



**Minutes of the January 20, 2026 Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees of Community College District 535**

The 817<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Board of Trustees of Community College District 535 was conducted on January 20, 2026 at the Des Plaines campus of Oakton College, 1600 East Golf Road, Des Plaines, Illinois.

**Closed Session – Call to Order and Roll Call**

Chair Burns called the meeting to order at 5:31 p.m. in room 1502. Trustee Bashiri-Remetio called the roll:

Trustee Martha Burns	Chair	Present
Trustee Theresa Bashiri-Remetio	Vice Chair	Present
Trustee William Stafford	Secretary	Absent
Trustee Micah Eimer		Present
Trustee Benjamin Salzberg		Present
Trustee Marie Lynn Toussaint		Present
Trustee Wendy Yanow		Present
Trustee Chris AbiNader	Student Trustee	Present

Also present in room 1502 were Dr. Joianne Smith, President; Dr. Bernard Little, Vice President for Student Affairs; Dr. Ileo Lott, Vice President for Academic Affairs; and Michele Roberts, Vice President for Administrative Affairs.

Chair Burns 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 December 16, 2025; and considering the appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance or dismissal of specific employees, collective negotiating matters, and pending litigation.

Trustee Salzberg made the motion, seconded by Trustee Eimer. Trustee Bashiri-Remetio called the roll:

Trustee Bashiri-Remetio	Aye
Trustee Burns	Aye
Trustee Eimer	Aye
Trustee Salzberg	Aye
Trustee Toussaint	Aye
Trustee Yanow	Aye
Trustee AbiNader	Aye

At 6:06 p.m., Trustee Yanow made a motion to adjourn the closed session meeting which was seconded by Trustee Toussaint. A voice vote was called and the closed session was adjourned.

**Open Session – Call to Order and Roll Call**

Chair Burns called the regular meeting of the Board of Trustees to order at 6:14 p.m. in room 1506.

Trustee Bashiri-Remetio called the roll:

Trustee Martha Burns	Chair	Present
Trustee Theresa Bashiri-Remetio	Vice Chair	Present
Trustee William Stafford	Secretary	Absent
Trustee Micah Eimer		Present
Trustee Benjamin Salzberg		Present
Trustee Marie Lynn Toussaint		Present
Trustee Wendy Yanow		Present
Trustee Chris AbiNader	Student Trustee	Present

Also present in room 1506:

Leadership: Dr. Joianne Smith, President; Dr. Bernard Little, Vice President for Student Affairs; Dr. Ileo Lott, Vice President for Academic Affairs; and Michele Roberts, Vice President for Administrative Affairs.

Administrators: Maribel Alimboyoguen, Dean of Health Careers; Marc Battista, Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs; Steve Butera, Director of Communications and External Relations; Dr. Sebastian Contreras Jr., Assistant Vice President for Student Affairs; Julia Gray, Interim Director of Campus Technologies; Thomas Hicks Jr., Director of Student Success and Academic Interventions; Matt Huber, Dean of Enrollment Management; Jake Jeremiah, Dean of Library; Dr. Mark Kiel, Dean of Counseling, Health and Wellness Services; Dr. Ashley Knight, Interim Dean of Liberal Arts; Dr. Andrea Lehmacher, Director of Marketing; Dr. Kanchana Mendes, Dean of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment; Nathan Norman, Senior Director of Workforce Development; Dr. James Rabchuk, Dean of STEM; Delia Rodriguez, Dean of Adult and Continuing Education; Emmanuel Sarris, Interim Dean of Business and Career Technologies; John Wade, Chief Information Officer; Dan Weber, Registrar/Director of Registrar Services; Aaron Wernick, Chief of Police and Emergency Management; Ella Whitehead, Director of Admission and Equity Outreach; and Andy Williams, Controller.

Union Leaders: Jennifer Crowley, Classified Staff Association; Mary Hope Griffin, Adjunct Faculty Association; and Patrick O'Donnell, Full-Time Faculty Association.

