



Grays Harbor College provides meaningful and engaging learning opportunities and support services to enhance the knowledge, skills, and abilities of our students and support the cultural and economic needs of our community.

Grays Harbor College Board of Trustees Regular Meeting

Board Meeting: The Board meeting was convened on July 8, 2025, at 1:02 PM.

Members Present: Dr. Paula Akerlund, Astrid Aveledo, Jim Sayce

Members Present on Zoom: Aliza Esty

Others Present: Holly Bringman, Lori Christmas, Dr. Aaron Coby, Ja'Shona Cooks, Sarah Dalrymple, Derek Edens, Ariel Finrock, Jason Gordon, Penny James, Brian Mahoney, Floyd Plemmons, Michael Priest, Dr. Carli Schiffner, Kenji Seta, Cassandra Smith, Jared Stratton, Heidi Wood

Others Present on Zoom: Annalee Atwell-Tobar, Ashley Bowie-Gallegos, Ava Garcia, Barbara Dyer, Cheyenna Carroll, Crystal Bagby, David Zagorodney, Dierk Meierbachtol, Erin Tofte, Haley McGraw, Holly Duffy, Jackie Blumberg, Janet Parker, JEB Thornton, Jeremy Winn, Jonni Dawson, Julie Randall, Justin Kjolseth, Lisa Smith, Lizbeth Sanchez, Matt Edwards, Shelly Hoffman, Sydney Yager

A study session was not held at this meeting.

I. Call to Order and Roll Call

Chair Dr. Paula Akerlund called the meeting to order at 1:02 PM. Roll call was taken by Ja'Shona Cooks.

II. Safety statement

Chair Dr. Paula Akerlund called attention to the safety statement.

III. Pledge of Allegiance

Chair Dr. Paula Akerlund led the attendees in the Pledge of Allegiance.

IV. Land Acknowledgment

Jim Sayce read the Land Acknowledgment. Chair Dr. Paula Akerlund thanked him for doing so.

V. Agenda Adoption

Chair Dr. Paula Akerlund called for a motion to adopt the agenda. Jim Sayce moved to approve the agenda, and Astrid Aveledo seconded the motion. The motion carried.

VI. Public Comments

No public comments.

VII. Celebration

Dr. Carli Schiffner celebrated the graduation ceremony and thanked Sarah Dalrymple for all of her planning efforts. Sarah thanked everyone for the team effort to make graduation happen, including Campus Operations, Jonni Dawson, Laurie Franklin, Emma Benson, Student Life Employees, and the Graduation Committee.

Dr. Schiffner also celebrated the Prison Education Program. The College received recognition for the approval of the Associate in Arts-Direct Transfer Agreement (AA-DTA) degree and the Associate of Applied Science (AAS) in Business Management to be Pell Grant eligible, and to be the first college to offer prison education in the state. Kristen Morgan, Senior Administrator at Washington State Department of Corrections, joined via Zoom to share additional highlights. Kristen also thanked Dr. Schiffner and Heidi Wood for their partnership, and the faculty for their work. Heidi also gave a shout out for the work being done by the faculty and staff.

