

# Board of Trustees Regular Meeting

January 13, 2026 at 1:00 PM

Hybrid Meeting: tulalW Student Center Boardroom (Aberdeen Campus)

Zoom: <https://ghc.zoom.us/j/81201267659>

Join by Phone: 253-215-8782 | Meeting ID: 812 0126 7659



## January 13, 2026 – Regular Meeting Agenda

The Board of Trustees of Grays Harbor College will hold a regular business meeting on Tuesday, January 13, 2026, at 1:00 PM. Dr. Paula Akerlund, Board Chair, will preside.

A light lunch will be offered at 11:30 AM. A study session featuring an AI discussion will be held at 12:00 PM and presented by Dr. Michael Brown from the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges, along with Dr. Aaron Coby, Haley McGraw, and Jeremy Winn from Grays Harbor College.

Item	Topic	Presenter(s)
12:00 - 1:00 PM	<b>Study Session – AI Discussion</b>	Dr. Michael Brown - Director of Educational Resources and Innovation, SBCTC Dr. Aaron Coby - Dean of Arts, Sciences, and Extended Learning, GHC Haley McGraw, Director of Library Services, GHC Jeremy Winn, E-Learning Coordinator, GHC
I.	<b>Call to Order/Roll Call</b>	Dr. Paula Akerlund
II.	<b>Safety Statement</b> In the event of an emergency requiring evacuation (e.g., fire or building hazard), please exit Boardroom 3320/3322 promptly. Proceed to the first door on the opposite side of the hallway and use the stairs to reach the first floor. Once on the first floor, turn left behind the stairs to exit through the doors leading outside. Avoid the door directly in front of you, as it leads to the first-floor hallway. An Evac+Chair evacuation chair is located directly at the top of the stairs for those who may need assistance. Once outside, gather at the designated assembly point, away from the building, to ensure your safety. If you have specific safety needs or require accommodations, please let Dr. Schiffner know.	Dr. Paula Akerlund
III.	<b>Pledge of Allegiance</b>	Dr. Paula Akerlund
IV.	<b>Land Acknowledgement</b> Grays Harbor College is located on the ancestral lands of the Chehalis, Chinook, Quinault and Shoalwater Bay Peoples. With this awareness, we honor the ancestors and pay respect to elders past and present of these nations and all Native Peoples of this land who occupy these lands since time immemorial. The College expresses its deepest respect for and gratitude towards these original and current caretakers of the region and to our native students, staff, and faculty, past and present, as well as support and respect their presence and valuable contributions into the future. As an academic community, we acknowledge our responsibility to	Jim Sayce

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**GRAYS HARBOR COLLEGE**

	establish and maintain relationships with these nations and Native peoples, in support of their sovereignty and the inclusion of their voices in the teaching and learning process.	
V.	<b>Agenda Adoption</b>	Dr. Paula Akerlund
VI.	<b>Public Comments</b> Please sign in and limit comments to three minutes.	
VII.	<b>Celebrations</b> 1. Elisa Harvey – Giving Tree 2. Campus Operations – Prep for Winter and Storm Watch	Holly Bringman Jason Gordon
VIII.	<b>New Employee Introductions</b>	Erin Tofte
IX.	<b>Action Items</b> 1. Approval of the December 9, 2025 Minutes 2. Second Reading of Operational Policy 503 – Financial Management 3. Second Reading of Operational Policy 504 – Cash Control	Dr. Paula Akerlund Jason Gordon Jason Gordon
X.	<b>Standing Reports</b> 1. Student Government Report 2. Classified Staff Report 3. Represented Exempt Staff Report 4. Faculty Report 5. Administrative Services Report 6. Human Resources Report 7. Learning and Student Success Report a. Enrollment 8. President's Report a. Accreditation 9. Board Report a. Foundation Meeting Report b. Legislative Committee Report c. Fiscal Liaison Report d. Items of Interest ▪ 2026-2027 Board Meeting Calendar Review	Isaac Humiston To Be Determined Shelly Hoffman Anita Plagge Jason Gordon Erin Tofte Holly Bringman  Dr. Carli Schiffner Kristy Anderson  Astrid Aveledo Jim Sayce Aliza Esty Dr. Paula Akerlund
XI.	<b>Non-Public Session</b> Non-Public Session covered by the Open Public Meetings ACT per RCW 42.30.140	
XII.	<b>Action Items as a Result of the Non-Public Session</b>	
XIII.	<b>Executive Session</b> Under RCW 42.30.110, an executive session may be held for the purpose of receiving and evaluating complaints against or reviewing the qualifications of an applicant for public employment or reviewing the performance of a public employee; consultation with legal counsel regarding agency enforcement actions, or actual or potential agency litigation; considering the sale or acquisition of real estate; and/or reviewing professional negotiations.	
XIV.	<b>Action Items as a Result of the Executive Session</b> Upon returning to open session, the Board may, in its discretion, take action as necessary on any item properly considered by the Board in executive session.	

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**GRAYS HARBOR COLLEGE**

XV.	<b>Good of the Order</b>	
XVI.	<b>Adjournment</b>	



*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.*

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## Grays Harbor College Board of Trustees Regular Meeting

**Board Meeting:** The Board meeting was convened on December 9, 2025, at 1:10 PM.

**Members Present:** Dr. Paula Akerlund, Jim Sayce, Dr. Harry Carthum

**Members Present on Zoom:** Aliza Esty

**Others Present:** Holly Bringman, Ja'Shona Cooks, Derek Edens, Dr. Carli Schiffner, Jason Gordon, Matthew Barber, Cathy LeCompte, Kristy Anderson, Erin Tofte, Cassaundra Smith, Lori Christmas, Holly Duffy, Kiah Balken, Maya Esquivido, Cherie Edwards, Tia Lutz, JEB Thornton, Jared Stratton, Sean Lyons, Anita Plagge, Tom Kuester, Ginelle Hanaway, Sydni Yeager, Lisa Getty, Virgil Matthews, Annette Orona, Camryn Scheuber, Kaleb Ames, Isaac Humiston, Angel Galeana, Sarah Dalrymple, Marco Cerqueira