Faculty: Marietta Arasniewicz, Physical Therapy Assistant; Melodie Graber, Chemistry; Kursheed Ichhaporia, Biology; Michael Peat, Automotive Technology; and Jennifer Reeb, Mathematics.

Staff: Alexis Alvarez, Financial Assistance; Giacomo Cirrincione, Learning Center; Victoria Cleary, Health Information Technology; Allison Conner, Learning Center; John Donoghue, Facilities; Leslie Dzike, Institutional Research; Joseph Hanafee, Advising and Transitions; Leah Hartono, Academic Affairs; Marcus Hayes, Auxiliary Services; Esther Hong, Advising and Transitions; Mike Loveday, Marketing and Communications; Ewa Lyczewska, Marketing and Communications; Gabrielle O'Connor, Student Life and Campus Inclusion; Rob Peterson, Access, Equity and Diversity; Vinita Shah, Media Services; Francisco Sosa, Information Technology; and Beatriz Sparks, Office of the President.

Students: Ana Adamaze and Dominika Sass.

**Pledge of Allegiance** – Chair Burns led the pledge.

**Land Acknowledgment** – Student Trustee AbiNader read the Land Acknowledgment.

### **Approval of Minutes**

Chair Burns asked a motion for the approval of the minutes of the December 16, 2025 regular meeting of the Board of Trustees. Trustee Salzberg made the motion. Trustee Bashiri-Remetio seconded the motion. A voice vote was called and the minutes were unanimously approved.

### **Statement by the President**

#### Condolences

- To Nurse Manager Roshni Jaimon on the passing of her mother Annamma "Alice" Thodukayil on December 13.
- To Joan Morris, tutor in the Learning Center on the loss of her husband, Ken Morris on January 7.
- To the family of Richard Stacewicz, retired faculty member in history and political science who passed away on January 15 following a long and courageous battle with kidney disease.
- To Senior Manager of Content Marketing, Kelsey Kapolnek on the passing of her father.

#### Congratulations

- Director of Admission and Equity Outreach, Ella Whitehead received the President's Award from the Evanston Northshore Branch of the NAACP at their 61st Freedom Fund Banquet on Nov. 15.
- Director of Online Curriculum and Instruction, Matthew Boutilier, and Distinguished Professor of History, Wendy Adele-Marie have been selected to receive the 2026 Innovative eLearning Technology award from the Instructional Technology Council (ITC). The award recognizes the outstanding use of a new technology tool or delivery system to accomplish a new method of student delivery or learning. The award

will be formally presented during a special recognition luncheon on March 14, 2026, at the ITC Annual Conference in Austin, TX.

### Happenings

- The Oakton community will reflect on Dr. Martin Luther King's legacy to consider how his call for justice, courage, and community continues to guide us today. Rev. Dr. Michael CR Nabors, Senior Pastor at Second Baptist Church in Evanston, will share reflections on change, resilience, and what it means to stay steadfast during challenging times. The event will take place on January 22 from 2 to 4 p.m. in the Student Center.
- President Smith thanked everyone who helped to coordinate the Spring 2026 opening day session last Monday and to trustees Stafford and Yanow for joining us. The event focused on preparations for the 10-year reaffirmation of accreditation visit that will happen in 2027.

### **Student Spotlight**

Dominika Sass came to the United States from Poland in 2020 to work as an au pair, and decided to enroll at Oakton after she became an international student. She wanted to pursue a degree in accounting and business. Her experience at Oakton was challenging—she felt overwhelmed by the new experience with a new language and the nuances of her visa requirements. Dominika said she received support from her professors, and she learned to ask questions and seek help as part of her learning process. Many of her classes challenged her beliefs and encouraged her to see the world from a different perspective.

Encouraged by her professors, Dominika became involved with the Illinois CPA Society, and later served as a student ambassador, helping other Oakton students. She is also involved in campus life where she stepped into leadership roles—she is the president for Phi Theta Kappa, and the Anime Club. These roles have helped her develop leadership, communication and organizational skills. Throughout her time at Oakton, the Student Life team and the international student support staff have played a significant role in her growth, and their support has made a lasting impact on her experience.

