The 592nd meeting of the Board of Trustees of Community College District 535 was held on Tuesday, February 21, 2006, at Oakton Community College, Des Plaines, IL.

Call to Order and Roll Call

Mr. Wadhwa called the meeting to order at 6:20 p.m. in room 1503 and the roll was called:

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<tr>
<td>Mr. Wadhwa</td>
<td>Chair</td>
<td>Present</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dr. Rosen</td>
<td>Vice Chair</td>
<td>Present</td>
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<td>Mr. Williams</td>
<td>Secretary</td>
<td>Present</td>
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<td>Dr. Alexopoulos</td>
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<td>Dr. Barshis</td>
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<td>Mr. Collins</td>
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<td>Present – arrived at 6:59 p.m.</td>
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<td>Dr. DiLeonardi</td>
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<td>Mr. Krzyminski</td>
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<td>Student Trustee</td>
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Closed Session

Dr. DiLeonardi offered a motion to go into closed session for the purpose of discussing litigation, collective negotiations, and the appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance or dismissal of employees. Dr. Barshis seconded the motion; a voice vote was called and the Trustees along with Dr. Lee, Mr. Chirempes, Ms. Lucas, Dr. Prendergast, Mr. Oudenhoven, Ms. Rizzo and Dr. Smith went into closed session at 6:20 p.m. in Room 1503.

Dr. DiLeonardi offered a motion to adjourn the closed session. Dr. Barshis seconded the motion; a voice vote was called and the meeting was adjourned at 7:32 p.m.

Call to Order and Roll Call

Mr. Wadhwa reconvened the 592nd meeting of the Board of Trustees at 7:36 p.m. in room 1506 and Secretary Williams called the roll:

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<td>Mr. Krzyminski</td>
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<td>Student Trustee</td>
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Also in attendance were Dr. Margaret Lee, Mr. George Chirempes, Ms. Bonnie Lucas, Dr. Nancy Prendergast, Ms. Barbara Rizzo, Dr. Joianne Smith, Mr. Joseph Appel, Mr. Maurice Archer, Ms. Ellie Bahrmasel, Dr. Kalyani Banerjee, Ms. Ann Marie Barry, Dr. Trudy Bers, Mr. Paul Boisvert, Ms. Michele Brown, Ms. WeiJa Chang, Mr. Carl Costanza, Mr. Timothy Davidson, Ms. Susan Doll, Dr. Carlee Drummer, Mr. Adrian Emmanuel, Mr. Jorell Espinosa, Ms. Julia Fraas, Mr. Will Frank, Mr. Terry Graf, Ms. Linda Korbel, Ms. Dawn Kuerschner, Ms. Roxann Marshburn, Ms. Marion Miller, Mr. Jeffrey Moro, Ms. Dawn Mueller, Mr. Gary Newhouse, Mr. Bruce Oates, Mr. D. Arnie Oudenhoven, Ms. Michele Reznick, Ms. Ashlea Schroeder, Dr. Katherine Schuster, Ms. Doreen Schwartz, Ms. Lynn Seinfeld, Mr. Mark Sprecher, Dr. Suzanne Stock, Dr. Randy Swing, Ms. Anita Taylor, Ms. Cheryl Warmann, Mr. Robert Whitman, Ms. Melissa Woo, and Dr. Donna Younger.

Ms. Barbara Dayton represented the Adjunct Faculty Association; Ms. Jillian Verstrate represented the Classified Staff Association; and Dr. Laura Saret represented the Full-time Faculty Association.

Mr. Timothy Farrell and Mr. Michael Pistorio represented the OCCurrence student newspaper. Ms. Pat Krochmal represented the Des Plaines Times. Ms. Patricia Dalzell was present as recording secretary to the Board.

**Pledge of Allegiance**

Dr. Nancy Prendergast led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Approval of the Minutes of January 17, 1006, Board Meeting**

Dr. Rosen offered a motion for approval of the minutes of the January 17, 2006, meeting. Dr. Barshis seconded the motion. A voice vote was called, and the Minutes of the January 17, 2006, meeting were approved.

Following the approval of the January 17, 2006, minutes, Chairman Wadhwa asked Mr. Krzyminski to read the College’s Vision, Mission and Values Statement into the record.

*We are the community’s college.*

*We are dedicated, first, to excellence in teaching and learning.*

*We challenge our students to experience the hard work and satisfaction of learning that leads to intellectual growth and support them academically, emotionally and socially.*

*We encourage them to entertain and question ideas, think critically, solve problems, and engage with other cultures, with one another, and with us.*

*We expect our students to assume responsibility for their own learning, to exercise leadership and to apply ethical principles in their academic, work, and personal lives.*

*We demand from ourselves and our students tolerance, fairness, responsibility, compassion and integrity.*
We are a community of learners.
We provide education and training for and throughout a lifetime.
We seek to improve and expand the services we offer in support of the people in the communities we serve.
We promote a caring community of staff and faculty members, students, administrators, and trustees, who in keeping with our values, work together to fulfill our mission.
We are a changing community.
We recognize that change is inevitable and that education must be for the future.
We respond to change informed by our values and our responsibility to our students and our communities.
We challenge our students to be capable global citizens, guided by knowledge and ethical principles, who will shape the future.

Statement by the President

Prior to her statement, Dr. Lee asked for introductions of those present.

Mr. Krzyminski introduced students Ellie Bahrmasel, Weija Chang, Tim Davidson, Adrian Emmanuel, Jorell Espinosa, Dawn Mueller, Michael Pistorio, Ashlea Schroeder, Robert Whitman and Melissa Woo.

Jillian Verstrate, President of the Classified Staff Association, introduced classified staff members Marion Miller, Business Services; Pat Dalzell, President’s Office; Mark Sprecher, Instructional Media Services; Will Frank, Television Services; and Tim Raetzman, Television Services, operating the direct cable feed in the Television Studio.

Laura Saret, President of the Full-time Faculty Association, introduced faculty members present: Dawn Kuerschner, Associate Professor, Nursing; Katherine Schuster, Associate Professor, Education; Paul Boisvert, Professor, Mathematics; Suzanne Stock, Professor, Mathematics; Julia Fraas, Associate Professor, Library Services; Anita Taylor, Professor and Chair, Health Information Technology; and Michele Reznick, Professor and Coordinator, Computer Technologies and Information Systems.

Barbara Dayton, President of the Adjunct Faculty Association, introduced instructors Kalyani Banerjee, Chemistry; Jeff Moro, Computers; Joe Appel, Management; Ellen Parmalee, BNAT, Susan Doll, Humanities; and Terry Graf, English.

