

**EAST CENRAL COLLEGE
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
Monday, March 3, 2025**

CALL TO ORDER: The regular meeting of the Board of Trustees was called to order at 5:30 p.m. by Board President Ann Hartley. Other Board members present for all, or parts of the meeting were Joseph Stroetker, Eric Park, Cookie Hays, Audrey Freitag, and J.T. Hardy. Also present were President of the College Jon Bauer; Administrators – Vice President of Student Development Sarah Leassner and Vice President of Academic Affairs Robyn Walter; Faculty – Faculty Association President Tracy Mowery, ECC-NEA President Reg Brigham, Associate Professor of Biology Kevin Dixon, and Precision Machining Program Coordinator Blake Poertner; Other Staff – Human Resources Director Carrie Myers, Director of Communications & Marketing Gregg Jones, Professional Staff Association President Todd Tracy, Classified Staff Association Vice President Cynthia Cubas, Rolla Campus Director Christina Ayres, Campus Life and Leadership Coordinator Andy Klingensmith, Executive Director of Institutional Effectiveness Michelle Smith, and Executive Assistant to the President Stacy Langan.

RECOGNITION OF GUESTS: Gregg Jones recognized Chris Parker from the *Missourian*; Officer Tomie Lowe from the Union Police Department; ECC students Ethan Sandstrom, Kylie Napier, Kathryn Boenher, Tessa Schweich, Addi Klophaus, and Jovie Garner; Amy Miller and Ryan Wilson from NAVIGATE Building Solutions; and community members Ray Krame, Paul Gross, Dean Gross, and Jim Plymale.

PUBLIC COMMENT: There was no public comment.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: Each item on the consent agenda shall be deemed to have been duly approved with the same validity as if each action were separately moved, seconded, and adopted.

Motion: To **approve** the agenda for March 3, 2025, meeting of the Board of Trustees.

Motion by Joseph Stroetker; Seconded by Eric Park; Carried Unanimously

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: The Board approved the minutes of the January 27, 2025, regular meeting of the Board of Trustees.

SPECIAL RECOGNITION: The Board recognized ECC student and Phi Theta Kappa member Ethan Sandstrom, a candidate for Phi Theta Kappa Division III Vice President. Advisor Kevin Dixon shared that the chapter received multiple awards at the recent Regional Convention. Mr. Dixon introduced Ethan, who has been involved in Phi Theta Kappa for about one year. He is running for national Vice President and aims to boost membership and engagement at East Central College. With 300 chapters nationwide, Ethan has advanced to the final round and will attend the national convention in April, where he will deliver a speech and campaign on the floor. A fellow student is serving as his campaign manager. This marks only the second time an East Central College student has run for national office. The Board offered congratulations and best wishes. Lindsay Riegel and Mr. Dixon took a group of students to the convention in Omaha, Nebraska, where the chapter submitted nominations in several award categories and earned recognition in each.

TREASURER'S REPORT AND FINANCIAL REPORT: President Jon Bauer reviewed the financial statements as of January 31, 2025. He noted there is nothing unusual in this month's report. Compared to this time last year, local revenue from the counties is coming in more slowly.

Motion: To **approve** the treasurer's report, the financial report, and the payment of bills subject to the annual audit.

Motion by Eric Park; Seconded by J.T. Hardy; Carried Unanimously

TUITION AND GENERAL FEES: Last year, the Board approved a tuition increase of ten percent. This year, President Bauer is recommending a three percent increase, which aligns with inflation. One suggested change to general fees is a \$1 increase in the technology fee, which supports student-used technology and helps meet growing needs. All other fees will stay the same. Once the budget is finalized, a comprehensive look will at the tuition structure will take place, including Tiers 1, 2, and 3, to see if any adjustments are needed. That review was expected this year, but the CFO position is currently vacant. This is a responsible, modest increase that supports our ability to cover expenses.

Motion: To **approve** an increase of 3% per credit hour in tuition for all tuition tiers as outlined in the memorandum attached to the agenda.