Dominika's journey as a full-time international student at Oakton will come to a close at the end of the spring semester, and she will enter a transitional phase that allows international students to gain professional experience related to their field of study. Dominika said that Oakton has given her the perfect foundation to make her dreams a reality not only preparing her academically, but also providing her with a space to become confident and adaptable.

Dominika would like Oakton to continue providing and expand services for international students.

### **Public Participation – None**

### **Board Report: Marketing and Communications Update and Impact**

Katherine Sawyer, Chief Advancement Officer, Dr. Andrea Lehmacher, Director of Marketing, and the Marketing and Communications team provided the Board of Trustees with an update on current initiatives, and their impact in the community. The presentation included marketing campaigns, legislative outreach, community engagement, media relationships, and internal communications activities.

The Marketing and Communications area is looking to expand the team, and is currently planning for the Oakton Welcome Center, and preparing for the HLC Accreditation visit.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

#### **1/26-1a Approval of Consent Agenda**

Trustee Salzberg offered: "Be it resolved that the Board of Trustees of Community College District 535 approves adoption of the Consent Agenda."

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

**1/26-1b Approval of Consent Agenda Items 1/26-2 through 1/26-7**

Trustee Eimer offered: "Be it resolved that the Board of Trustees of Community College District 535 approves the following items 1/26-2 through 1/26-7 as listed in the Consent Agenda."

**1/26-2 Ratification of Payment of Bills for December 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 \$10,071,581.42 for all check amounts as listed and for all purposes as appearing on a report dated December 2025."

**1/26-3 Acceptance of Treasurer's Report for December 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 December 2025."

**1/26-4 Ratification of Payment of Professional Personnel – Fall 2025**

"Be it resolved that the Board of Trustees of Community College District 535 approves an adjustment of \$6,896.71 to the total amount of part-time teaching salaries paid during the fall 2025 semester; the revised total payment amount is \$3,994,174.15."

"Be if further resolved that the Board of Trustees of Community College District 535 approves an adjustment of \$9,161.10 to the total amount of faculty overload salaries paid during the fall 2025 semester; the revised total payment amount is \$992,939.31."

**1/26-5 Authorization to Pay Professional Personnel**

"Be it resolved that the Board of Trustees of Community College District 535 hereby authorizes the Treasurer of the College to pay 2026 spring semester part-time faculty and adjunct faculty on January 30, 2026, and full-time overload payments on February 13, 2026, with ratification at the February Board meeting."

**1/26-6 Approval of Clinical Practice Agreements**

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

Medical Assistant (1)  
Medical Assistant / Nursing / Phlebotomy (4)."

**1/26-7 Approval of Intergovernmental Agreements with High School District Partners**

"Be it resolved that the Board of Trustees of Community College District 535 authorizes the approval of an Intergovernmental Agreements between Oakton College and Evanston Township High School District 202 and Glenbrook High School District 225."

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

Trustee Bashiri-Remetio	Aye
Trustee Burns	Aye
Trustee Eimer	Aye
Trustee Salzberg	Aye
Trustee Toussaint	Aye
Trustee Yanow	Aye

The motion carried. Student Trustee AbiNader favored the resolution.

**1/26-8 Authorization to Approve January Purchases**

Trustee Toussaint 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>
1/26-8a	1	IP Telephony Annual Maintenance and Software Assurance – One-Year Renewal	Telcom Innovations Group, LLC Itasca, IL	\$40,073.43
1/26-8b	1	Honorlock Remote Proctoring Services License – One-Year Contract	Honorlock, Inc Boca Raton, FL	\$173,100.00
1/26-8c	1	Furniture for the Enrollment Center and Enrollment Suite Workspace Renovations – Des Plaines Campus	Forward Space, LLC Wood Dale, IL	\$82,726.03
1/26-8d	1	Consulting Services from CRMified to support Salesforce Implementation	CRMified Orlando, FL	\$80,000.00
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>				<b>\$375,899.46."</b>

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

Trustee Bashiri-Remetio	Aye
Trustee Burns	Aye
Trustee Eimer	Aye
Trustee Salzberg	Aye
Trustee Toussaint	Aye
Trustee Yanow	Aye

The motion carried. Student Trustee AbiNader favored the resolution.