The administrators present included Maurice Archer, Director, Accounting Services; Ann Marie Barry, Director, Student Activities; Trudy Bers, Executive Director, Institutional Research, Curriculum and Strategic Planning and Executive Assistant to the President; Ms. Michele Brown, Director, Admissions and Enrollment Management; Carl Costanza, Director of Facilities; Carlee Drummer, Executive Director, College Advancement; Linda Korbel, Dean, Languages, Humanities and the Arts; Roxann Marshburn, Director, Grants and Alternative Funding; Gary Newhouse, Dean, Library and Instructional Media Services; Bruce Oates, Director, Registration and Records; D. Arnie Oudenhoven, Director, Human Resources; Doreen Schwartz, Director,
Dr. Lee stated that today is a “Banner Day” as the College completed the transition from OakSTAR to the SunGard SCT Banner Student Information System. She offered her personal congratulations and the College’s collective thank you to Bonnie Lucas and the entire Banner team.

The President congratulated first time fathers Steve Repsys, College Advancement Writer, and David Rudden, Research Analyst, on the birth of baby girls. She also congratulated Erick Mann, Professor of History, on receiving the Chair Academy’s 2006 International Exemplary Leader Award. Dr. Lee stated that the International Exemplary Leader Award would be presented at the Chair Academy Conference in Tucson in April. She also remarked on the wonderful exhibit in the Koehnline Art Museum, featuring the work of Oakton Professors Jim Krauss and Peter Hessemer.

Dr. Lee offered condolences to Tim Raetzman, TV Services, on the passing of his mother; to Liz Leblanc, retired Professor of English, on the death of her husband; to Elyse Gerol, ESL-VITA Assistant, on the passing of her father; and to Ruben Ibanez, 3rd shift custodian at RHC, and his wife, on the death of their 15-year old daughter. She commented on the outpouring of support from the Oakton family for the Ibanez family.

**Report: First Year Experience**

Dr. Prendergast introduced Dr. Randy Swing and stated that he serves as the Co-Director and Senior Scholar for the Policy Center on the First Year of College located in Brevard, North Carolina. She stated that as part of the Center’s core staff, Dr. Swing was involved in developing the Foundations of Excellence Project and is co-author of the book *Achieving and Sustaining Institutional Excellence for the First Year of College*. Dr. Prendergast noted Dr. Swing’s many accomplishments over the past twenty years and stated that the College is very pleased to be a part of the Foundations of Excellence project, a national study that seeks to define characteristics of excellence in institutional programs and services provided to first year students.

Dr. Swing explained that the Policy Center on the First Year of College invited Oakton to participate in a nationwide project designed to enhance the learning and retention of beginning students. He stated that the Foundations of Excellence in the First College Year was originally piloted to four-year institutions and is now being developed for the two-year colleges. Dr. Swing noted that as part of the project, Oakton was given the opportunity to collaborate in developing an aspirational model for the new student experience. He explained that the model will enable colleges to envision a more effective experience for beginning college students and to assess the degree to which Oakton actually achieves excellence in accordance with the model. Dr. Swing noted that the goals of the project are to develop a research-based, comprehensive model of the first year that is attainable and immediately usable by Oakton to increase student
learning, success, and retention. The model can also serve as a means to measure and evaluate the level of achievement of the aspirational model.

Dr. Swing offered a brief history of his education and why his background prepared him for working with two year institutions and first year students. He gave a brief overview of the Foundation of Excellence Project.

- The Foundations of Excellence Project is the work of the Policy Center on the First Year of College
- Oakton Community College and 86 other campuses participated in writing an aspirational model for the first year
- Oakton was chosen as one of ten institutions to begin using the model, and the only one in Illinois, because of the College’s wide range of initiatives to support new first year students
- The core of the process was the development of an aspirational model that no campus in America could achieve
- Oakton formed a Task Force with Dr. Younger as the Project Coordinator to evaluate how well the College measures up to the nine statements of excellence in the first year of college.

Dr. Swing commented on what matters with new student success. He stated that in the 1960’s, institutions focused on who students were, their cultural, ethnic and economic backgrounds and tried to link that to success. He further stated that in the 1970’s external influences were factored in and by the 1990’s the focus was on student engagement or how much time students spent on various college based and college related activities. He noted that a problem arose when the same kinds of students going to different institutions had different outcomes, which led to understanding the importance of institutional mission when evaluating new student success. Dr. Swing stated that the Foundations of Excellence project asks participating institutions to focus on what they can control such as policies, practices, procedures and structures.

Dr. Swing stated that the most powerful advising force on campus is other students. He commented on the peer effect and how using the powerful learning resource of other students greatly increases student learning and success. He commented on barriers to college success both on and off campus, such as students who work and suggested that Oakton could leverage student part-time employment opportunities to increase student success. Dr. Swing further commented on recent studies regarding student success and the importance of early intervention, noting that good attendance promotes success.

In closing, Dr. Swing stated that participation in the Foundations of Excellence project carries a commitment to completing a year-long self-study of all aspects of the new student experience at Oakton. The Self-Study is the first step in developing an action plan for improvement. He further stated that the ultimate goal is institutional improvement to better challenge and support all new students.

Chairman Wadhwa thanked Dr. Swing for his informative presentation on the Foundations of Excellence project.
Comments by the Chairman

Mr. Wadhwa commented on the excellent job being done by the students who work on the OCCurrence student newspaper. He noted the importance of being honest and fair in gathering, reporting and interpreting information. Chairman Wadhwa then commented on a recent article regarding the appointment of Dr. Barshis to fill the unexpired term of Trustee Handzel. He stated that the Board of Trustees followed the advice of the College’s legal counsel in ensuring that Dr. Barshis’ appointment complied with the legal statutes of the State of Illinois. He noted that Dr. Barshis brings a great amount of knowledge, commitment and integrity to the Board and that he is privileged to call him a colleague. Mr. Wadhwa commented on the job of the journalist in supporting the open exchange of views while avoiding the creation of news that is misleading. He noted that Board members do not form alliances, and that each one thinks independently and brings to the table his or her personal and professional experience and viewpoint. He stated that trustees respect each other’s opinions, even when they differ, and that there are no agendas other than to serve the students, the College and the community.