VIII & IX. Action Items & Standing Reports

Action Items

1. Approval of June 10, 2025 Minutes
 - a. Chair Dr. Paula Akerlund called for a motion to approve the June 10, 2025 meeting minutes. Aliza Esty moved to approve the minutes, and Astrid Aveledo seconded the motion. The motion carried.
2. First Reading of Operational Policy 316 – Advanced Placement International Baccalaureate Policy
 - a. Dr. Aaron Coby shared there were minor changes made to this policy. Additional language was added at the beginning of the policy to provide context about the International Baccalaureate program and its importance.
 - b. There was a question regarding the language “E on A and AS level Exams” under the Cambridge International heading, and Dr. Coby clarified it mirrors the language in State Board Policy. There was also a question if many students utilize this, and Dr. Coby shared that it was limited.
 - c. Moved to a second reading.
3. First Reading of Operational Policy 317 – Transfer Rights and Responsibilities
 - a. Dr. Aaron Coby shared there were minor changes made to this policy.
 - b. Moved to a second reading.
4. First Reading of Operational Policy 407 – Student Rights and Responsibilities
 - a. Holly Bringman shared there were minimal changes made to this policy regarding the reference to Vice President titles.
 - b. Moved to a second reading.
5. First Reading of Operational Policy 408 – Campus Speakers
 - a. Holly Bringman shared that minor language changes were made on the review of the policy, including the use of “college speaker” instead of “campus speaker”; and the inclusion of virtual speakers. Holly recommended that that policy be tabled from consideration until clarity could be made on related procedures.
 - b. The policy was tabled and will be brought back as a first read once revised.
6. First Reading of Operational Policy 412 – Hazing
 - a. Holly Bringman shared updates made to this policy upon review, including alignment with current state law, and the creation of the Hazing Committee.
 - b. Discussion ensued about the committee make up at the College and employee engagement on committees.
 - c. A typo was identified in section 1) b) third bullet down, after the word “or intimidating, such” and will be corrected. Holly noted she also found a typo she will address.
 - d. It was asked how students are made aware of this policy, and Sarah Dalrymple explained that it’s covered in New Student Orientation and it is also in the student handbook.
 - e. Moved to a second reading.

7. Second Reading of Operational Policies:

- a. Operational Policy 322 – Student Absences for Holidays of Faith and Conscience
 - No discussion.
- b. Operational Policy 323 – Academic Credit for Military Training
 - No discussion.
- c. Operational Policy 410 – Standards of Progress for Financial Aid Recipients
 - Holly Bringman noted a minor typo that will be addressed, and a handbook online exists on the College’s website that outlines the policy.
 - The Director of Financial Aid keeps track of the academic progress. It was asked what the process is for notifying students, and this will be looked into and followed up.
- d. Operational Policy 416 – Athletics
 - Holly Bringman shared there is an accompanying procedure for this policy that is linked to the Northwest Athletic Conference (NWAC) codebook.
 - Discussion ensued about how the policy is integrated into the day-to-day work. Clarity was provided about the “other conferences” mentioned in the last sentence.
- e. Operational Policy 640 – Leaves and Reporting
 - Erin Tofte shared the main change in this policy revision is the number of the vacation hours for Exempt Employees that can be “banked” was updated from 400 to 280, to add parity with other employee groups at the College. Erin also noted employees will have three years to get their leave hours down to the new level.
 - There was a question if sick leave could be transferred, and Erin confirmed it can be transferred, and the College has a shared leave policy.
- f. Operational Policy 905 – Appropriate Use of the College Brand
 - Dr. Carli Schiffner shared out on behalf of Kristy Anderson. This policy is in regards to the use of the College brand and the appropriate use of College branded material.
- g. Chair Dr. Paula Akerlund called for a motion to adopt Operational Policies 322, 323, 410, 416, 640, and 905. Jim Sayce moved to adopt the policies, and Astrid Aveledo seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Standing Reports

1. **Student Government Report** (Isaac Humiston)

No report due to the summer intermission.

2. **Classified Staff Report** (Jared Stratton)

Jared Stratton provided an updated printed report to the Board, which is attached below. He also shared that a motion of understanding was reached for non-economic items for the statewide WPEA contract and are in the effect as of July 1st. The approved items can be found in his new report attached below. Bargaining for economic items is still taking place.

Jared thanked Lisa Smith for donating her financial award from the Exempt Staff of the Year award to the Staff Development and Training Committee. The Classified Staff of the Year was awarded to Lisa Krause. Jared also commented on the retention bonus rollback.

3. **Represented Exempt Staff Report** (Shelly Hoffman)

There were no updates beyond the written report.

4. **Faculty report** (Shiloh Winsor & Tom Kuester)

No report due to the summer intermission.

5. **Administrative Services Report** (Jason Gordon)

Jason Gordon shared that the fiscal year has ended, and business services is working on closing out the fiscal year. After that's complete, Jason will be able to present the year end budget report in September. The FY2026 budget has been uploaded to the ctcLink system; and he is still waiting on a few details for the grants.

