

OCCA Board of Directors Meeting Takeaways – May 16, 2025

On Friday, May 16, 2025, the OCCA Board met for its last quarterly meeting of the fiscal year. The hybrid meeting was held at Chemeketa Community College in Salem and on Zoom for those joining remotely. Here are some takeaways from the meeting that can be shared with your local community college board members.

OCCA 2025-2026 Budget Approved

The Board unanimously approved the OCCA 2025-2026 budget.

The OCCA 2025-2026 Budget was presented to the Board by OCCA Director of Operations Katie Archambault along with OCCA Board Treasurer Laurie Chesley. Following a detailed review of current financial trends, organizational needs and priorities, the Budget Committee unanimously recommended this budget for approval. The 2025-2026 budget reflects a thoughtful and deliberate review of projected revenues and expenditures. It was developed with OCCA's organizational priorities at the forefront, ensuring that resources are aligned with strategic goals and the association's mission-driven work. The budget aims to support OCCA's ongoing operations and strategic initiatives while maintaining fiscal responsibility and long-term sustainability.

OCCA 2025-2026 Executive Committee & Officers Elected

The Board unanimously approved the slate of nominees for the 2025-2026 OCCA Executive Committee and officers. They are:

- President - Andrew Speer, Board Member, Mt. Hood CC
- Vice President - Pat Fahey, Board Member, Rogue CC
- Secretary - Dr. Jessica Howard, President, Chemeketa CC
- Treasurer - Dr. Rachel Pokrandt, President, Umpqua CC
- At Large (2024-2026) - Kristin Adams, Board Member, Linn-Benton CC
- At Large (2025-2027) - Susan Anderson, Board Member, Southwestern Oregon CC
- Past President - Austin Folsnag, Board Member, Lane CC
- In addition to these officers and Executive Committee members, there will be two Ex-Officio members who serve on the Executive Committee by virtue of their positions:
 - Oregon Presidents' Council Chair – Mark Browning, President, Blue Mountain CC
 - Office of Community Colleges and Workforce Development Director – Donna Lewelling

The Board also thanked the 2024-2025 Executive Committee for their work and recognized outgoing Board President Austin Folsnag (Lane CC) for his leadership over the past year.

OCCA Executive Director Evaluation

The Board unanimously approved the OCCA Executive Director Evaluation.

The Board met in Executive Session pursuant to ORS 192.660(2)(i) to discuss the annual evaluation of OCCA Executive Director Dr. Abby Lee, who began in her role on July 1, 2024. Prior to Dr. Lee's start, the evaluation process was updated to incorporate feedback from both Board members and staff through surveys. Following the Executive Session, the Board returned to regular session and approved the Executive Director evaluation which recognized Lee's outstanding leadership and relationship-building efforts over the past year.

Equity Call to Action

The Board unanimously approved OCCA's updated Equity Call to Action.

As OCCA continues its work to advance equity, diversity, and inclusion, the Board approved a recommendation from OCCA's DEI Committee to update this living document. Originally adopted by the Board in October 2020, this document reflects OCCA's intentional and ongoing commitment to racial and social justice. The updated Call to Action reinforces OCCA's role in advancing equity and serves as a framework to guide the actions of Board members and association staff – both professionally and personally – as we work to live out these values. This work remains ongoing and deeply rooted in OCCA's mission.

[Click here for the Board Statement and Call to Action.](#)

Board Approves OCCA Values Statement

The Board unanimously approved the new OCCA Values Statement.

Following a nine-month process guided by facilitator Miriam Friedman, the OCCA Board finalized the organization's new values statement. The statement aligns with the OCCA mission and vision statements and is as follows:

OCCA Values:

- **Student Success & Advocacy** - Elevating the voice of Oregon's community colleges while advancing access, achievement and lifelong learning.
- **Equity** - Championing inclusivity and ensuring all students have the opportunity to succeed.
- **Collaboration & Local Responsiveness** - Partnering across colleges and communities to honor the unique strengths and needs of each institution while supporting a shared vision.
- **Accountability** - Upholding honesty, transparency and responsibility to build trust and ensure meaningful outcomes.
- **Innovation** - Embracing forward-looking and sustainable practices to address evolving challenges.

OCCA Mission:

Leading with racial equity, we advocate, communicate, and collaborate to strengthen community colleges for the benefit of Oregonians, particularly those historically underserved or

systemically marginalized in higher education.

OCCA Vision:

We support vibrant and responsive community colleges that empower diverse communities through workforce training and education. We are a collective voice, advocating for policies that build a resilient and prosperous future for all.

Interim Legislative Update

As the 2025 legislative session enters its final stretch, Deputy Director John Wykoff reported to the Board that OCCA is working with colleges to plan for both the immediate next steps following this session and the upcoming 2026 short session. At the same time, the OCCA Legislative committee is looking at policy areas for potential legislation or other initiatives that align with organizational priorities and respond to issues emerging from the concluding legislative session. These areas include:

- Adult Reconnect
- Board Development & Student Participation in College Governance
- Bachelor of Applied Science Degrees
- Transition to Corequisite Education
- State Revenue and Budget

Upcoming Events

OCCA Lunch & Learn Webinars – May 29 & June 26

There are two OCCA Lunch & Learn webinars left for the 2024-2025 year.

- May 29: *What's Happening in Washington – A Federal Update with ACCT* – Join us for an exclusive federal policy update featuring our national partners at the Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT). This timely webinar will provide an in-depth look at recent developments in Washington, D.C., including insights into the federal budget process, newly issued executive orders, and emerging priorities impacting community colleges. This is your direct line to the latest federal updates — straight from our partners on the ground in the nation's capital. Don't miss this opportunity to gain critical context, ask questions, and better understand the evolving federal landscape shaping higher education.
- June 26: Public Meetings Law and Other Basics of Board Service. Board elections are over and new board members will soon be sworn in. Join us at this Lunch & Learn focused on the basics of community college board governance, public meetings and ethics laws. Learn about what is required at the Board's July organizational meeting and how to structure board retreats to comply with public meetings law. We will also share resources for orienting new board members and will make time for your questions.

Visit the Lunch & Learn page on OCCA's website to register:

<https://www.occa17.com/lunchandlearn>.

2025 Board Leadership & Governance Summit – September 6, 2025, Salem, OR

The Board Leadership & Governance Summit is a dedicated learning and development opportunity for community college board members and presidents. This one-day event will offer insights into effective board governance, statewide higher education structures, and the key responsibilities and expectations of board service.

This summit is designed to support both new and experienced board members, providing timely information, practical guidance, and the opportunity to engage with peers from across the state. We encourage all board members and presidents to attend as part of your ongoing leadership development and commitment to strong, informed governance.

More details and registration information will be available this summer on our website, <https://occa17.com/board-summit/>.

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 or visit 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.