Public Participation

Ellie Bahrmasel, Chicago resident, Oakton Community College student:

Good evening President Lee, Chairman Wadhwa, and esteemed trustees. My name is Ellie Bahrmasel and I am currently serving as President of the Board of Student Affairs. This evening, I am here to express to you the concerns the student body has expressed regarding the proposed tuition increase that you will vote on this evening. While students understand that they must bear a portion of the cost of tuition, and many understand tuition increases are happening at institutions at a national level, certain concerns have arisen that cannot be ignored. Traditionally, the beauty of the community college system has been the quality education it has provided to its students while maintaining accessibility and affordability. It is our widely held belief that a tuition increase of this magnitude threatens to alienate the community it is intended to serve, which is the antithesis of the mission of this institution. “We are the community’s college.” In order to gain a better understanding of student opinion, the BSA implemented a survey at both the Des Plaines and Ray Hartstein Campuses. The results came as no surprise. The resounding sentiment held by students is that they do not support a tuition increase, and if that increase is imminent, many expressed that they could only support the minimal of increases due to their personal budgetary constraints. When asked how to meet the deficit the school will experience without a tuition increase, a majority of those polled felt that the answer was further budgetary cuts, by cutting classes, increasing class sizes, and cutting programs on campus. While conducting this survey, we recognized the flaw in the question regarding programming, not explaining fully what was meant by programming, but the results remain clear: the students do not endorse this tuition increase. Forty-three percent of the students polled stated that the proposed tuition increase would affect their decision to attend Oakton in the
future. How will it affect their decision becomes the question. It is a concern of ours that students at Oakton will be negatively impacted by this tuition increase. We see this as being a great disservice to the learning community as a whole for many, Oakton is the only avenue open to them to pursue higher education affordably. What will happen to those who are no longer able to afford education as a direct result of this increase? Perhaps more illuminating was the comments section of the survey. Many students responded by stating, “I may have to stop going to college all together,” or “I will have to take fewer classes.” The students have spoken. They believe it is critical to run this institution in as economically lean a manner as possible. Most students are reluctant, but willing, to sacrifice extensive access to certain conveniences, and some services, to which they become accustomed in order to economize. Through these economic measures, it is our hope that the institution would be able to maintain, if not surpass, the high caliber of education which has become synonymous with Oakton Community College. The challenge we now face as students, faculty and administration alike is to critically examine how to achieve the goal of providing the quality education we have become accustomed to more cost effectively than in the past. Upon reviewing the ICCB Data and Characteristic Report, many red flags were raised. Students expressed concern when reviewing faculty and administration salaries. It was a bit alarming to note that Oakton had the third highest average administrator salary, averaging $100,864 in FY2005, as well as the third highest faculty salary averaging $74,352 within the same fiscal year. Though we are not attempting to demean the quality put forth by our faculty and administrators, we are concerned about the discrepancy between the salaries provided by Oakton in stark contrast to the state-wide averages. What measures has the college taken to ensure the productivity of each employee? It is our belief that the college must take every measure possible to ensure that job descriptions are current and that employees are performing to the highest standards. Furthermore, we feel it is of the utmost importance that the college examine each program on an individual basis, evaluating its success and cost effectiveness. Also, it has been noted that many students feel that copious amounts of waste plague this institution. It is our recommendation that the school have an outside source perform an energy audit to evaluate the way in which we as an institution utilize our resources and materials. Though this alone cannot solve the budgetary issues in question, Oakton is in a position to move in a more eco-friendly direction while ultimately reducing spending on these materials. Ultimately, the students cannot support this tuition increase. We genuinely feel that the college has not challenged itself to take every measure possible to avoid this situation. While we receive a two-page bulleted list of cuts that have been made throughout the school, we felt it was lacking and not specific enough. How can the institution state that it has done everything in its power to help alleviate the cost of education when there is no numerical evidence provided to support this claim? With the limited access to information we were provided, we could not, in good faith, stand behind this decision. We would like to thank the Board for allowing our voice to be heard this evening. It is important to you to take into
consideration the needs of those that this institution is designed to serve; the community of learners, the students of Oakton Community College.

Melissa Woo, Chicago resident, Oakton Community College student:
I speak to you today on behalf of my perspective as an Oakton student. I do not pretend to be a financial expert nor do I pretend to fully understand every piece of information I have analyzed regarding this tuition increase. Do know this. I have attended meetings regarding the increase and discussed it with students, faculty, administration and staff. I say all of this to say I am speaking to you as a well informed student. While considering your decision do not forget what the word community means. Do not forget that this is a public institution. That we have made a commitment to increase diversity here at Oakton. Ladies and Gentlemen what of the financially restricted student, do we have enough faith in financial aid? I understand that there is such a thing as inflation and I understand that many other colleges have decided to raise their tuition. But I also echo a statement made by Mr. Wadhwa, ‘I do not care about other schools, I care about Oakton.’ Ladies and Gentlemen I will read to you a passage from the school’s mission that Alex read to you at the beginning of the meeting. ‘We are the community’s college. We recognize that change is inevitable and that education must be for the future. We respond to change informed by our values and responsibility to our students and community.’ If a raise in tuition is inevitable and our response to change is informed by our responsibility to our students and community, how can we justify raising tuition? Isn’t community the key to a community college, to serve the people? This is a public institution and I echo this again this is a public institution for the people. If we raise tuition for the next three years, then what? When will the line be drawn? If I remember correctly this board was aware of the deficit two years ago and President Lee told us that a deficit will quote, ‘force us into cutting controllable expenses and it could be done if we all pull together. Have we pulled together? Have we all done our share. Please keep these things in mind when you vote.

