

## **OCCA Board of Directors Meeting Takeaways – October 4, 2024**

On Friday, October 4, 2024, the OCCA Board met in a hybrid fashion at Rogue Community College in Grants Pass, with 15 members joining the first meeting of the 2024-25 year in person and another 23 virtually. Here are some takeaways from the meeting that can be shared with local community college board members.

### **About OCCA & the Role of the OCCA Board Representative**

Since this meeting was the first OCCA Board meeting of the 2024-25 year, OCCA Board President Austin Fohnagy provided an overview of OCCA, its mission and services, as well as the role of OCCA Board Representatives. The OCCA Board consists of the president and one locally elected board member from each of the 17 community colleges in the state, as well as four non-voting members with one representative from each of the following: the Higher Education Coordinating Commission, Oregon Education Association, Oregon School Boards Association, and Oregon Community College Student Association. The elected board members designated from each college to serve on the OCCA Board are called OCCA Representatives. Their role is a two-way street – under OCCA's Bylaws the OCCA Representatives share information they learn at OCCA Board meetings and events with their fellow local college board members, and they also share information, policy recommendations, and concerns from their boards with OCCA. Each month, OCCA staff provide representatives with talking points to use at their respective college board meetings to provide an update on OCCA and its activities to support colleges. In addition, OCCA provides these Board Meeting Takeaways following each of the association's quarterly board meetings to keep members informed.

### **OCCA Standing Committee Appointments**

OCCA Board President Austin Fohnagy appointed – and the Board approved – various OCCA representatives, locally elected college board members, college staff and presidents to OCCA standing committees for 2024-25. [Click here for the updated membership](#). Welcome to the new committee appointees; we look forward to your participation in OCCA committees this year!

### **Legislative Update**

OCCA Deputy Director John Wykoff provided a legislative update, highlighting how OCCA worked with the chair of the House Committee on Higher Education to provide an update on emerging community college Bachelor of Science Nursing (BSN) programs. In addition, The Committee heard an update from the Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC) on the ongoing work to create more seamless transfer from community colleges to four-year public universities. OCCA has been closely involved in legislative work around better transfer pathways from community colleges to public universities. Nicholas Insalata, a computer science faculty member from Portland Community College testified.

Wykoff also noted that OCCA may ask legislators to raise the community college capital construction cap from \$8 million to \$12 million to account for inflationary costs.

In addition, Wykoff presented the OCCA Legislative & Regulatory Policy Positions draft with recommendations from OCCA's Legislative Committee and DEI Committee for the 2025-27

biennium. This document provides guidance to OCCA staff throughout the legislative session and the biennium and is the basis from which staff approach taking positions on pending legislation and issues. The positions document is approved by the OCCA Board prior to odd-numbered year legislative sessions and will be brought back to the Board in December for their approval.

### **OCCA Member Feedback Survey**

OCCA Director of Operations Katie Archambault provided a high-level overview of the results from the annual Member Feedback Survey. The 2024 Member Feedback Survey marks the second year of OCCA's effort to gather comprehensive insights on member and stakeholder awareness, satisfaction, and engagement with our services, events, and advocacy efforts. The primary goal of this annual survey is to assess the effectiveness of OCCA's offerings, identify areas of success, and highlight opportunities for improvement. This year's survey saw increased participation with 68 respondents, compared to 46 the previous year. Overall, the majority of respondents expressed satisfaction with OCCA's services, particularly in areas such as advocacy and customer service, there are clear opportunities to enhance member engagement through more targeted communication and by addressing the barriers to participation in events and trainings. Next, the various OCCA committees will carefully review the feedback that pertains to their areas of focus and work to develop solutions that address the feedback provided by respondents.

Thank you to all who participated this year and provide valuable feedback. These surveys help OCCA make improvements to services, programs and events, so the feedback is valuable to staff. To see an overview of the results, along with insights for improvements, please [click here](#).

### **OSBA Dues Increase**

Oregon School Boards Association (OSBA) Board President Sami Al-Abdrabbuh brought forward a request from OSBA related to increased dues. He noted OSBA has not raised dues for more than 25 years and is now asking for a 15% increase over five years. Dues will increase significantly over the five-year period and then will annually increase using an inflationary factor. OCCA pays OSBA dues on behalf of all the community colleges, which impacts OCCA's budget and could have a trickle-down effect on colleges through increased OCCA membership dues. Several OCCA board members raised concerns about the size of the dues increase over a five-year period and asked questions about the return on investment. Pointed questions were asked about how OSBA works on behalf of community colleges and several examples were provided. OSBA will finalize its decision on whether to increase dues at its November annual membership meeting.

### **Values Workshop**

The Board meeting also included a workshop with Miriam Freidman of Strategic Spark Consulting, who worked with board members on beginning the process to develop a values statement for OCCA and discuss shared values. Board members broke out into small groups to discuss commonalities and differences among the 17 colleges. OCCA will continue this process through additional workshops with the Executive Committee and Board.

## Upcoming Events

### **OCCA Lunch & Learn Webinar – October 31, 2024**

The first Lunch & Learn webinar for 2024-25 will take place on Oct. 31: “OCCA 101.” Attendees will learn how OCCA serves colleges and about key initiatives. These webinars – which are included in OCCA membership – will continue to take place on the last Thursday of each month at noon through June (no December webinar due to the holidays). [Click here](#) for the schedule and [click here](#) to get registered for one or all the webinars!

### **OCCA Annual Conference – November 6-8, 2024**

Registration for the 2024 OCCA Annual Conference at Salishan Coastal Lodge in beautiful Gleneden Beach on the Oregon coast closes October 15! Community college presidents, board members, administrators, faculty/staff, and students are encouraged to attend this great training and networking opportunity. This year’s theme is “Charting a Course to the Future.” Keynote speakers include Marty Alvarado from SOVA Solutions, who is a passionate advocate for equitable and transformative education with over two decades of experience driving impactful change across education and workforce development systems. Our other keynote speaker is Parfait Bassalé of Bassalé Consulting, who led efforts to reduce the achievement gap for historically excluded students during his tenure as the Executive Diversity Officer at South Puget Sound Community College, which was named a 2023 Aspen Top 10 Community College finalist.

More information about the conference, including details about breakout presentations, exhibitors and sponsors, hotel, and the annual Howard Cherry Awards of Excellence is available on the OCCA website, <https://www.occa17.com/occa-annual-conference/>.

*Have a question about any of this information or other community college issues? Want to learn how to get more involved with the OCCA Board? Contact OCCA staff at [occa@occa17.com](mailto:occa@occa17.com) or visit [www.occa17.com](http://www.occa17.com). Be sure to also follow us on Facebook @OregonCommunityCollegeAssociation and on Twitter @ORCommColleges, and subscribe to the OCCA Digest e-newsletter on our website.*