transfer to UIC and pursue a bachelor's and master's degree. He said Oakton has provided a strong foundation, and he is excited to take the next step towards achieving his professional aspirations. He suggested the College should work on creating opportunities for authentic connections with faculty.

Comments by the Chair and Trustees

Chair Toussaint encouraged the community to be resilient through the current times. Trustee Burns thanked Gideon Apantaku for sharing his experience at Oakton. Student Trustee Ocaña thanked student Jernone Smith for attending the meeting, and highlighted his academic commitment.

Public Participation – None

Board Report: Equity Plan

Dr. Rick Daniels, Director of Institutional Equity and Inclusion.

The Office of Institutional Equity and Inclusion leads campus efforts to cultivate a diverse, equitable, and inclusive environment where every individual has the opportunity to thrive.

The Oakton College Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Council will guide the ongoing institutional DEI efforts and assist in the promotion and implementation of related programs, projects, and initiatives. The Leadership Council will align with the College's Strategic Plan through the implementation of campus-wide initiatives that advance racial equity and cultivate a culture of belonging that reflects our diversity.

Equity Plan Goals

- Eliminate disparities in student and employee outcomes.
- Cultivate a culture of inclusion and belonging at Oakton.

Strategies to Advance Equity at Oakton

1. Utilize Equity Policy Audit to assess and revise policies to promote equity and inclusion.
2. Leverage the Workforce Equity Initiative to expand access to high-demand, high-wage jobs for underrepresented populations.
3. Launch Project Open Gate to enhance access to higher education for underrepresented students.
4. Institutionalize support for the Office of Access, Equity and Diversity with a continuous focus and resources dedicated to advancing equity and diversity at the College.
5. Leverage Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Leadership Council to cascade DEI practices across the College, making these principles central to all operations.
6. Invest in professional development for College employees to improve the culture of belonging for BIPOC students and employees.

The Equity Policy Audit 2.0 is a robust examination of institutional policies, procedures and practices. Its goal is to identify barriers to students and employees, and establish equity-minded strategies to create change.

Feedback from ICCB

- DEI Statements: Align with mission but need clearer implementation steps.
- Equity Policy Audit: Identifies barriers; informs targeted equity interventions.
- Staff Climate Assessments: Essential for fostering an inclusive campus environment.

Next Steps

- Integrate ICCB feedback into institutional practices to enhance effectiveness.
- Provide sustained support for the successful implementation of Equity Plan strategies.
- Continue to align IIEI operations with institutional equity objectives to drive systemic progress.

NEW BUSINESS**2/25-1a 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 Stafford seconded the motion. A voice vote was called and the motion passed unanimously.

2/25-1b Approval of Consent Agenda Items 2/25-2 through 2/25-6

Trustee Bush offered: "Be it resolved that the Board of Trustees of Community College District 535 approves the following items 2/25-2 through 2/25-6 as listed in the Consent Agenda."

2/25-2 Ratification of Payment of Bills for January 2025

"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 \$9,276,670.67 for all check amounts as listed and for all purposes as appearing on a report dated January 2025."

2/25-3 Acceptance of Treasurer's Report for January 2025

"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 January 2025."

2/25-4 Ratification of Payment of Professional Personnel – Spring 2025

"Be it resolved that the Board of Trustees of Community College District 535 ratifies the payment of salaries for teaching on a part-time basis during the spring 2025 semester; the total payment amounting to \$3,556,104.04."

"Be it further resolved that the Board of Trustees of Community College District 535 ratifies the payment of salaries for teaching on an overload basis during the spring 2025 semester; the total payment amounting to \$537,459.10."

2/25-5 Approval of Clinical Practice Agreements

"Be it resolved that the Board of Trustees of Community College District 535 approves the following cooperative agreements:

Cancer Registry Management (1)
Nursing (1)
Pharmacy Technician (1)."

2/25-6 Approval of Intergovernmental Agreements between Oakton College and the City of Des Plaines

"Be it resolved that the Board of Trustees of Community College 535 hereby approves the intergovernmental agreements between Oakton College and the City of Des Plaines, attached hereto."

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

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

The motion carried. Student Trustee Ocaña favored the resolution.

2/25-7 Authorization to Approve February 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>
2/25-7a	1	WAN/Internet Service for the Evanston Health Careers Education Center – Three-Year Contract	Comcast Business Communications, LLC Philadelphia, PA	\$43,056.00
2/25-7b	1	Digital and Traditional Marketing Services – One-Year Contract Renewal	VisionPoint Marketing, LLC Raleigh, NC	\$450,000.00
2/25-7c	1	RedHat Enterprise Linux Annual Maintenance and Software Assurance – One-Year Contract Renewal	Emergent, LLC Virginia Beach, VA	\$31,320.00
2/25-7d	1	Storage Area Network Software and Hardware Support and Maintenance	SHI International Corporation Somerset, NJ	\$77,154.92
2/25-7e	1	Owner’s Representative Services – Master Plan	Cotter Consulting, Inc Chicago, IL	\$800,000.00
2/25-7f	1	Consulting Services for Branding Wall	Greenlight Team, LLC Chicago, IL	\$34,700.00
GRAND TOTAL:				\$1,436,230.92.”