Dawn Mueller, Rockford resident, Oakton Community College student:
Good evening, Members of the Board of Trustees, and others in attendance: My name is Dawn Marie Mueller. I am currently a student of Oakton Community College. I am 40 years old; a single parent of an 18-year-old who is in her first year of college; and, the daughter and caretaker of an 80-year-old father with severe dementia and other complications of stroke, cardiovascular and pulmonary conditions, and cancer. I am the holder of a bachelor’s degree and some graduate work in physics. I am recovering from debilitating injuries resulting from having been subjected to 18 years of domestic abuse, including assaults and batteries. I have, and continue to be, dependent upon almost every form of government support, from Social Security to food stamps to federally-subsidized housing, to Medicare and Medicaid. I have been homeless, to the point of having to live a spell in a storage unit, where I was obliged to make due with a mop and bucket as a toilet. My finances are in a shambles. Having been prevented from obtaining by Ph.D. in physics, I have been unable to
utilize my undergraduate degree to obtain employment in the job market of the past several years. The instability in governmental research funding, coupled with a turbulent geopolitical events and a precarious economy, have made it very difficult for a person caught in the purgatory between post-grad and post-doctoral academic status. Having had a long period of disability on top of this, makes me quite unemployable for any position profitable enough to cover basic living expenses, outstanding medical bills and the costs of having obtained that education. The year I obtained my undergraduate degree, my daughter’s father battered me until I was completely disabled, in order to prevent me from removing my child from the state in order to accept a research position and graduate student offer that would have made me financially independent. While I was in a disabled state, he filed for custody of my child and was awarded it; then, he cut me off from my child and hid her from me. I was separated from her for eight years. Currently, I have approximately $40,000 in student loans, upon which I have not been able to pay a nickel due to long-term unemployment and disability. A partial impetus for my enrollment in classes at Oakton, is to stave off the ever-present danger of defaulting on student loans by keeping them in student deferment status. For, if student loans are defaulted upon, one’s credit history is smashed. Coupled with long-term unemployment, this ultimately leads one down an ever-vicious economic death spiral of loss of assets, food insecurity, medical crisis and housing loss. A decade ago, one might have chuckled at jokes poking fun at the so-called “PhD’s flipping hamburgers at McDonald’s.” The federal and statewide unemployment condition of the past several years, coupled with rising inflation and horrendously escalating costs of tuition and fees, and the rapid disintegration of the nation’s social safety net, have resulted in the ugly fact that this scenario is no longer a joke. It is real. I am not the only older post-grad student who has fallen into an academic holding pattern in order to keep student loans from defaulting, or is executing similar gymnastic maneuvers in order to survive economically. Defaulted student loans cannot be discharged by bankruptcy. In these perilous economic times, graduating and graduated students are finding it ever more difficult to pay for job search activities and find gainful and profitable employment in order to pay their student loan debts, obtain medical coverage, put a roof over their heads, and feed their families. I’ve been around enough years to see that inflation, outsourcing of jobs, skyrocketing state and federal deficits, and an international trade deficit have spun this nation’s finances out of control. The bean counters in this room should be having neurotic conniption fits. There is a reason why the intelligentsia of this nation is “brain-draining” its scientific and engineering talents abroad. The economic handwriting is on the wall. My grandparents came from Germany in the 1920’s. I have carefully listened to the tales of my family members who went through two World Wars, hyperinflation of the Deutschmark, the stock market collapse, the Great Depression. Younger students do not have the benefit of such hindsight. Should you, tonight, move and vote in favor of adoption of the proposed resolution on tuition inflation, you will only be throwing a bucket of fuel on the fire of hyperinflation of college tuition, which couples with the hyperinflation of housing prices and the necessities of life. You are robbing Peter to pay Paul. In
raising my tuition, you would only be trying to force the federal and state agencies which try to subsidize and defray the expenses of college, to fork out more money on behalf of students. The more money the federal and state governments have to fork out on behalf of students, is that much less money that you would get from the state legislature by directly lobbying your representatives. All of this is doing nothing but ballooning the state and federal deficits and wrecking the future financial security of your students. By feeding hyperinflation, you are only contributing to the ultimate collapse of the American economy. If this pattern continues, do not be shocked if you hear of students pawning or selling their Pell-Grant-paid textbooks for food, or burning them for heat to keep warm as fuel prices continue to rise. This is not hyperbole. The American dollar is becoming worthless. It has been a long time since this currently has been backed by precious metals. The only thing that renders this greenback different from toilet paper, is the amount of faith you are willing to put in the federal government to pay its debts. I am leaving you with two exhibits. You propose a tuition increase of $6 per credit hour in FY2007, and $7 per credit hour in FY08. Here is $312 in photocopied paper dollars to cover the increased cost. The greenback’s value of one dollar is rapidly approaching the cost of a photocopy of the damned thing. Please don’t ask me for greenbacks, because I simply don’t have it. The second exhibit is my shoe. You will notice its condition, including the holes in the soles and evidence of having walked many miles in foul weather to attend this school. Please consider whether or not you have completely exhausted all options of supporting your students. Before you approve any tuition increase, please first try running up the college flagpole four flags: one that reads, “End this stupid war that is costing us trillions of dollars!”; one that reads, “Impeach Bush!”; one that reads, “Fire Cheney!”; and one that reads, “So-long Dennis Hastert!” Surround the flagpole with five thousand students, faculty and staff. Call the media. Have all colleges and universities across the state do the same. Thank you for your time.

Laura Saret, Highland Park resident, President of the Oakton Community College Full-time Faculty Association:

The Oakton Community College Faculty Senate expresses its thanks to and appreciation of Acting Vice President of Academic Affairs, Nancy Prendergast. The Senate and its officers have found our working relationship with Nancy to be collegial and productive. We have also found her performance in the present position to be excellent, and especially value her commitments to shared governance and increased faculty involvement in decision-making and problem-solving. We applaud her service to the college in all her capacities, and we look forward to continuing to work with her to enhance the academic environment and community at Oakton in the future.

New Business

Consent Agenda
2/06-1a Approval of Adoption of Consent Agenda

Dr. Alexopoulos offered:

“Be it resolved that the Board of Trustees of Community College District 535 approve adoption of the Consent Agenda.”

Mr. Williams seconded the resolution.

A voice vote was called and the resolution to adopt the use of the Consent Agenda was approved.

2/06-1b Approval of Consent Agenda Items 2/06-2 through 2/06-7

Dr. Rosen offered:

“Be it resolved that the Board of Trustees of Community College District 535 approve resolutions 2/06-2 through 2/06-7.”

2/06-2 Ratification of Payment of Bills for January 2006

“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 $4,961,603.42 for all funds as listed and for all purposes as appearing on a report dated January 2006.”

2/06-3 Acceptance of Treasurer’s Report for January 2006

“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 2006.”

2/06-4 Ratification of Actions of the Alliance for Lifelong Learning (ALL) Executive Board

“Be it resolved that the Board of Trustees of Community College District 535, in its capacity as governing board of the administrative district of the Alliance for Lifelong Learning Program, ratifies and approves the actions of the Executive Board in items a to c and hereby approves the expenditures in the amount not to exceed $386,019.88 for all funds listed in item a.”

2/06-5 Ratification to Pay Professional Personnel – Spring 2006

“Be it resolved that the Board of Trustees of Community College District 535 authorizes the payment of salaries to the persons and in the amounts listed for
teaching on a part-time basis during the Spring Semester, 2006; resulting in a revised total of $2,520,095.84.”

“Be it further resolved that the Board of Trustees of Community College District 535 authorizes the payment of salaries to the persons and in the amounts listed for teaching on an overload basis during the Spring Semester, 2006; resulting in a total of $276,601,”

“Be it further resolved that the Board of Trustees of Community College District 535 authorizes the payment of stipends to the persons listed, in the amounts and for the activities specified, the total payment amounting to $3,087.50.”

2/06-6 Supplemental Authorization to Pay Professional Personnel

“Be it resolved that the Board of Trustees of Community College District 535 authorizes the payment of salaries to the persons and in the amounts listed for teaching on a part-time basis during the Spring 2006 Semester; resulting in a revised total of $2,699,750.58.”

“Be it further resolved that the Board of Trustees of Community College District 535 authorizes the payment of salaries to the persons and in the amounts listed for teaching on an overload basis during the Spring 2006 Semester; resulting in a total of $54,073.60.”

“Be it further resolved that the Board of Trustees of Community College District 535 authorizes the payment of stipends to the persons listed, in the amounts and for the activities specified, the total payment amounting to $13,665.”