**Others Present on Zoom:** Penny James, Jennifer Johnson, Julie Randall, Amy Hitchcock, Dr. Aaron Coby, Lisa Smith, Heidi Wood, Ariel Finrock, Annalee Atwell-Tobar, Lizbeth Sánchez, Jody Pope, Cheyenna Carroll, Jamie Traugott, Sarina Tung, Ashley Bowie-Gallegos, Jackie Blumberg, Carla Idohl-Corwin, PJ Moore, Ariel Finrock, Patrick Martin, Marjie Stratton, Brian Mahoney

A study session featuring a Tribal Government Affairs update by Maya Esquivido from the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges and a Native Pathways Program update by Cherie Edwards and Tia Lutz from Grays Harbor College was held at 12:00 PM.

### I. Call to Order and Roll Call

Chair Dr. Paula Akerlund called the meeting to order at 1:10 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 Dr. Harry Carthum seconded the motion. The motion carried.

### VI. Public Comments

Lori Christmas, Grays Harbor College employee, shared information about the Montesano Festival of Lights Parade.

## **VII. Celebration**

Holly Bringman celebrated Coach Virgil Matthews for his induction into the University of Montana Hall of Fame. Matthews briefly shared remarks reflecting on his experience and the significance of the honor.

Bringman also recognized the collective efforts supporting the Harbor Landing Food Pantry, including Student Life, the GHC Foundation, Jamie Traugott from the State Board, and the community. Isaac Humiston extended appreciation to the students and staff who contributed to assembling food baskets and supporting food pantry operations. He also thanked and welcomed new employees Marco Cerqueira and Angel Galeana, who began their roles on December 1.

## **VIII. New Employee Introductions**

Erin Tofte introduced new employees. Amy Hitchcock joined the College as Program Manager A at the Ilwaco Campus. Angel Galeana transitioned into the Student Life Coordinator position. Crystal Butler joined as a Corrections Education Navigator at Stafford Creek Corrections Center. Leilani Polk joined the College as a TRIO Student Support Specialist. David Minkler joined as a Grounds and Nursery Specialist 3.

## **IX. Review Items**

1. First Reading of Operational Policy 503 - Financial Management
  - a. Jason Gordon provided a brief overview of Operational Policy 503 and the review process that took place. He noted that there were no significant changes to the policy.
2. First Reading of Operational Policy 504 - Cash Control
  - a. Jason Gordon provided a brief overview of Operational Policy 504 and shared that the policy received minor revisions. He also clarified that surplus funds refer to cash and investments held as reserves.

## **X & XI. Action Items & Standing Reports**

### **Action Items**

1. Approval of November 18, 2025 Minutes
  - a. Chair Dr. Paula Akerlund called for a motion to approve the November 18, 2025 meeting minutes. Dr. Harry Carthum moved to approve the minutes, and Jim Sayce seconded the motion. The motion carried.
2. Second Reading of Operational Policy 403 - Federal Educational Right and Privacy Act (FERPA)
  - a. Discussion noted that FERPA violations are tracked by the Registrar's Office and Human Resources.
  - b. Chair Dr. Paula Akerlund called for a motion to approve Operational Policy 403 - Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Jim Sayce moved to approve the policy, and Dr. Harry Carthum seconded. The motion carried.
3. Second Reading of Operational Policy 501 - Business Functions, Delegation of Authority
  - a. Chair Dr. Paula Akerlund called for a motion to approve Operational Policy 501 - Business Functions, Delegation of Authority. Dr. Harry Carthum moved to approve the policy, and Jim Sayce seconded. The motion carried.

## **Standing Reports**

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

Isaac Humiston reported that December holiday baskets are currently being distributed. He also shared that Student Government has registered to attend Advocacy Day on February 5.

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

Jared Stratton informed the Board that this would be his final report and that he is working to identify a replacement. He expressed appreciation to the Board for their support.

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

There were no updates beyond the written report.

### **4. Faculty report (Anita Plagge)**

Anita Plagge acknowledged Tom Kuester for his service as the Grays Harbor College Federation of Teachers (GHCFT) President over the past three years and introduced Sean Lyons as the incoming GHCFT President.

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

Jason Gordon reported that budget development for the upcoming fiscal year is underway, with budget managers' submissions due by the end of the month. He shared that revenue projections will begin next, and that he will continue to monitor state level projections.

Gordon also reported that KPFF Consulting Engineers will begin predesign work related to the Lake Swano Dam. Representatives from KPFF Consulting Engineers will be on campus later this week to conduct site data collection and hold a project kick-off. He explained that the predesign phase involves analyzing the dam and evaluating options for the College's next steps, followed by a design phase that will inform future construction decisions. Discussion then ensued regarding cash payment options at athletic events.

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

Erin Tofte noted that the organizational charts included in the report are updated monthly and posted on the public Cabinet webpage. She shared that the Director of Advising position and the Associate Dean at Stafford Creek Corrections Center position have now been posted. Tofte also provided the Board new employee identification badges.

### **7. Learning & Student Success Report (Holly Bringman)**

Holly Bringman provided an enrollment update, reporting that total enrollment is at approximately 1,180 students, including Running Start and Stafford Creek Corrections Center (SCCC) enrollments. She shared that several enrollment initiatives are underway, including a call campaign beginning this week and Enrollment Days scheduled for Tuesday and Wednesday of next week. Bringman also noted that 86 percent of Running Start students are enrolled full-time.

Bringman reported that the Bachelor of Science in Computer Science program, developed in collaboration with Teri Bell, Jaime Reino, and Dr. Aaron Coby, has been approved and submitted to the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU) for a planned Fall 2027 launch.