**1/26-9 Ratification for the Purchase of Facilities Truck Repair**

Trustee Bashiri-Remetio offered: "Be it resolved that the Board of Trustees of Community College District 535 authorizes the Ratification for the purchase of the Facility Truck Repair with Rush Truck Centers, 575 St. Paul Boulevard, Carol Stream, IL 60188, for a total not to exceed \$35,689.34."

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

Trustee Bashiri-Remetio	Aye
Trustee Burns	Aye
Trustee Eimer	Aye
Trustee Salzberg	Aye
Trustee Toussaint	Aye
Trustee Yanow	Aye

The motion carried. Student Trustee AbiNader favored the resolution.

**1/26-10 Preview and Initial Discussion of Upcoming Purchases**

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

- a. Universal Collaborative Robot
- b. Advanced Driver Assistant Systems (ADAS)
- c. Contracted Instructional Training for the Paramedic Program
- d. RedHat Enterprise Linux Annual Maintenance and Software Assurance

**1/26-11 Authorization to Hire Assistant Vice President for Operations**

Trustee Yanow offered: "Be it resolved that the Board of Trustees of Community College District 535 approves the appointment of Ms. Kathleen Dunne Balducci as Assistant Vice President for Operations effective February 23, 2026 at an annual salary of \$165,000. That salary will be prorated for the period of February 23, 2026 through June 30, 2026."

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

Trustee Bashiri-Remetio	Aye
Trustee Burns	Aye
Trustee Eimer	Aye
Trustee Salzberg	Aye
Trustee Toussaint	Aye
Trustee Yanow	Aye

The motion carried. Student Trustee AbiNader favored the resolution.

**1/26-12 Approval of Emeritus Appointments**

Trustee Toussaint offered: "Be it resolved that the Board of Trustees of Community College District 535 approve the ten-year Emeritus appointments for Professors William Strond, Sheila Zabin, Barbara Cohen, Marcia Kiraly, and Elaine Phillips."

"Be it further resolved that the Board of Trustees of Community College District 535 approves a ten-year Emeritus re-appointment for Deborah L. Albano."

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

Trustee Bashiri-Remetio	Aye
Trustee Burns	Aye
Trustee Eimer	Aye
Trustee Salzberg	Aye
Trustee Toussaint	Aye
Trustee Yanow	Aye

The motion carried. Student Trustee AbiNader favored the resolution.

**1/26-13 Approval of New Unit of Instruction**

Trustee Eimer offered: "Be it resolved that the Board of Trustees of Community College District 535 approves the following new unit of instruction: Data Analytics Certificate."

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

Trustee Bashiri-Remetio	Aye
Trustee Burns	Aye
Trustee Eimer	Aye
Trustee Salzberg	Aye
Trustee Toussaint	Aye
Trustee Yanow	Aye

The motion carried. Student Trustee AbiNader favored the resolution.

**1/26-14 Notification of Award of Grants**

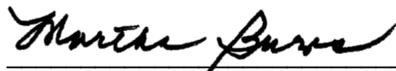
Funding has been made available to Oakton College:

- a. Noncredit Strategies at Work FY26 .....\$110,000.00
- TOTAL: .....\$110,000.00**

**Adjournment**

Chair Burns 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, February 17, 2026 at the Skokie Campus.

Trustee Salzberg made a motion to adjourn, which was seconded by Trustee Yanow. A voice vote was called and the meeting was adjourned at 7:27 p.m.

  
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 Martha Burns, Chair

  
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 William Stafford, Secretary

Minutes recorded by:  
Beatriz Sparks  
1/2026