

MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT NO. 4
SKAGIT VALLEY COLLEGE
Tuesday, May 12, 2026
4:30 p.m.

BOARD MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Ms. Mariko Doerner – Chair
Ms. Flora Perez-Lucatero – Vice-Chair
Dr. Carl Bruner
Mr. Ozell Jackson III
Ms. Vhari Rust-Clark
Dr. Thomas Keegan, Interim President

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 4:35 p.m.

DECLARATION OF A QUORUM

The Chair, Mariko Doerner, recognized that a quorum of Board members was present.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No requests were submitted.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Guests included the Men's Basketball NWAC Champions and the recently tenured faculty members.

CONSENT AGENDA

1. Board Meeting Minutes – March 10, 2026
2. Board Special Meeting Minutes – March 24, 2026
3. Board Special Meeting Minutes – April 4, 2026
4. Skagit/Island Head Start Report
5. Exceptional Faculty Awards 2026-2027

It was moved by Vhari Rust Clark and seconded by Carl Bruner to approve the Consent Agenda as presented.

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY
COLLEGE REPORTS

1. Associated Students of Skagit Valley College (ASSVC) REPORT
Ashley Zamora, President, Mount Vernon Campus

Student leaders supported Cardinal Community Day through volunteer service and participation in a student panel discussion moderated by the Director of Student Life. The panel provided faculty and staff with insight into student government advocacy efforts and student participation in campus decision-making.

ASSVC representatives also volunteered during Children of the Valley campus visits, assisting students with leadership and campaign-planning activities.

Whidbey Island ASSVC representatives participated virtually in the Legislative Voice Academy, where they presented a proposal focused on improving access to childcare for community and technical college students.

The Mount Vernon ASSVC appointed two students to fill vacant positions for the remainder of the academic year. Recruitment for 2026–27 student leadership positions is underway, with applications open for ASSVC and Student Program Board positions on both campuses.

The Services and Activities Fee Committees completed their initial budget review and recommendations. Students also forwarded a recommendation to increase the Student Technology Fee by \$1 per credit and expand the credit cap associated with the fee from 8 to 12 credits. If approved, this would be the first increase since the fee was established in 2001.

Student leaders continued to support planning efforts for Cardinal Centennial Days and end-of-year celebrations.

The Mount Vernon ASSVC partnered with the Culinary Arts program to host a Cardinal Community Lunch, serving nearly 200 students and providing opportunities for student engagement and connection.

The District ASSVC also discussed a proposal to increase the quarterly scholarship for ASSVC representatives from \$1,500 to \$2,000 to better reflect rising educational and living expenses while recognizing the significant time commitment required of student leaders.

2. Skagit Valley College Federation of Teachers (SVC-FT)
Kip Zwolenski, Union President

Kip reported that spring is a busy time for faculty, with hiring processes nearing completion. Retiring faculty were recognized during Cardinal Community Day. The spring promotional period is also in progress, with eligible faculty being notified regarding salary step advancement opportunities. SVCFT will conclude the academic year with a faculty gathering on the Lewis Hall terrace rooftop prior to Commencement.

3. WPEA – Lance Levesen

No report at this time.

4. PRESIDENT – Dr. Thomas Keegan

The 2026 legislative session ended March 12 and included a \$2.2 million base funding reduction for SVC in FY 2027.

State funding for Centers of Excellence will be eliminated July 1, and the College is exploring self-support and long-term sustainability options to continue this work.

The Legislature also directed the State Board to study system efficiencies that do not directly support student services and provide recommendations by December 1, 2026.

Running Start funding will be temporarily reduced for the next two years, resulting in an estimated \$25,000 reduction for SVC.

A new system funding formula will reduce SVC funding by just under \$600,000 annually.

Parent education courses are no longer eligible for state funding, and the College is developing a pathway to connect these courses to the Early Childhood Education program.

Enrollment remains strong, with total FTEs at 3,763, 6% above last year, and state-funded FTEs at 2,835, 4% above last year. The College achieved 98% of its budgeted tuition-bearing FTE target.

International enrollment remains an area of concern, having declined significantly from nearly 300 FTEs in 2016 to a projected 25 FTEs next year. While this reflects national trends, the College is exploring strategies through its operational planning process to strengthen international enrollment efforts.

Faculty and staff forums were held at the Mount Vernon and Whidbey Island campuses to identify priorities, challenges, opportunities, and desired leadership traits for the Vice President of Student Services and the Whidbey Island Campus

Administrator positions. Recruitment for both positions is underway, with the Vice President of Student Services position expected to be filled in late summer.

The Whidbey Island Campus Administrator position reinforces the College's One College model, with faculty and staff continuing to report through a single district organizational structure. The administrator will provide on-site leadership, communication, coordination, and emergency operations support, while a separate position will focus on community engagement and partnership development on Whidbey Island. Leadership noted that the model reflects faculty and staff input, lessons learned, and the College's commitment to the One College approach.