She also shared that the Culinary Arts program is transitioning from a certificate to a degree pathway. The two-year Associate of Arts degree has been approved by the NWCCU and does not constitute a new program in the College's program inventory. Discussion followed regarding growing the program's capacity, including short-term and continuing education offerings.

**8. President's Report (Dr. Carli Schiffner)**

Dr. Carli Schiffner expressed appreciation to the Celebration Committee for hosting yesterday's Holiday Celebration. She also thanked Jared Stratton and Marjie Stratton for their service and time at the College. Dr. Schiffner shared that the upcoming legislative session is expected to focus on budget cuts, and the College is preparing locally. She noted that the Governor's proposed budget is anticipated within the next week. The College's advocacy message will focus on maintaining status quo funding for community colleges and fully funding cost-of-living adjustments (COLAs). She also shared that efforts are underway to organize visits to Olympia.

**a. Accreditation (Kristy Anderson)**

The written report provides an update on the Year 7 Report, and feedback will soon be gathered from campus. Positive feedback has been received from the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU) regarding the College's previous accreditation report.

**9. Board Reports**

**a. Foundation Meeting Report (Astrid Aveledo & Lisa Smith)**

Lisa Smith reported that the *Journey Campaign* mail appeal has been sent to donors and will run through the end of February. She also shared that the College was awarded a grant from the AMB Foundation to support the Native Pathways Program, with the Grays Harbor College Foundation serving as the fiduciary manager. The grant will help expand outreach efforts, provide technology support, and offer culturally relevant programming for the Native Pathways Program. Smith added that the Foundation will continue working with Cherie Edwards and Tia Lutz to pursue additional grant opportunities.

**b. Legislative Committee Report (Jim Sayce)**

Jim Sayce reported that he has been in contact with legislative staff and is working to schedule a meeting during the third week of January. Dr. Carli Schiffner added that the Legislative Send Off will take place on January 9. Prior to the event, a morning meeting will be held in collaboration with the Port of Grays Harbor to hear directly from local representatives and discuss community needs.

**c. Fiscal Liaison Report (Aliza Esty)**

Aliza Esty reported that she met with Jason Gordon to discuss ways to provide additional context for the budget, including better connecting FTE data to the overall budget picture.

**d. Items of Interest (Dr. Paula Akerlund)**

There were no items of interest.

#### **XIV. Executive Session**

The Board entered a closed executive session at 2:10 PM under RCW 42.30.110 to consult with legal counsel regarding ongoing legal matters and personnel matters. The session was scheduled to last approximately 15 minutes. The Board reconvened in open session at 2:24 PM.

#### **XV. Action Items as a Result of the Executive Session**

No action was taken as a result of the executive session.

#### **XVI. Good of the Order**

Dr. Harry Carthum asked about the current Running Start FTE. It was shared that the current Running Start headcount is approximately 430 students. Discussion followed regarding the overall experience of Running Start students and diversifying funding streams. It was also shared that the College currently has eight open staff positions, with one faculty position anticipated to open in January.

#### **XVII. Adjournment/next meeting**

There being no further business, Chair Dr. Paula Akerlund adjourned the meeting at 2:30 PM. The Board of Trustees will hold its next meeting on January 13, 2026 at 1:00 PM, at Grays Harbor College in Aberdeen and via Zoom.

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Dr. Carli Schiffner, Secretary

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Dr. Paula Akerlund, Chair



## IX.2. - Second Reading of Operational Policy 503 - Financial Management

GHC Board of Trustees Meeting

January 13, 2026

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### Operational Policy

Policy Name	Financial Management
Policy Number	503
Date Adopted	8/1/1975
Date(s) Revised or Reviewed	Revised: 1/17/1995; 3/15/1999; 12/21/2021 Reviewed: 4/21/2020

### Policy:

It is the policy of Grays Harbor College to ensure strong financial management and the integrity of College resources. The College follows established state laws, regulations in the State Administrative and Accounting Manual (SAAM) from the Washington State Office of Financial Management (OFM), and guidance in the Fiscal Affairs Manual (FAM) from the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC).

The Board of Trustees hereby directs the president of the College to establish and control a proper accounting system which is consistent with the rules of proper regulatory bodies, good business practices, and any state statutes which may apply.

It shall also be the duty of the president to develop a proposed budget of revenues and expenditures for each ensuing fiscal year and to present it to the trustees for their approval. The budget shall be managed as a controlled spending plan for the fiscal year. The president is authorized to make expenditures and commitments in accordance with and in harmony with the adopted budget, but the president shall also have the authority to make adjustments to the adopted budget plan when deemed necessary. Any adjustments which involve changes in the philosophy inherent in the adopted budget shall be reported to the Board.

### References:

[Office of Financial Management State Administrative and Accounting Manual \(SAAM\):](#)

[State Board for Community and Technical Colleges Fiscal Affairs Manual \(FAM\)](#)

## IX.3. - Second Reading of Operational Policy 504 - Cash Control

GHC Board of Trustees Meeting

January 13, 2026

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### Operational Policy

Policy Name	Cash Control	
Policy Number	504	
Date Adopted	8/1/1975	
Date(s) Revised or Reviewed	Revised: 1/17/95, 3/15/99, 4/21/2020	Reviewed:

### Policy:

It is the policy of the Board of Trustees of Grays Harbor College to maintain sound business practices concerning the control of cash which is received and disbursed on behalf of the College. The Board, therefore, directs the president of the College or designees to deposit all cash received for the College into financial institutions for the exclusive benefit of the College. If the College accumulates surplus funds, the Board authorizes the president or designees to invest and/or liquidate for the exclusive benefit of the College, any such surplus funds. The president or designees are expected to judge the circumstances under which any such cash balances can be prudently invested or liquidated.