2/06-7 Approval of Clinical Practice Agreements

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

For the Early Childhood Education Program
   Wilmette Community Nursery School - Wilmette

For the Physical Therapist Assistant Program
   AthletiCo - Lemont
   Sherman Hospital/Sherman Health Systems - Elgin

For the Registered Nursing Program
   Swedish Covenant Hospital Home Health Care – Chicago."

Dr. DiLeonardi seconded the motion.

There being no discussion, Mr. Williams called the roll.
Mr. Williams  Aye
Dr. Rosen  Aye
Dr. Alexopoulos  Aye
Dr. Barshis  Aye
Mr. Wadhwa  Aye
Mr. Collins  Aye
Dr. DiLeonardi  Aye

The motion carried and the Consent Agenda resolutions were approved.

Student Trustee, Mr. Krzyminski, favored the resolution.

2/06-8  Authorization to Approve February Purchases

Dr. DiLeonardi offered:

“Be it resolved that the Board of Trustees of Community College District 535 authorizes the approval of the attached resolutions 2/06-8a through 2/06-8g:

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<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Vendor</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Great America Tickets on Consignment</td>
<td>Six Flags Great America</td>
<td>$76,608.50</td>
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<tr>
<td>b. Annual Maintenance for Financial</td>
<td>eNucleus</td>
<td>$72,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>System Software</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Regular Xerographic Paper</td>
<td>Midland Paper Company</td>
<td>$40,436.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Additional Services for the Illinois</td>
<td>Hyatt Regency O’Hare Hotel</td>
<td>$22,359.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women’s Health Conference</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. Advertising Contract for Human Services</td>
<td>Chicago Tribune</td>
<td>$30,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. Purchased Emergency Chiller Repair</td>
<td>Hudson Technologies</td>
<td>$12,480.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services</td>
<td>Company</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g. Information Technology Services</td>
<td>APEX Systems Inc.</td>
<td>$83,200.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Total:</td>
<td></td>
<td>$337,084.71</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Dr. Alexopoulos seconded the motion.

Secretary Williams called the roll.

Dr. Rosen  Aye
Dr. Alexopoulos  Aye
Dr. Barshis  Aye
Mr. Wadhwa  Aye
Mr. Collins  Aye
Dr. DiLeonardi  Aye
Mr. Williams Aye

The resolution was approved. Mr. Krzyminski, Student Trustee, concurred.

2/06-9 Approval of Completed Capital Equipment

Mr. Collins offered:

“Be it resolved that the Board of Trustees of Community College District 535 approves the Statement of Final Completion of State and Locally Funded Projects for the Lavatory Restoration – Phase III and the Statement of Final Construction Compliance for the Protection, Health and Safety Project for the Emergency Warning/Security Camera Upgrades.”

Dr. DiLeonardi seconded the motion.

Mr. Williams called the roll.

Dr. Alexopoulos Aye
Dr. Barshis Aye
Mr. Wadhwa Aye
Mr. Collins Aye
Dr. DiLeonardi Aye
Mr. Williams Aye
Dr. Rosen Aye

The resolution passed. Student Trustee, Mr. Krzyminski, favored the resolution.

2/06-10 Approval of Intellectual Property Agreement

Dr. Barshis offered:

“Be it resolved that the Board of Trustees of Community College District 535 approve the Intellectual Property Agreement between the Board and Amy Zumfelde.”

Dr. Rosen seconded the motion.

Mr. Williams called the roll.

Dr. Barshis Aye
Mr. Wadhwa Aye
Mr. Collins Aye
Dr. DiLeonardi Aye
Mr. Williams Aye
Dr. Rosen Aye
Dr. Alexopoulos Aye
The resolution was approved. Mr. Krzyminski, Student Trustee, favored the resolution.

2/06-11 Award of Tenure

Dr. DiLeonardi 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 2006 semester, to:

Carol Bustamante, Associate Professor, English
Reza Dai, Associate Professor, Electronics and LAN
Dawn Kuerschner, Associate Professor, Nursing
Mark Palmeri, Assistant Professor, Art
Bincy Reginold, Instructor, Basic Nurse Assistant Training
Katherine Schuster, Associate Professor, Education.”

Dr. Barshis seconded the resolution.

Dr. Prendergast stated that she is very proud of the six faculty being presented to the Board for tenure. She stated that they have served Oakton well for the past three years and expressed her confidence in their service to the College in the future.

Mr. Williams called the roll.

Mr. Wadhwa    Aye
Mr. Collins    Aye
Dr. DiLeonardi Aye
Mr. Williams Aye
Dr. Rosen Aye
Dr. Alexopoulos Aye
Dr. Barshis Aye

The resolution passed. Student Trustee, Mr. Krzyminski, concurred.

2/06-12 Notice of Non-Renewal of Short Term Faculty Contracts

Dr. Alexopoulos offered:

“In accordance with Section 103-B of the Illinois Public Community College Act, non-tenured faculty on one semester or one year contracts should receive notice of dismissal not later than sixty (60) days before the end of the academic year or term. At this time, the Board has determined that the services of temporary, full-time
faculty members: Mary Vermilion, Margaret Gas, Faith Jacobson and Leslie Van Wolvelear will not be required for the 2006-2007 academic year.”

Dr. Barshis seconded the motion.

On behalf of the College, Dr. Prendergast thanked the faculty noted in the resolution for their dedicated service. She stated that they have served the College in an exemplary manner in their one-year, temporary appointments.

Mr. Williams called the roll.

Mr. Collins Aye
Dr. DiLeonardi Aye
Mr. Williams Aye
Dr. Rosen Aye
Dr. Alexopoulos Aye
Dr. Barshis Aye
Mr. Wadhwa Aye

The resolution was approved. Mr. Krzyminski, Student Trustee, concurred.

2/06-13 Adoption of Resolution on Tuition Rates

Mr. Collins offered the narrative and the resolution:

“Based on projected operating expenses (including the now fully operational 59,000 square foot Art, Science and Technology Pavilion at the Ray Hartstein Campus), the College estimates its anticipated revenue needs will not be met by the current revenue sources. These sources are property tax revenues (which are capped by law), state appropriations in support of operations which have continued to diminish (non-capital state funding for the College has decreased since FY03 by a cumulative amount of $4.2 million dollars), and student tuition payments at the present rate of $69 per credit hour. In spite of ongoing, extensive cost-containment measures, the College cannot support current programs and services and continue to meet its contractual obligations without the proposed increase in tuition. At the current total rate of $71.60 per credit hour, which includes tuition and mandatory credit hour based fees, Oakton is currently below the local average of our peer group of community colleges ($76.56) by $4.96 per credit hour.