Motion by Cookie Hays; Seconded by Joseph Stroetker; Carried Unanimously

Motion: To **approve** an overall increase in general fees of \$1 per credit hour as follows:

Student Activity Fee	\$12 (unchanged)
Support Services Fee	\$ 2 (unchanged)
Technology Fee	\$10 (increase of \$1)
Facilities Fee	\$ 8 (unchanged)
Security Fee	\$ 8 (unchanged)

Motion by Joseph Stroetker; Seconded by Cookie Hays; Carried Unanimously

COURSE FEES: President Bauer noted that Vice President Walter leads the process to determine course fees. There were two corrections including one omission and one typo as outlined in the addendum. The overall fee increase reflects the cost of disposable items used during courses, including clinical supplies. The newly created Respiratory Care program is a notable increase to course fees. It was also noted that when vendor costs go down, course fees are reduced. Academic Deans and faculty review course fees line by line each year to ensure accuracy.

Motion: To **approve** course fees for the 2025 – 2026 academic year as outlined in the memorandum attached to the agenda.

Motion by Joseph Stroetker; Seconded by Cookie Hays; Carried Unanimously

U.S.D.A. GRANT AUTHORIZATION: President Bauer noted the College wants to pursue financial assistance from the United States Department of Agriculture to purchase equipment for the Industrial Engineering Technology and Welding departments.

Motion: To **approve** a resolution authorizing East Central College to apply to the united States Department of Agriculture (U.S.D.A.) Business Development grant program for the purchase of welding equipment to support instruction in the Industrial Engineering Technology and Welding programs.

Motion by Eric Park; Seconded by Joseph Stroetker; Carried Unanimously

ASSOCIATE OF SCIENCE BIOLOGY PROGRAM: Vice President Walter informed the Board that Academic Council approved the recommendation to begin a new program. The current Engineering program has an articulation agreement in place that provides a seamless transition to Missouri University of Science and Technology. Interest in Biology has grown. While a general STEM

pathway exists, the proposed Associate of Science in Biology offers a more defined route that transfers into a Bachelor of Science at Southeast Missouri State University, Missouri University of Science and Technology, and Logan University. This degree aligns with the strategic plan to support STEM degree completion. No full-time faculty position is expected. Current course offerings will support the program, and an additional 20 or more students are anticipated. There will be no additional cost or fees. Other colleges offering this degree include Jefferson College, St. Charles Community College, and Lewis and Clark Community College in Godfrey, Illinois. Once approved by the Board, the proposal will go to the Missouri Department of Higher Education, then to the Higher Learning Commission for approval. This process will take place over the next few months.

Motion: To **approve** the establishment of an A.S. Biology Program effective Fall 2025 to be offered through the Science and Engineering Department to complement the existing A.S. in Engineering.

Motion by Joseph Stroetker; Seconded by Eric Park; Carried Unanimously

BIDS: Department of Labor grant resources are in place as the Respiratory Care program begins this fall. Some items listed are under the threshold that requires Board approval, but it is helpful for the Board to see the process. All items will be paid for with Department of Labor grant funds. The first equipment purchase includes manikins designed to replicate real-life scenarios, hospital beds, and ventilators. As part of the consortium, East Central College serves as the fiscal agent.

Motion: To **approve** the purchase of manikins and supplemental equipment for \$412,026.76 from Laerdal Medical Corporation, a sole source provider, funded by the U.S. Department of Labor's Strengthening Community Colleges grant for the new Respiratory Care program.

Motion by Joseph Stroetker; Seconded by Cookie Hays; Carried Unanimously

Motion: To **approve** the purchase of a hospital bed package for \$38,500.00 from Pocket Nurse, a sole source provider, funded by the U.S. Department of Labor's Strengthening Community Colleges grant for the new Respiratory Care program.

Motion by Cookie Hays; Seconded by Joseph Stroetker; Carried Unanimously

Motion: To approve the purchase of a ventilator with added components, for \$37,103.20 from Nihon Kohden, a sole source provider, funded by the U.S. Department of Labor's Strengthening Community Colleges grant for the new Respiratory Care program.