The president or designees are directed to make payments for goods and services, and the Board authorizes the president or designees to sign checks, or submit payments through electronic means, for these payments.

The president or designee is authorized to establish, receive and deposit student tuition and fee charges as provided under the applicable statutes of the state of Washington and under the regulations of the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges [RCW 28B.15](#).

## X.1. – Student Government Report

GHC Board of Trustees Meeting  
January 13, 2026

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**To:** Grays Harbor College Board of Trustees

**From:** Isaac Humiston – ASGHC President

**cc:** President Carli Schiffner, VPLSS Holly Bringman

**Date:** December 29, 2025

**Re:** ASG January Board Report

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- **ASGHC Updates**

- Executive VP Lisa Getty and President Isaac Humiston met with Matt Edwards to learn about how ASG can support increasing the student voice on college committees.
- Over 600 Fall and Winter holiday baskets were distributed to GHC students, staff, and families in Grays Harbor and Pacific Counties.
- Planning is underway for programming around Black History Month (February) and Women's History Month (March).
- ASG received a large donation of brand-new art supplies for student activities from Mary Genung with the One Stop Shell Shop in Ocean Shores. We are really excited to have high quality art supplies for our students!

## **X.3. – Represented Exempt Staff Report**

GHC Board of Trustees Meeting

January 13, 2026

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# **Written Report**

## **Item Information:**

**Topic:** Professional Exempt Representation

**Prepared by:** Shelly Hoffman, Recruitment Facilitator

**Attachments:** None

## **Narrative**

No report at this time.

## **Summary & Next Steps**

Not applicable.

## **Action Requested:**

Not applicable.

## **X.4. – Faculty Report**

GHC Board of Trustees Meeting  
January 13, 2026

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# **Written Report**

## **Item Information:**

**Topic:** Faculty Report

**Prepared by:** Anita Plagge, Professor of Biology

**Attachments:** N/A

## **Narrative**

- This meeting falls exactly one week into the quarter. Faculty are refreshed after Winter break and are starting the quarter with renewed excitement for teaching. Some faculty are teaching their once-a-year classes.

## **Summary & Next Steps**

None

## **Action Requested:**

None

## ☐ **Follow-Up**

None

## X.5. – Administrative Services Report

GHC Board of Trustees Meeting  
January 13, 2026

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# Written Report

## Item Information:

**Topic:** Administrative Services Report

**Prepared by:** Jason Gordon, Vice President for Administrative Services

**Attachment:** None

## Narrative

### FY2026-27 Budget Development

- Budget development is currently in process.
- Budget requests were due on December 31, 2026 and review of those requests will take place this month.
- Tuition rate increase of 3.3% for FY27 was approved by SBCTC.
- Governor's supplemental budget for the FY2025-27 biennium budget was released. Some highlights include:
  - 1.5% across-the-board cut to college base appropriations starting FY27.
  - Funding provided for WPEA agreements, including retroactive pay for FY26 wage increases.
  - Running Start enrollment cap lowered from 1.4 to 1.2 FTE.

### Lake Swano Dam Project

On December 11, Grays Harbor College held a kickoff meeting with KPFF Consulting Engineers and GeoEngineers to begin work on the Lake Swano Dam project. This initial phase focuses on evaluating alternatives for either rehabilitating or removing the dam to meet Department of Ecology Dam Safety Office requirements.

The meeting covered the purpose of the project, including the review of alternatives, permitting considerations, and the importance of stakeholder outreach.

Work is underway on key tasks:

- **Project Management and Coordination:** Establishing schedules, progress reporting, and bi-weekly team meetings.
- **Site Review:** A field visit was completed to document current conditions and gather data to support design and permitting.

Next steps include developing preliminary design recommendations, cost estimates, and an assessment of opportunities and risks for each alternative. This phase is expected to take approximately three months, with the final report anticipated by the end of May 2026.

## **Audit**

The College has been selected by SBCTC for a civil rights review during the current year audit cycle. This review is required by the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights and is part of SBCTC's annual risk-based audit and compliance plan. The last civil rights review for GHC was conducted in 2020. SBCTC will notify us when the review begins and provide a report upon completion, outlining any findings and required corrective actions.

## **Business Affairs Commission (BAC)**

- The most recent BAC meeting was held via Zoom on December 5.
- The next BAC meeting will be held at SBCTC on February 5-6.

## **Summary & Next Steps**

Administrative Services continues to prioritize FY2026 budget performance, FY2027 budget development, and BAC initiatives. Updates will be shared with the Board as new information becomes available.

## **Action Requested:**

None

## ☐ **Follow-Up**

## **X.6. – Human Resources Report**

GHC Board of Trustees Meeting  
January 13, 2026

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## **Written Report**

### **Item Information:**

**Topic:** Human Resources Report

**Prepared by:** Erin Tofte, Associate Vice President of Human Resources

**Attachments:** NA

## **Narrative**

### **General Updates:**

- The second new employee onboarding session was held with 7 new employees participating. These sessions will be held monthly, with the next one scheduled for January 21st.
- Interest Based Bargaining training is scheduled for January 21<sup>st</sup>. Bargaining for the SCCC portion of the faculty contract will begin in late January.
- Minimum wage increases to \$17.13 from \$16.66 on January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2026.
- Title IX training held for Student Life and Athletic Department Staff, and a student session will be held in January.
- Employee personal finance session being offered on January 14<sup>th</sup> at noon. Understanding the Basics of Financial Wellness will be presented by our EAP partners (Employee Assistance Program) and faculty member Dr. Lyn Lanka.