After dissemination of financial projections and a substantial amount of discussion across the institution, the College is proposing a tuition increase of $6 per credit hour for FY07 and $7 per credit hour for FY08. Tuition increases at these proposed levels will enable the College to continue to provide a quality education to its students and allow students to plan for their educational expenses. The Board could consider reducing the amount of future tuition should the College experience unanticipated funding increases in FY08. Barring catastrophic change in funding scenarios (e.g. a
revision of the property levy or extension formula or a cessation of state funding), the College will not seek an additional increase in tuition for FY08.

The proposed tuition rate increase should continue to keep tuition and mandatory credit hour based fees at Oakton Community College below the local average of our peer group of community colleges and substantially, more affordable than other public colleges and universities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TUITION RATE</th>
<th>INCREASE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FY 2007 $75/credit hour</td>
<td>$6.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FY 2008 $82/credit hour</td>
<td>$7.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This proposed increase will enable the College to meet existing contractual obligations and satisfy the needed revenue for operations and maintenance of institutional programs and services.”

President’s Recommendation:

That the Board adopt the following resolution:

“Be it resolved that the Board of Trustees of Community College District 535 authorizes a tuition rate of $75 per credit hour effective as of the summer term of 2006, and a tuition rate of $82 per credit hour effective as of the summer term of 2007.”

Dr. Alexopoulos seconded the motion.

Mr. Wadhwa asked the Student Trustee, Mr. Krzyminski to begin opening discussion on the resolution to increase tuition.

Mr. Krzyminski commented on his understanding of the need to increase tuition in order to maintain services to students and fixed operational expenses. He stated that as Student Trustee, he was elected by the students to represent their viewpoint. He reflected on Ms. Bahrmasel’s comments during Public Participation and stated that it is the students perception that the administration has not provided sufficient information on cost cutting and fiscal responsibility to warrant a tuition increase. Mr. Krzyminski commented that the College’s Mission statement, words of which were echoed by the President of the Board of Student Affairs, which stated that we are the “community’s college.” He stated that it was dismaying to envision that we could be moving the community out of the community college with another tuition increase. The Student Trustee also commented on recent conversations with students in the Board of Student Affairs office, as well as with Ms. Mueller, another student who spoke during Public Participation, and stated that although he understands that community colleges across the state are in a funding crisis, Oakton needs to be more proactive in addressing this dilemma.
Mr. Collins stated that he was elected to the Board of Trustees of Oakton Community College to represent the interests of the community. He applauded the students who expressed their concerns during Public Participation and commented on the importance of maintaining Oakton’s reputation as a quality educational institution and his commitment to ensuring that status. Mr. Collins reflected on his long and careful consideration of the difficult task set before the Board this evening regarding a tuition increase. He noted the lack of funding again this year from the State of Illinois and from the federal government, and how trustees from across the country converged in Washington, DC to combine their lobbying efforts to have more funds released. Mr. Collins stated that 51 percent of all college students are enrolled at community colleges giving us a big voice; however, we are not receiving the funding that we need to provide a quality education at an affordable price. He further stated that we have raised tuition for the past 15 years and it is time to formulate a plan on how to become more financially self-supportive. Mr. Collins reiterated his past requests to form an alumni association in order to raise funds as well as reaching out to the business community. He commented on the College’s expanding opportunities with the new Art, Science and Technology Pavilion at the Ray Hartstein Campus and how the College could increase funds by marketing it as an educational and business resource to the corporate world. Mr. Collins further commented on Oakton’s class size of fewer than 35 students and the impact of increasing class size. He stated that his vote on this resolution would be a message to the community that we need their help as there are other ways to balance the budget rather than placing the burden on the students by increasing tuition. He challenged the community to do their part and to get involved in contacting those who can make a difference.

Dr. Barshis commented that when tuition was raised in 2004, he stated that we need to stop running the College on the backs of the students; however, we also need to understand that the political climate at the state and national level is to move away from public support of public education. He stated that America has become a pay for services country, explaining that people who receive a service, pay for that service, thus severely impacting low and medium income households. Dr. Barshis commented that public education represents one of America’s major achievements. He stated that an advanced state of crisis affects our schools, due primarily to the lack of adequate funding, which, in turn, results from the failure of the state and federal governments to meet their obligations.

Dr. Barshis further commented on Mr. Chirempes’ fiscal projections that estimated a 6.7% decrease in state funding in fiscal year 2007 which prompted the need to raise tuition in order to meet our financial obligations at the College. He noted a discrepancy in this projection based on information received from the Chief Executive Officer of the Illinois Community College Board which stated that the Governor’s proposed budget includes an overall increase of 1.9% for the community college system, mostly in the base operating and equalization grants. He explained that the base operating grant was increased due to a reallocation of funds from the eliminated impact grant (Hold Harmless Grant) which Oakton received for a three year period to compensate us for changes in the state funding formula that allows a
higher level of grants and state reimbursement for vocational and technical education courses and a lower level of funding for transfer and remedial education courses. Furthermore, Dr. Barshis noted that the ICCB stated that the proposed budget is also reestablishing $3 million for the student success grant, a two percent increase in the adult education family literacy grant, a two percent increase in the career and technical education grant and $50 million for the replacement of temporary community college buildings, as well as some capital renewal funds, all of which may never happen. Based on information regarding a proposed 1.9% increase in funding as relayed through the ICCB, and Oakton’s financial projection of a 6.7% decrease in funding from the state, Dr. Barshis stated that he weighed all factors in formulating a decision. He stated that although we will probably get a very small amount of the 1.9% proposed increase from the state if the budget passes, we will still need to increase tuition a minimum of $6 per credit hour to meet all of our obligations. Dr. Barshis questioned the request to increase tuition at this time based on assumptions and a proposed budget from the state. He asked Mr. Chirempes to clarify the proposed budget information from the ICCB.

Mr. Chirempes responded that after reading through the Governor’s proposed budget information, he tried to contact the ICCB several times via e-mails and telephone calls and, to date, had not received a response regarding the same questions posed by Trustee Barshis. He explained how the funding formula works and stated that if the state funding goes up one percent, it does not mean that Oakton’s funding will go up one percent. He further clarified that there are six categories based on cost that depend on the distribution of credit hours which may or may not lead to an increase in funding; however, he had not received any response from the state regarding his request for information. Mr. Chirempes stated that the request to increase tuition is not only based on what funding we get from the state, but also includes two variables: an estimate of our tax revenue and an assumption that enrollment will remain flat.