The State Board presented preliminary numbers regarding the revised Allocation Model. It looks like the College would see a loss based on the proposed model. This is mostly due to change of the formula, which takes the 4-year rolling enrollment average into account instead of an FTE target. Updated enrollment numbers will be sent out in August, which will provide another chance to review how enrollment is impacting the base allocation amounts. The revised Allocation Model hasn't been approved by the Presidents yet; it is anticipated to go into effect in FY2026-27.

Jason shared that the FY24 financial statement audit is scheduled to be finished by August. The facility condition survey has been received from the State Board, and the team will be working on it in July. Leaders from the State Board will be coming to the College later in July to assess the College facilities, , which will inform the Capitol budget for the 2027-29 biennium.

The planning for Lake Swano Dam has begun. The College received one million dollars for Lake Swano for this biennium, which will cover the pre-design and design phase. The College is working with the State Board and the Department of Enterprise Services on this and updates will be shared as the team gets further into the process. Jason clarified he will be the lead person for managing the Lake Swano project.

6. **Human Resources Report** (Erin Tofte)

Erin Tofte shared the College received money for Narcan training, which was completed in the Spring Quarter, and for Narcan boxes to be distributed around campus.

The WPEA contract changes will be communicated out soon, as well as the form for remote work that employees need to file annually.

The following new employees were introduced but unable to attend: Virgil Mathews, Men's Basketball Coach, and Jessica Madison, Softball Head Coach. They will try to come to the August meeting.

New employees in attendance included: Michael Stopsen, Fiscal Tech 3 / Cashier. Michael shared he has been working for the College at the Student Help Desk for two years, and he loves the people and environment. He graduated from the College the same day he started and he's glad to be here.

7. **Instruction Report** (Dr. Aaron Coby)

Dr. Aaron Coby noted most of his updates are in the Instruction Division report. He highlighted the data regarding the Tutoring Center that Nancy Estergard provided. He also noted the library will see more growth, as the Running Start office will be moving to the first floor. Also happening in the library is the Faculty and Staff art exhibit, which starts this week.

At graduation, Patrick Martin received the Faculty of the Year award; Patrick, along with Britney Ferry, also received the Going above and Beyond award which is awarded by students.

8. Student Services Report (Holly Bringman)

Holly Bringman shared that the Student Services report was prepared by Laurie Franklin and gave thanks to her. Holly added she is in her third week at the College and is working on getting a sense of everyone's work. As of today, Summer Quarter enrollment jumped up from 201 to 265 total. Fall Quarter had some upward movement, and has a total of 762 students as of today. There was a call campaign in June, and Holly is working on assessing the effectiveness of it and other efforts to reach students. Enrollment days are coming up and there are a few planned throughout the summer on August 19 and 20, as well as September 8 and 9. Stafford Creek shows as zero on the enrollment report, but they are being entered into the system now.

9. President's Report (Dr. Carli Schiffner)

Dr. Carli Schiffner highlighted Jason Gordon and his team's work to get the budgets loaded into ctcLink by July 2. She also gave a shout out to Floyd Plemmons and Administrative Services for creating and completing a one-year plan to get two years' worth of campus projects completed.

The Trio SSS Federal grant has been extended. The College will have EOC and Upward Bound funding through the summer, and is hoping to get word in the summer regarding continuance. Unfortunately, the federal government has put a hold on Title II funding, and with that pause the funding cannot be allocated to the states. Title II funds the basic adult education programs at the College. At this time, the State Board is asking colleges to make plans on how they will continue to offer services. The State Board has some funding through the summer that may be allocated to colleges. The College has made a plan internally and will continue to offer business as usual.

The Allocation Model Review Committee (AMRC) is wrapping up their work; all the revisions have been made and the recommendations have been sent to the Presidents. The numbers have reflected a reduction of \$290,000 for the College, due to the 4-year rolling average versus the target formula. If approved, it would go into effect on July 1, 2026, and the changes would be implemented over four years. Colleges will receive new numbers in August, which should drop off the FY2021 numbers and hopefully will improve the Colleges budget outlook. The AMRC has looked to see if there are trends across the colleges, and there are no patterns that could be found so they are consulting with researchers in the system to reevaluate. Dr. Schiffner emphasized the College will need to continue to focus on enrollment and growing State FTE, in addition to increasing retention and adult reengagement.