### **New Employees:**

- Yari Rolfe-Maloney, Maintenance Mechanic 2, 12/16/25
- Taylor Friebauer, TRiO Ed. & Student Success Specialist Upward Bound, 12/16/25
- Sonja McGraw, Executive Assistant to Vice President for Learning & Student Success, 12/22/25
- Jacob Borden, Women's Soccer Coach, 01/01/26
- Yoni Salas, Custodian 2, 01/05/26
- Michelle Smith, Library and Archives Para 1, 01/05/26

### **Changes in Employment:**

- Ariel Finrock, Co-Interim Director of BASTE Program, 12/01/25
- Cheyenna Carroll, Events Manager (Bishop Center), 01/12/26
- Cassaundra Smith, CTE Coordinator, 01/01/26

### **Searches:**

- Director of Advising (new position), posted
- Associate Dean of Instruction at Stafford Creek (replacing CJ Berndt), posted
- Support Specialist SCCC (Prison Education Program/Pell replacing Natalie Tillary), posted
- SCCC ABE/ESL Temporary Faculty Position (William Newman), posted
- Several adjunct positions (to hire for specific courses and pools for future hires)



### **Action Requested:**

- NA

### ☐ **Follow-Up**

- NA

## X.7. – Learning and Student Success Report

GHC Board of Trustees Meeting

January 13, 2026



# Written Report

## Item Information:

**Topic:** Learning and Student Success Report

**Prepared by:** Holly Bringman, Vice President of Learning and Student Success

## Narrative

### Enrollment

#### Winter Quarter Enrollment Snapshot as of Tuesday, December 30<sup>th</sup>

FTE: Winter 2026	Winter 2025 12/31/2024 Day # -7	Winter 2026 12/30/2025 Day # -7	Difference	% Diff from 2025 to 2026	Winter 2025 FTE change to end of quarter	Final FTE Numbers for Winter 2025
1-Academic Transfer & Pre-College	456.3	484.7	28.4	6.2%	35.8	492.1
2-Transition Programs	4.0	106.6	102.6	2567.3%	126.8	130.8
3-Career and Technical Ed.	275.9	316.8	40.8	14.8%	62.8	338.7
4-BAS Programs	35.1	42.3	7.2	20.5%	4.0	39.1
<b>State Funded Total</b>	<b>771.4</b>	<b>950.4</b>	<b>179.0</b>	<b>23.2%</b>	<b>229.4</b>	<b>1,000.7</b>
Running Start FTE	399.4	426.5	27.0	6.8%	9.9	409.3
<b>State + Running Start Total</b>	<b>1,170.8</b>	<b>1,376.8</b>	<b>206.0</b>	<b>17.6%</b>	<b>239.2</b>	<b>1,410.0</b>
Stafford Creek FTE	99.1	81.6	-17.5	-17.7%	85.0	184.1
<b>State + RS + SCCC Total</b>	<b>1,269.9</b>	<b>1,458.4</b>	<b>188.5</b>	<b>14.8%</b>	<b>324.2</b>	<b>1,594.1</b>

As of December 30, 2025, Grays Harbor College has reached 59.4% of its state-funded FTE allocation target (1,601 FTE), showing a substantial improvement over the same time last year, which was at 50.8% of a lower target (1,519 FTE). Total state-funded FTE is up by 179 compared to this time last year, and combined with Running Start enrollments, overall FTE is up by 206. Notably, the Transitions and ELA teams made early progress with enrollments, which inflates the current gap when compared to prior year timing. Running Start is currently reported at 464 FTE, with 28 expected to shift from state-funded coding. Winter quarter state-funded FTE stands at 950 out of a 1,010 budgeted target (94%), or an estimated 91% when adjusting for uncoded Running Start. Worker Retraining FTE is at 70% of its quarterly goal. These numbers reflect steady growth and ongoing enrollment momentum across key student populations.

## SSAIL Work Groups

Grays Harbor College has made meaningful progress in advancing student success through the formation of dedicated work groups within the Student Services and Instructional Leadership (SSAIL) team. These cross-functional groups are now actively addressing key components of the student experience, with a focus on improving enrollment, retention, and completion outcomes.

### Work Groups and Areas of Focus

- **Student Journey Mapping**  
This group is situating its work within the framework of Guided Pathways, identifying how students navigate college structures and aligning those steps with academic and career pathways. They are building a student-centered map that will serve as both a planning tool and a guide for continuous improvement.
- **Enrollment/One-Stop Experience**  
Focused on strengthening onboarding experiences, this group is refining Enrollment Labs, Enrollment Days, and the one-stop student support model. Their goal is to streamline processes, reduce confusion, and increase collaboration across departments. Additionally, they are implementing a quarterly retention campaign model to proactively support students at key points in the registration process.
- **Student Voice**  
This group is ensuring students' perspectives inform every aspect of the work. Initial feedback has already been shared and is being used to shape strategies and ensure that changes are responsive to real student needs.
- **Communication Sequencing and Strategy**  
This team is mapping critical student communications to ensure messages are timely, coordinated, and supportive of student decision-making. They are working closely with the Student Journey team to align efforts, recognizing the significant overlap between communication and successful student navigation.

Together, these work groups represent a renewed commitment to collaboration, systems-thinking, and student-centered innovation. SSAIL looks forward to sharing more about their progress in the coming months.

## Financial Aid

During the first half of the academic year, Grays Harbor College has successfully disbursed over **\$4 million** in student financial aid. This funding includes awards applied directly to student tuition and fees, as well as refunds issued to students to support their broader educational expenses.

- **Tuition and Fee Support:**  
Financial aid covered \$411,689 in summer and \$1.33 million in fall tuition and fees, totaling \$1.75 million in direct payments to the college on behalf of students.
- **Student Refunds:**  
In addition to covering tuition, over \$2.3 million was refunded directly to students—\$391,701 in summer and \$1.92 million in fall—to assist with books, transportation, housing, and other costs related to college attendance.

- **Total Disbursements:**

Combined, the summer and fall quarters accounted for \$4,055,762 in financial aid disbursements. These totals include all federal, state, and institutional funds processed through the Financial Aid office.