Dr. Lee commented that the loss in funding from the Hold Harmless grant was over $300,000 and even if the Governor’s proposed budget included a 1.9% increase in funding to community colleges, it is highly unlikely that Oakton will receive even a small percentage of the total amount. She noted that the last line in the communication from the ICCB reads that the Illinois General Assembly has to approve the budget, which will probably not be until April. President Lee noted the reasons for presenting the resolution on a tuition increase to the Board in February: the College catalog includes tuition information and it is scheduled to go to print; it allows the students to plan for their college expenses for the next two years; and it gives us the go ahead in planning for the FY07 budget. She stated that no one wants to increase tuition, especially the students; however, the reality is that those costs are borne by the consumer as the state and federal governments are shirking their responsibilities. The President compared Oakton’s tuition to that of our sister colleges, stating that Oakton’s tuition remains lower than the others and the resolution placed before the Board is an attempt to be as moderate as possible with the option to decrease tuition should the College experience an unanticipated increase in funding. She stated that Oakton is coping with a cumulative $4.2 million reduction
in non-capital funding from the state over the last three years and that the tuition increase is needed to balance our budget. She further explained to the students that the resolution to increase tuition is not a Board versus administration issue, it is to ensure that Oakton provides a quality education to everyone who come through our doors.

Mr. Williams commented on several important changes to the educational system in the United States including the creation of the GI Bill, the Head Start program, and the community college system. He criticized the current leadership in this country for placing education in the back seat. Mr. Williams stated that he too has spent a great deal of time deliberating over the information regarding the proposed tuition increase and has reviewed our cost cutting measures as well as the services that we provide our students. He further stated that everyone who sits at the Board table must ensure that Oakton remains one of the best community colleges in the nation and a balanced budget is the key to stability.

Dr. Rosen thanked the students who addressed the Board during Public Participation. He stated that their comments were courageous and their convictions were right. He introduced the larger concept of how other colleges are addressing the issue and stated that introducing the larger concept does not minimize the community issues discussed by the students and his colleagues on the Board. Dr. Rosen presented several statistics on tuition increases across the nation that are readily available to anyone having access to the web. He noted that community colleges across the nation have increased their tuition an average of 5%; public, four-year institutions, 7%; private, four-year institutions, 6%; and community colleges in Illinois, 8%. He stated that this trend has been relatively constant as evidenced by statistical data for the past 30 years. He explained that the data is not right, nor wrong, that it only provides a benchmark for another context of understanding. Dr. Rosen commented on several other areas of statistical data including average costs paid by community college students per year, as well as the average amount of grant money and federal aid they receive. He compared these statistics to those attending public and private four-year institutions. Dr. Rosen noted that a community college education is by far, the most economical education in the country as it provides the most value per dollar spent. He further remarked on cost cutting information addressed in the *Chronicle of Higher Education* and the *College Board* publications. He reminded everyone that last month’s report to the Board including information on services to students and that 21,214 Oakton students used the services of our Learning Center, a department that does not generate tuition, during the Fall 2005 semester. Dr. Rosen commented that serving over 21,000 students in one semester is a powerful statement of our commitment to the success of our students and to the core of our educational mission. He then commented on information he downloaded on controlling college costs, which was an option on the student survey conducted by the Board of Student Affairs. He stated that Oakton’s students would opt to increase class size and commented on a recent article in the Chronicle regarding the reinvention of introductory courses taught by undergraduate students who were used as teaching assistants, as well as lecture courses with 350 students. He remarked that this cost
cutting measure would be to the detriment of student learning, to student retention and to Oakton as a premier community college. Dr. Rosen further commented on statistics in the College Board Report regarding two distinct categories that impact an increase in operating costs: employee salaries and rising health care costs. He stated that the hiring and retention of qualified and exemplary employees is the backbone of an institution and noted that the granting of tenure to deserving faculty is a commitment of millions of future dollars. He further stated that rising health care costs and the shifting of the financial burden of health care costs to the user is a very complex issue with which many institutions are struggling. In closing, Dr. Rosen commented that his intent was to move the dialogue into a wider context in order to understand the larger picture of what the Board must analyze and reflect on when making a decision such as increasing tuition.

Dr. DiLeonardi thanked the students who spoke during Public Participation and stated that they reminded her of many of the same issues of juggling finances and financial aid that she faced when working her way through college and undergraduate school. She encouraged the students to finish their commitment to obtaining their degrees and noted the many sources for financial assistance including many available scholarships and financial assistance offered through the Educational Foundation and the Board of Student Affairs. Dr. DiLeonardi commented on the difference in tuition costs, curriculum and operating expenses among the community colleges across the state. She stated that living expenses and housing costs downstate are lower; therefore, downstate salaries and tuition are lower. She also explained that property taxes are capped in Cook County which means that we can’t raise funding through an increase in property tax like other counties in the state. In regard to the ICCB memo on a proposed 1.9% increase in funding from the state budget, she stated that most of those funds would go to the community colleges that have a higher percentage of vocational and technical programs rather than those like Oakton with a high number of Baccalaureate degree transfer students. Dr. DiLeonardi explained that Oakton has historically only increased tuition and not fees, since financial aid covers tuition and not fees, while other area colleges increase their tuition and their fees. She stated that no one at the College wants to raise tuition to cover our expenses, especially the members of the Board; however, based on information and discussions, it is the only viable option for balancing our budget and ensuring a quality education.

Dr. Alexopoulos commented on the College being proactive in utilizing the new Pavilion at the Ray Hartstein Campus to generate funds from business and industry. He stated that marketing was the key to making this happen. In regard to the resolution on increasing tuition, he stated that we need to be realists as the budget must be balanced and expenses must be addressed. He further commented on the Board’s fiscal responsibility of ensuring that the administration’s recommendation on a tuition increase is thoroughly researched and necessary. Based on comments made by Dr. Barshis in regard to the Governor’s proposed budget increase of 1.9% to community colleges, Dr. Alexopoulos suggested that the Board postpone voting on the resolution until after the budget is approved; however, since the state budget would not be approved until April, he withdrew his suggestion.
Mr. Wadhwa thanked the students who addressed the Board with their concerns on the proposed tuition increase. He commented on the challenges to raise funds within the community as proposed by other Board members as well as President Lee’s commitment to cost containment. Mr. Wadhwa stated that the original resolution on tuition covered a three year period since we did not know the exact figures from the state; however, after careful deliberation it was decided that we could not give a fixed increase to a variable, which is the amount of funding from the state. He explained that a two year tuition increase was proposed with the second year being a conditional increase; whereby, if the state increases funding to Oakton, the Board could decrease the second year tuition rate. Mr. Wadhwa remarked that the real estate taxes are capped; therefore, they are fixed, and the variable, which is state funding, is what determines our tuition rate. He also commented on remarks made regarding Oakton’s faculty and administrative salaries being the third highest in the state. He addressed this issue by noting that the College will not compromise on quality as it is what sets us apart from the other colleges.