It was asked if this will widen our gap, and Dr. Schiffner confirmed it would, as the College has historically been low on the target for funding, but has been working on closing the gap. She also noted the previous target had not been adjusted since the pandemic. The Presidents will vote on the revised Allocation Model next week, and if approved, it will be presented to the State Board in August. If it's not approved the current Allocation Formula may be rolled over. It was asked if a pathway for Running Start students into a Bachelor of Applied Science program would help. Dr. Schiffner agreed it would and that it is being worked on.

a. **Accreditation** (Kristy Anderson)

There were no updates beyond the written report.

b. **Student Services and Instructional Building (SSIB)** (Floyd Plemmons)

Floyd Plemmons shared the College has made big strides in getting the building where it needs to be for final acceptance. The Fire Damper has been accepted by the Fire Marshall and the next time it needs to be replaced in 4 years, it should be easier. The solar panel project is complete and Floyd is working on scheduling the inspection. It's currently generating power, and will eventually help supplement this building by about \$7,500. Also, there was a kitchen upgrade for the Culinary Arts program.

The Fire Marshall required a directional antenna system for first responder radio communications to be installed; the College is now within a week of approval for the system, which is the last piece needed for final approval of the tulalW Student Services building.

10. Board Report

a. Appointment of Representatives

Jim Sayce has agreed to continue serving as the Board representative on the Legislative Committee. The appointment of the Board representative for the Foundation will be deferred until the Art project is complete.

b. Foundation Meeting Report (Astrid Aveledo & Lisa Smith)

Astrid Aveledo shared the Foundation announced they have appropriated \$500k to the College for equipment purchasing in the industrial tech programs. There is a high need for replacements, and this will bring in industry and relevant training. The \$500k will also help to expand the Medical Assistant and NA-C programs to the Ilwaco and Raymond area.

c. Board Art Committee Update (Astrid Aveledo)

Astrid Aveledo shared that the Committee is closing out a couple of things and planning an event for the fall to complete the art project.

d. Legislative Committee Update (Jim Sayce)

Jim Sayce spoke with Senator Jeff Wilson's staff, who came down to do a port tour in Pacific County. Senator Wilson will come back for a separate port tour and hopefully a tour of the College. Jim emphasized the need for more technical training in this area and spoke about different areas that are in need, specifically high skilled millwrights. Dr. Carli Schiffner added that Senator Wilson will be joining a delegation at Stafford Creek, and she is working to get him to stop by the College.

e. Fiscal Liaison Update (Aliza Esty)

Aliza Esty met with Jason Gordon yesterday, and they spoke about their future meeting cadence, as well as the outcomes for the meetings. There was a request for projection reports and review of the reserves, and auxiliary budgets. It was also noted it would be useful to see the different enrollment targets that the College is working towards in regards to the State FTE and Budget FTE.

f. Study Sessions

Dr. Paula Akerlund asked the Board and Cabinet to review the provided schedule and send suggestions to her and Ja'Shona Cooks. Dr. Akerlund also shared a reminder about the Board Retreat at the Polson Museum on July 29, which will begin at 9:00 AM.

g. Items of Interest (Dr. Paula Akerlund)

Astrid shared an article from the *New York Times*, which spoke about the top employers in each state. She would like to dive deeper into the state's top employers when speaking about what the College offers and program planning.

The meeting recessed at 2:32 PM and reconvened at 2:40 PM.

XIII. Executive Session

The Board entered a closed executive session at 2:40 PM. under RCW 42.30.110 to consult with legal counsel regarding ongoing and new litigation. The session was scheduled to last approximately 45 minutes. The Board reconvened in open session at 3:45 PM.

XIV. Action Items as a Result of the Executive Session

No action was had as a result of executive session.

XV. Good of the Order

Jim Sayce emphasized the importance of getting your yearly physical.

XVI. Adjournment/next meeting

There being no further business, Chair Dr. Paula Akerlund adjourned the meeting at 3:48 PM. The Board of Trustees will hold its next meeting on August 12, 2025 at 1:00 PM, at Grays Harbor College in Aberdeen and via Zoom.

Dr. Carli Schiffner, Secretary

Dr. Paula Akerlund, Chair