This investment in student success reflects the college's continued efforts to reduce financial barriers and support access to higher education for our students.

## TRIO SSS

TRIO SSS has resumed intake of new students this winter, welcoming approximately 50 students from a previously paused waitlist following the conclusion of the STEM grant. With JEB Thornton stepping in as Interim Dean of Student Services and Enrollment, the TRIO program is currently led by Interim Director Ginelle Hanaway, who brings experience as both TRIO Coordinator and Student Support Specialist. The team has completed required program exits and is actively scheduling new student intake appointments.

In the **Passport to Careers** program, serving former foster and unaccompanied homeless youth, significant improvements are underway. These include an updated student support plan (in progress with WSAC), improved communications through Canvas, and enhanced student engagement strategies such as end-of-quarter letters, birthday cards, and monthly tabling events to raise visibility. Enrollment in the Passport program has decreased modestly from 11 to 9 students between fall and winter, and outreach is ongoing to re-engage those not currently enrolled.

TRIO is also expanding campus and community engagement through upcoming events and partnerships. Highlights include the third annual *Dolly Days* literacy celebration, a financial literacy workshop series in collaboration with Peak Credit Union, and participation in Legislative Day to advocate for Passport programs.

## Workforce and Continuing Education/Extended Learning

The **Westport Maritime Futures** project is in the program development stage with a few more focus groups to conduct after the first of the year. Based on past course work and training offered in maritime shoreside work and deck hand preparation, the project will develop a two-page summary of the program proposed that will include learning outcomes, objectives, descriptions and timeline for those interested in participating in the training. Also, in the planning stage is a high school maritime training that will expose secondary students to the maritime industry and let them explore their passion for working in the industry.

**Small Business Requirements and Resources Workshop** will be offered from Wednesday, February 18 to Friday, February 20 at variable times in Ilwaco, Raymond and Aberdeen. This is a free two-hour workshop for aspiring small business owners who want information on where to start and what to do, and for current small business owners who want to maintain and grow their businesses. It is being offered by the Office of the Secretary of State (OSOS), Office for Regulatory Innovation & Assistance (ORIA), Department of Revenue (DOR), Labor and Industries (L&I), Employment Security, Department (ESD), Washington Health Benefit Exchange (WAHBE), Office of Minority and Women's Business Enterprises (OMWBE), and Others who will be presenting on all things small business and providing an opportunity to connect one-on-one with each agency during Office Hours after the presentation.

**The Community and Continuing Education** winter schedule continues to develop with 16 courses currently on the roster. Candi Bachtell, the champion for this program since its revival has transitioned out of that role and has assisted with onboarding Amy Hitchcock, the new Continuing Education Program Manager. Amy is located in Ilwaco and serves as the building manager in addition to the program manager for the continuing and community education classes. In her role as building manager, she will be working closely with facilities as the building gets a new paint job courtesy of a \$21,000 gift from the Grays Harbor College Foundation.

## Arts & Sciences

Grays Harbor College presents its **8th Annual Grays Harbor College Jazz Festival**. This free, non-competitive event provides a valuable opportunity for students to perform for a live audience and receive expert critique from experienced jazz clinicians.

### Event Details

- **Date:** Thursday, January 15, 2026
- **Time:** 8:00 AM – 4:00 PM
- **Location:** The Bishop Center for the Performing Arts, Grays Harbor College Campus, 1620 Edward P. Smith Dr., Aberdeen, WA
- **Cost:** Adults - \$20; Senior/Grays Harbor area students - \$17; GHC students and >12 youth – Free.

### Featured Clinicians and Evening Performance

This year, our daytime adjudicators and noontime clinicians will be members of the distinguished Latin Jazz trio, **Duende Libre**. Alex Chadsey (bandleader and keys), Jeff Busch (percussion), and Farko Dosumov (bass) have apprenticed with direct descendants and master musicians from the Latin American diaspora and will serve as a unique resource for our participating musicians. A special feature of the festival is the opportunity for participating students and educators to attend a live evening performance by the [Duende Libre](#) at 7:00 PM in the GHC Bishop Center.

Thank you, Dr. Bill Dyer, and all the amazing support personnel for making these events happen!

## Nursing

Nursing is pleased to share that Dr. Allison Bradywood, Executive Director of the Washington State Board of Nursing, will be visiting our campus on January 13. Dr. Bradywood is visiting nursing programs across the state to learn more about the successes and challenges within our programs. During her visit, she will meet with nursing faculty, with much of the discussion focused on the implementation of the Nursing Education WACs and opportunities to update and improve these laws to better support program quality and effectiveness. We are excited and honored to host her.

Additionally, our Nurse Navigator, Alexis Montoure, is successfully leveraging Grays Harbor College social media to engage with the broader community. One of her recent posts went “Grays Harbor viral,” reaching more than 30,000 views and receiving over 300 likes within just a few days. Holly Duffy noted that this level of engagement is an excellent response. The Daily World also picked up the Facebook post and featured it in the newspaper. As a result, Alexis has already received several inquiries directly from this outreach. She plans to post quarterly during the winter and spring terms.

## Transitions

During Fall Quarter 2025, Grays Harbor College's Transition Program proudly awarded 23 High School+ (HS+) diplomas, marking a significant milestone for these students in their educational journey. When combined with summer quarter completions, the program has awarded a total of 34 HS+ diplomas so far, this academic year.

These achievements reflect the dedication, perseverance, and resilience of our adult learners, many of whom are balancing complex life circumstances while returning to education. Just as importantly, this success is the result of the collective efforts of Transition faculty, instructional staff, advisors, and support personnel who work collaboratively to guide students from entry through completion.

Faculty and staff provide individualized instruction, academic advising, testing support, and wraparound services that help remove barriers and keep students engaged. Their commitment to student-centered, equity-driven practices ensures that learners receive the encouragement, structure, and resources needed to reach their goals.