Trustee Yanow seconded the motion.

Before the roll call, Trustee Burns asked for item 2/25-7e to be voted on separately.

Trustee Bashiri-Remetio called the roll for approval of purchases except 2/25-7e:

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

The motion carried. Student Trustee Ocaña favored the resolution.

Trustee Stafford offered: “Be it resolved that the Board of Trustees of Community College District 535 authorizes the purchase of Owner’s Representative Services – Master Plan from Cotter Consulting, Inc., 100 S Wacker Drive, Suite 920, Chicago, IL 60606, for the total amount of \$800,000.00.”

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

Trustee Bashiri-Remetio	Aye
Trustee Burns	Nay

Trustee Bush	Aye
Trustee Stafford	Aye
Trustee Toussaint	Aye
Trustee Yanow	Aye

The motion carried. Student Trustee Ocaña abstained.

2/25-8 Preview and Initial Discussion of Upcoming Purchases

The following purchases will be presented for approval at an upcoming Board of Trustees meeting:

- a. Baseball Field Parking Lot Reconstruction
- b. Job Search Genius – One-Year Contract Renewal
- c. zSpace Laptops Replacement
- d. Used Electric Vehicles
- e. ShareStream Cloud-Based Video on Demand – Three-Year Contract
- f. Chrome River Travel Management – Three-Year Contract

2/25-9 Authorization to Hire Full-Time, Tenure-Track Faculty Members

Trustee Toussaint offered: “Be it resolved that the Board of Trustees of Community College District 535 approves the attached resolutions for Ms. Mary Ellen Girgis and Mr. Vijay Shankar for the full-time, tenure-track faculty hires for the 2025-2026 academic year, beginning in August 2025. They will receive the salary associated with the lane and step described as follows:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Academic Rank and Assignment</u>	<u>Lane-Step</u>	<u>Base Salary</u>
Ms. Mary Ellen Girgis	Assistant Professor Surgical Technology	A-7	\$72,223
Mr. Vijay Shankar	Assistant Professor Cardiac Sonography	B-5	\$69,458.”

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

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

The motion carried. Student Trustee Ocaña favored the resolution.

2/25-10 Acceptance of Faculty Retirements

Trustee Bashiri-Remetio offered: “Be it resolved that the Board of Trustees of Community College District 535 accepts the retirements of Carrie Kelly and Michelle James.”

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

2/25-11 Approval of Award of Tenure

Trustee Yanow offered: “Be it resolved that the Board of Trustees of Community College District 535, by the authority vested in it by the State of Illinois, hereby grants tenure, effective after the completion of the spring 2025 semester, to the following faculty:

Jayne Blacker, Associate Professor, Mathematics
 Christy Carter, Associate Professor, Speech and Theatre
 Michelle Oh, Associate Professor, Library
 Toni Surdo, Associate Professor of Psychology
 George Vail, Assistant Professor, Automotive Technology.”

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

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

The motion carried. Student Trustee Ocaña favored the resolution.

2/25-12 Acceptance of Administrator Resignation

Trustee Bush offered: "Be it resolved that the Board of Trustees of Community College District 535 accepts the resignation of Mr. LeVon McAllister effective March 7, 2025"

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

2/25-13 First Read of Policy Revision

Trustee Stafford offered: "Be it resolved that the Board of Trustees of Community College District 535 hereby accepts for review the proposed revisions to Policy 1011 attached hereto with action to take place at the next regularly scheduled Board meeting."

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

2/25-14 Notification of Award of Grants


Funding has been made available to Oakton College:

- a. ICCB Noncredit Workforce Training Initiative Grant.....\$105,000.00
(Manager: Eilish McDonagh Hermer and Leah Kintner / Administrator: Delia Rodriguez)
 - b. Illinois Community College Board Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education Supplemental (IELCE Supplemental) \$52,947.00
(Manager: Elena Smoukova / Administrator: Delia Rodriguez)
- TOTAL:..... \$157,947.00**

Adjournment

Chair Toussaint 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, March 18, 2025 at the Des Plaines Campus.

Chair Toussaint made a motion to adjourn, which was seconded by Student Trustee Ocaña. A voice vote was called and the meeting was adjourned at 7:20 p.m.


 Marie Lynn Toussaint, Chair


 Theresa Bashiri-Remetio, Secretary

Minutes recorded by:
Beatriz Sparks
2/2025