The College is also re-envisioning Yadira Rosales' position to focus on community engagement and strategic partnerships. Details are still being finalized, but leadership is excited about the opportunities this work presents.

An update was provided on two cybersecurity incidents that occurred since the last Board meeting. The first incident, in late March, involved unauthorized access to a College system and was quickly contained. A digital forensic review conducted in partnership with Microsoft found no evidence that College information was taken. Staff were commended for their swift and thorough response.

The second incident involved Canvas, the learning management system used by colleges and universities nationwide. The platform was temporarily taken offline following a cyberattack. Canvas owner Instructure reported that it had secured the return and deletion of the affected data and received assurances that customers would not be subject to extortion.

Both incidents underscored the risks associated with web-based technologies and reinforced the importance of ongoing vigilance, training, communication, and investment in cybersecurity.

Several College accomplishments were highlighted. Tim Wheeler and Andrew Lemberg secured \$1.36 million from the State Board to support accessibility improvements across the district and enhance compliance with ADA and related accessibility standards.

The Emergency Medical Technician program and Community Education department partnered with South Whidbey Fire/EMS to bring EMT training to the Whidbey Island Campus beginning in Fall 2026. The program will serve both Fire/EMS volunteers and community members and is expected to be offered twice annually.

The Financial Aid Office awarded more than \$19 million in financial aid during the current academic year, a 56% increase since 2023.

The Foundation also awarded more than \$1.5 million in scholarships for 2026–27, supporting over 500 students, the largest number in its history.

In addition, the Foundation established the Endeavour Fund Welding Scholarship through support from anonymous donors. The new scholarship provides five \$8,000 awards to students enrolled in the Welding Technology program.

5. Strategic Priorities Performance Report | Institutional Capacity

Dr. Mike Cogan and Dr. Gabriel Mast presented an update on the College's Strategic Priorities performance measures related to Institutional Capacity.

6. BOARD OF TRUSTEES/ACT

Trustee Perez-Lucatero reported attending the SVC Foundation Retreat and shared that the retreat provided valuable insight into Foundation and College's initiatives and programs.

Trustee Jackson reported on his participation in the Association of College Trustees (ACT) Conference. Sessions focused on presidential recruitment, onboarding, and effective board support for college presidents. He noted that several ideas and best practices from the conference may be beneficial for future Board discussion. Trustee Jackson also participated in the Trustees of Color affinity group, where discussions centered on student belonging, food insecurity, and reducing the stigma associated with accessing support services such as food pantries. Additional sessions provided perspectives on challenges and opportunities facing colleges across the state, as well as strategies for governing boards during presidential transitions.

Trustee Rust-Clark shared that a conference session focused on trustee-president relationships was particularly valuable and provided useful insights for effective board leadership and governance.

ACTION ITEMS

1. Recommendation to approve the Presidential Search Consultant RH Perry as the apparent successful contractor and direct the President, or his designee, to contact and engage in contract negotiations. If negotiations are unsuccessful with Search Consultant RH Perry, then the President, or his designee, is authorized to negotiate a contract with Search Consultant AGB Search. If negotiations are unsuccessful with Search Consultant AGB Search then the President, or his designee, is authorized to negotiate a contract with Search Gold Hill Associates.

It was moved by Flora Perez-Lucatero and seconded by Vhari Rust-Clark to approve the presidential search consultant as presented.

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

2. Recommendation to approve the Head Start Continuation Grant Application.

It was moved by Carl Bruner and seconded by Ozell Jackson to approve the Head Start Continuation Grant Application as presented.

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

STUDY ITEMS

1. Recommendation of Board of Trustees Regular Meeting Schedule for 2026-2027. This item is up for study and will be brought to the Board for approval at the June meeting.
2. Recommendation of election of Vice Chair for 2026-2027. This item is up for study and will be brought to the Board for approval at the June meeting.

NEXT REGULAR MEETING

The next regular meeting will be June 9, 2026, at 4:30 pm, Mount Vernon Campus, Administrative Annex – Boardroom.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Chair Doerner announced that the Board will convene into executive session pursuant to RCW 42.30.110(1)(i) to discuss with legal counsel representing the agency litigation or potential litigation to which the agency, the governing body, or a member acting in an official capacity is, or is likely to become, a party, when public knowledge regarding the discussion is likely to result in an adverse legal or financial consequence to the agency. She expected the Executive Session to last 45 minutes and that the Board may take action as a result of discussions in the executive session. Convened into Executive Session at 6:00 p.m.

OPEN SESSION

The Chair reconvened the meeting into open session at 6:45 p.m.

ACTION ITEM

3. Recommendation to grant authority to the Board Chair to work with Chris Clay to settle pre-tort claim #6741021793PC.

It was moved by Carl Bruner and seconded by Flora Perez-Lucatero to approve authority to the Board Chair to work with Chris Clay to settle pre-tort claim #6741021793PC as presented.

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Chair Doerner adjourned the Board of Trustees meeting at 6:46 p.m.

Mariko Doerner, Chair

Dr. Thomas Keegan, Interim President
Executive Secretary to the Board