The continued growth in HS+ completions demonstrates the strength of the Transition Program and its critical role in supporting educational attainment, workforce readiness, and long-term success for adult learners across our service area.

## Stafford Creek and Corrections Education

On December 5, Grays Harbor College's Construction Trades Apprenticeship Program (CTAP) at Stafford Creek Corrections Center hosted a trades engagement event designed to connect incarcerated students with regional labor partners and reentry resources. Representatives from multiple trade unions, the Governor's Office, the Department of Corrections, and Grays Harbor College participated in a panel-style discussion with CTAP students.

Trade representatives shared information about apprenticeship expectations, career pathways, and the benefits and challenges of union employment. Several presenters also shared personal reentry experiences, including successful transitions into the trades following incarceration. These firsthand accounts were particularly impactful for students, reinforcing the message that viable, living-wage career pathways are attainable after release.

The event generated strong student engagement, with thoughtful questions and discussion that aligned closely with CTAP curriculum and workforce preparation goals. Students consistently report that opportunities for direct interaction with industry partners help clarify expectations, build confidence, and strengthen their understanding of post-release employment options.

This event reflects Grays Harbor College's ongoing commitment to workforce education, reentry support, and meaningful partnerships that promote student success and economic mobility for incarcerated learners.

Representatives from multiple trades and partner organizations joined the CTAP class, including:

- Jeremy Clevenger – Laborers Union
- Ray Dumas – Cement Masons & Plasterers Union

- Eric Sanchez – Iron Workers Union
- Kelly Tanke – Bricklayers Union
- Nicholas Brock – Governor’s Office, Ombuds
- Steve Peterman – Correctional Industries Manager 3, DOC
- Janece Levien – Education Services Administrator, Reentry Division, DOC
- Heidi Wood – Dean of Transition and Correction Education, GHC
- Leslie Coffman – Acting Dean, Stafford Creek Corrections Center, GHC
- Kelly Richters – CTAP Instructor, GHC/SCCC

## **X.8. – President's Report**

GRAYS HARBOR COLLEGE Board of Trustees Meeting  
January 13, 2026

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# **Written Report**

## **Item Information:**

**Topic:** President's Monthly Report  
**Prepared by:** Carli Schiffner, PhD, President  
**Attachments:** Accreditation Update

## **Narrative**

### **EVENTS:**

President's Office Hours, December 1  
NWCCU, Fall Conference and Commissioner Meeting, December 2-3  
Regional Economic Forecast and Innovation Expo, December 4  
GHC Employee Holiday Celebration, December 8  
NCII, Work Session, December 10  
CHOICE and Community College Connection Summit, December 12  
Department of Corrections, Yellow Badge Training, December 16  
New Employee Meet and Greet, December 17  
GHC Employee Waffle Bar, December 24

### **MEETINGS:**

Kayla Dunlap, Director of Government Relations, Port of Grays Harbor, December 1  
Dr. Gretchen Schmidt, National Council for Inquiry and Innovation, Director, December 1  
Kim Tanaka, Director of College Trustees, SBCTC, December 1  
Gray Pac Superintendents Monthly Meeting, December 5  
Department of Corrections and SBCTC, December 5  
GHC Faculty / Exempt Professional and Management, December 5  
Bishop Center Future Planning, December 8  
Legislative Committee, December 8  
Department of Corrections and Purdy Center Discussion, December 8



Dr. Tana Senn, Secretary, DCYF, December 9  
PESB Prep Meetings, December 9, 15  
Recompete Steering Committee, December 10  
Stafford Creek Corrections Center, GHC Staff Meeting, December 10  
GHC Foundation Meeting & Presidential Update, December 11  
Washington Corrections Center for Women & SBCTC Meeting, December 11  
Washington State Productivity Board, Meeting, December 12  
Secretary Lang, Department of Corrections, WACTC Representative, December 15  
Friends of Bishop Center, Planning and Review Meeting, December 15  
Dr. Lori Hunt, Chief of Staff, Spokane Community College District, December 15  
Athletic Department, Staff Meeting, December 15  
Campus Operations, Staff Meeting, December 17  
Dr. Chris Nesmeth, Elma Superintendent, December 18  
Accreditation Steering Committee, December 18  
SBCTC Leadership Circle Breakfast, December 19  
Dr. Michael Brown, Director of E-Learning and Innovation, SBCTC, December 19

\*Plus, numerous hiring committees, interviews, and recruitment sessions.

## ACCREDITATION

Report attached.

In early December, the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU) held its annual fall conference. This conference brings together leadership from public and private institutions of higher education throughout the Western region of the country. Training is offered to incoming peer evaluators—Grays Harbor College’s Dean of Arts and Sciences, Dr. Aaron Coby, recently became a peer evaluator and attended this training! Dr. Jessica Riddell, Professor of English at Bishop’s University in Canada, provided the keynote address based on her research about hope.

At the business meeting held during the conference, proposed changes to the NWCCU standards were presented to the general audience—noting shifts related to peer comparative data and defining mission fulfillment. Feedback on these and other changes is requested by member institutions in the new year.

Commissioners will convene in late January for their first of two annual meetings to consider institution reports and updates. The Commission is under new leadership, Dr. Selena Grace, who has brought about a positive collaborative approach to working with all institutions of higher education.

## WACTC UPDATE & the STATE BUDGET

Governor Ferguson's budget was published on December 23, 2025 and reflects the realities of the grim economic forecast that was shared in November 2025 by the Washington State's Economic and Revenue Forecast Council. As mentioned in the last president's report, any agency or institution in the discretionary part of the budget (that is all of public higher education) is prone to reductions in order to balance the state budget, and that indeed is playing out with the Governor's budget.