Dr. Barshis remarked that only 10% of our funding comes from the state; therefore, even if Oakton received a 1.9% increase in funding from the state, which would be highly unlikely, we would still need to increase tuition to balance the budget. In regard to Oakton’s faculty and administrative salaries, Dr. Barshis explained that one needs to look at salary factors that were not presented. He stated that Oakton has one of the lowest administrator to student ratios in the state, and while we have 28 administrators, our sister colleges have over 50 administrators for the same number of students; therefore, the higher salary figure is skewed. Another point in question addressed by Dr. Barshis was the fact that 50% of our instruction is done by full-time faculty, while nationwide, only 30%-40% of courses are taught by full-time faculty. He cautioned that this statistic does not slight the quality and commitment of our adjunct faculty, it only means that Oakton’s commitment to its students in providing more instructors that are here on a constant basis is an important part of our success story. Dr. Barshis further commented that we are in an untenable situation with the tuition as the state and federal government have all but abandoned education; therefore, getting a few more dollars from the state will not make much of a difference.

Mr. Collins reiterated his previous comments regarding alternate funding sources. He asked the students and the community to help the Board by contacting their state legislators, noting that a larger voice is needed in order to have a positive effect. Dr. Alexopoulos agreed with Mr. Collins’ comments, adding that it is an election year and an opportune time where all the candidates and government officials are listening. Mr. Krzyminski added that there are many avenues that those in the community can pursue in order to get the message to our legislators. He stated that it could be as simple as flooding their offices with a thousand letters asking them to support funding for higher education.
Mr. Wadhwa thanked the members of the Board for their input on the tuition issue. He stated that it is a very difficult decision for all of them and that they have analyzed the facts and searched their conscience in order to make an informed decision tonight.

Mr. Williams called the roll.

Dr. DiLeonardi       Aye
Mr. Williams         Aye
Dr. Rosen            Aye
Dr. Alexopoulos      Aye
Dr. Barshis          Aye
Mr. Wadhwa           Aye
Mr. Collins          Nay

The resolution was approved. Mr. Krzyminski, Student Trustee, did not favor the resolution.

2/06-14 Approval of Policy Revisions

Mr. Collins offered:

“Be it resolved that the Board of Trustees of Community College District 535 hereby approves and adopts the revisions to Policies 4300, 4309, 4312 and 5111 in the form attached hereto.”

Dr. Barshis seconded the motion.

Mr. Williams called the roll.

Mr. Williams         Aye
Dr. Rosen            Aye
Dr. Alexopoulos      Aye
Dr. Barshis          Aye
Mr. Wadhwa           Aye
Mr. Collins          Aye
Dr. DiLeonardi       Aye

The resolution passed. Student Trustee, Mr. Krzyminski, favored the resolution.

STRATEGIC CONVERSATION FOR THE BOARD – Supporting Student Success

Mr. Wadhwa stated that the Board would discuss tonight’s scheduled strategic conversation on supporting student success at the March Board meeting due to the lengthy and important discussion on the tuition increase. He asked members of the Board if they had any questions regarding Dr. Swing’s presentation on the First Year Experience project.
Dr. Barshis asked for Dr. Swing’s interpretation of the data regarding the 675 students who responded to the survey on their first year experience as reported by the Office of Research in a recent issue of *In the Abstract*. He noted that the positive responses were in the 50% area, neither positive nor negative and asked if this information serves as a benchmark for possible intervention with the implementation of the Foundation of Excellence project.

Dr. Swing responded that the big question being discussed around the country is what is driving higher education these days; therefore, there are many surveys to try and understand what students are doing. He stated that once the survey information is compiled, nothing is done and there is no further action, even when we benchmark those surveys against other institutions. Dr. Swing explained that first we try to discredit the survey results and when that doesn’t work, we try and discredit the person or group that put the survey together. He explained that the Foundations of Excellence project is based on the assumption that change is where the dynamics lie and knowledge that is campus specific will take us down the path that leads to student success. Dr. Swing commented on Oakton’s administration and faculty having the ability to interpret the data that we collect against an optimal level of achievement. In respect to Dr. Barshis’ question, he has similar data from other community colleges; however, he trusts the judgment of Oakton’s Task Force of faculty and staff in deciphering the data.

Dr. Barshis noted his concern as a trustee that the data given them is often misinterpreted as they don’t have the full picture, only a few numbers on a piece of paper. He stated that he is troubled by this as it often leads to a misunderstanding of the data. He thanked Dr. Swing for his response and stated that he looked forward to a follow up on how the data is interpreted by our Task Force at subsequent Board meetings.

Dr. Swing added that Dr. Bers has the ability to analyze numbers based on categories such as student demographics and areas where benchmarks are important such as race, gender, full-time student, part-time student, in district, and out of district. He stated that the benchmarks that matter are often institution-specific as they are the internal differences that an institution can address in order to promote a positive change.

Dr. Rosen thanked Dr. Swing for his excellent presentation on Oakton’s participation in the Foundations of Excellence project. He stated that as a community college, we care about what we do to help our students succeed. He asked Dr. Swing to respond to two pieces of data that concern first year success: (1) 50% of all college students today will not complete college in four, five or eight years; and (2) the number of students known as Baccalaureate transfer students who complete their degrees remains constant at approximately 25% of all Americans since 1945.

Dr. Swing addressed the issue of retention rates regarding degree completion. He commented on his work with the Ministry of Education in Japan and his advisory work with the Quality Assurance Agency in Scotland and stated that for every retention rate given, there are six more that will differ and all will be based on what appears to be good evidence. Dr. Swing stated that the best data actually comes from the U.S. Census Bureau. He noted that the Census Bureau statistics for degree completion is higher than 50% and when the statistics cross state lines, they jump to the upper 70% range as most retention rates are based on institutional or state data. He explained that the majority of students who start college, do finish college at some point in their
lives. Dr. Swing commented that low income students today are less likely to complete their
degrees than middle to upper income students and that this is a statistic that we need to address.

Mr. Williams commented on the importance of focusing on the first year college student. He
stated that it has become a national issue and programs must be formulated to ensure that
programs aimed at retention are properly staffed.

Adjournment

Mr. Wadhwa stated that the next scheduled regular meeting of the Board of Trustees of Oakton
Community College, District 535, would be held at 7:30 p.m. on March 21, 2006, at the Des
Plaines Campus, room 1506.

Dr. Alexopoulos offered a motion for adjournment and Mr. Williams seconded the motion. A
voice vote was called and Mr. Wadhwa adjourned the meeting at 9:55 p.m.

/s/ Jody Wadhwa
Jody Wadhwa, Chairman of the Board

/s/ Emory W. Williams
Emory Williams, Secretary of the Board

/pd
3/06

A video tape recording of the February 21, 2006, meeting was made and may be viewed by
calling the Library and Instructional Media Services office at 847-635-1640.