The State Board team has shared the following analysis with the college system about Governor Ferguson's 2026 Second Supplemental Operating Budget Proposal:

- Implements modest efficiency measures, including a 1.5% across-the-board reduction to base appropriations starting in FY27 (achieving \$18.5M in savings) and a \$900K reduction in administrative goods, services, and travel. These are reductions base appropriations allow institutions local flexibility in adjusting operating budgets.
- Provides funding for the WPEA and Highline recently ratified collective bargaining agreements, including retroactive pay for FY26 wage increases, funded at the 79/21 fund split.
- Maintains the 79/21 compensation fund split reintroduced in the 2025–27 enacted budget.
- Provides inflationary increases for the 2015 College Affordability Program tuition backfill and funding for increased College in the High School enrollment.
- Makes necessary adjustments for compensation and benefit cost changes and for Washington's central services. The central services adjustment for self-insurance liability premiums is higher than typically appropriated.

In addition to the highlights noted above, there are two other areas of the Governor's Budget that will impact the college system:

- Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction: Proposes adjusting the Running Start program by lowering the enrollment cap from 1.4 to 1.2 full-time equivalents in AY 2026–27 (reducing funding by \$14M, equivalent to about 10 fewer college credits per student annually).
- Employment Security Department: Provides \$2.7M in one-time federal funding for an interagency agreement with the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges to expand capacity in workforce programs serving Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act participants (with up to 5% allowable for administration).

Although the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges' Legislative priorities remain focused on maintaining current funding levels and fully funding cost of living adjustments, it goes without saying that the proposed cut to the Running Start Program will become a paramount issue for the State Board to tackle as the Legislative Session begins.

In summation, the Governor's Budget does net a negative result for Grays Harbor College—the College's base allocation will be reduced. This is on top of the base allocation reduction that comes from the implementation of the new allocation model. Both of these cuts to GHC's base allocation will go into effect at the same time—July 1, 2026. The GHC Legislative Committee will be scheduling visits with our elected officials to discuss the local impacts of the proposed budget as well as the system impacts.

## OUTREACH & PARTNERSHIPS

Through December, the Grays Harbor College President continued to visit as many Grays and Pacific County Superintendents as possible—adding Elma, in particular, to the mix. The superintendents demonstrated strong support of the GHC BAS in Teacher Education program as the College continues its work with the Professional Education Standards Board (PESB).

In mid-January, Cheyenne Carroll will begin as the inaugural Bishop Center / Events Manager position for the College. Ms. Carroll has been working in the Institutional Effectiveness & College Relations Department at GHC for the last two years as a communications consultant, working primarily on designing marketing materials, accessibility projects, and managing the reader board.

Prior to that she served as an operations supervisor with Penske Logistics for over eight years and has experience in the hospitality industry. Ms. Carroll comes from a community theatre background as well, performing in shows at the Bishop Center, Driftwood Theatre, and is a member of Plank Island Theatre's Improv Troupe.

A special thank you to Jonni Dawson for all her hard work over the past two years helping to manage the Bishop Center through a lot of transitions. In mid-January, Ms. Dawson will report directly to Holly Bringman and will be assisting throughout Instruction and Student Services.

### GRANTS, Federal and Philanthropic:

The funding for federal grants that pertain to higher education institutions is very limited. While there was a recent grant announcement for FIPSE (Fund for the Improvement of Post Secondary Education), many Colleges, including Grays Harbor College, are choosing to invest in local, state, or philanthropic entities at this time.

### **Action Requested:**

This is informational, no action requested at this time.

## X.8.a. – Accreditation Report

GHC Board of Trustees Meeting  
January 13, 2026

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# Written Report

## Item Information:

**Topic:** Institutional Accreditation

**Prepared by:** Kristy Anderson, Associate Vice President for Institutional Effectiveness & College Relations

**Attachments:** None

## Narrative

### Feedback on GHC's 2025 Annual Report

GHC recently received positive feedback on the College's Annual Report to the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU). The annual report fulfills several key functions for NWCCU, including compliance with federal regulations (34 CFR 602), the provision of essential financial and student achievement indicators, and the submission of brief interim updates on progress toward institutional recommendations outside the regular review cycle. The process also allows institutions to verify that contact information, key personnel records, and external financial audit submissions are current. GHC's NWCCU Staff Liaison, Dr. Teresa Rivenes, offered the following observations:

1. *Everything is complete and nothing further needs to be submitted at this time.*
2. *You have submitted an external financial audit for FY23 and met the financial audit reporting timeline in NWCCU Eligibility Requirement 20.*
3. *It looks as if your headcount and FTE are up which is great news- congratulations!*
4. *GHC is in a stable financial position.*
5. *I looked at your website, specifically at the desegregated data around transfer, retention, and completion. This is a fantastic report, and I love that it appears to be updated annually! Nice work on this. I encourage you to think, and document, how you reflect on this report (annually and systemically) and use it for improvement. This will be great for your EIE report!*
6. *I appreciated the update on your outstanding recommendations. I appreciated hearing you are working to make your assessment process simple, meaningful, and full of faculty discussion and engagement.*

### NWCCU Standards Review Update

NWCCU is currently reviewing the 2020 Standards that colleges must meet as part of the accreditation process. The goal of this review is to gather broad input and revise the Standards and Eligibility Requirements in order to:

- Provide greater clarity for institutions, peer evaluators, and Commissioners
- Strengthen continuous improvement efforts through data-informed approaches to student learning and institutional effectiveness

The Commission anticipates releasing a draft of the revised standards for public comment in February, with final adoption expected in July 2026. A phased implementation is planned to begin in 2027.

Based on this timeline, GHC does not expect the revised standards to affect the College's Year 7 Evaluation of Institutional Effectiveness report or the accreditation visit scheduled for Fall 2026.

## **Summary & Next Steps**

### **Action Requested:**

No action at this time.