Motion by Eric Park; Seconded by Cookie Hays; Carried Unanimously

SELECTION OF GENERAL CONTRACTOR: Contractors are being recommended for hire to renovate space at the Union campus and at Central Methodist University's campus in Columbia, Missouri. Bidders had the option to submit for one or both locations. The recommendation is to award Franklin County Construction the contract for Union and Integra the contract for Columbia. The contractors' ability to complete the work has been verified. The goal is to enroll students by August 2025. Quick turnaround on the bids was important so work can begin immediately following Board approval. Both contractors are confident they can complete the renovations as outlined in the proposed timeline.

Motion: To **award** the general contracting package for construction of a respiratory laboratory at the main campus in Union to Franklin County Construction, in the amount of \$446,700, and to award the general contracting package for construction of a respiratory laboratory at the Central Methodist University facility in Columbia, Missouri, to Integra Inc., in the amount of \$287,775, both contracts to be funded through the U.S. Department of Labor Strengthening Community Colleges Grant.

Motion by Joseph Stroetker; Seconded by Eric Park; Carried Unanimously

STUDENT OUTCOMES: Vice President Walter presented course success reports, which include total course enrollments. Notes from the presentation slides were included. The overall course success rate was 82.3 percent. Low-income students are defined as Pell-eligible. Specific targeted initiatives are in place to support these students. Around 60 percent of ECC students receive some form of financial aid, and the supports provided benefits all students. Vice President Walter explained that the fall-to-fall comparison includes a one-year lag. East Central College continues to show improvement and remains above the 50th percentile. A year-to-year comparison and fall-to-spring retention trend analysis were also shared. Part-time students face the greatest challenges with retention, and half of ECC's students are part-time. Regarding support for low-income students, many take advantage of available resources. The strategic plan includes a better intake survey to identify student needs earlier and offer proactive support. Federally and institutionally funded student workers also contribute to student success. One of ECC's newest initiatives through Title III is RISSE, an endowment through the Foundation. The program offers incentives to developmental education students for attending class, using the learning center, and turning in assignments.

***PERSONNEL:** The Board **accepted** the resignation of Gayle Bailey, Financial Aid Advisor, effective March 28, 2025. The Board also **approved** the addendum to the roster of adjunct faculty for the Spring 2025 semester as listed in the attached memorandum.

BOARD PRESIDENT'S REPORT: Board President had no report.

REPORTS:

A. STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION: Student Government Association officers shared that last semester's trivia night was a success and well attended. The event is scheduled again for March 13. They will send a Google Form to faculty and staff to collect questions. Teams will bring items to donate to the ECC Food Pantry. This semester they plan to host a Spring Fling on April 17 from 11 to 2. The event will be similar to Falcon Fest and the theme is Easter. An egg hunt will also take place that week. Plans include a cookout and either live music or a movie projection. They are looking for new SGA officers as current officers will graduate this year. The Psychology Club expects to complete the unhoused bag project tomorrow. Once items are collected, they will sort and distribute them to Union police officers. The club also plans to host an event similar to a movie night. They invited Foundation Director Bridgette Kelch to their last meeting to share information about Prop ECC.

B. FACULTY ASSOCIATION REPORT: Association President Mowery shared that the Union chapter of Phi Theta Kappa took students to Kansas City to attend a conference. Rolla advisor Dr. Beth Rozema will host the induction ceremony this weekend. A Faculty recital is scheduled this Friday at 4 p.m. and the Missouri State High School Athletics Association Music Festival will take place

on the Union campus this Friday and Saturday. Dr. Coreen Derifield will host events for Women's Day.

- C. ECC-NEA:** ECC-NEA President Brigham noted they are about halfway through the bargaining season. He also informed the Board that planning has begun for this year's Inspirers of Excellence, which is an opportunity for ECC students to recognize high school teachers that prepared them for college. The event is planned for May.

- D. PROFESSIONAL STAFF ASSOCIATION REPORT:** The association recently completed an internal value improvement survey. Results showed a positive outlook, with 87 percent of members believing PSA is fulfilling its mission. To strengthen the member experience, many recommended more social activities and peer awards. Some members expressed interest in more diverse initiatives. For new member support, strong suggestions included creating a welcome packet and offering a formal introduction. Overall, the survey highlighted PSA strengths and pointed to opportunities to boost engagement, improve onboarding, and clarify financial plans. The executive council will move forward with an agenda to implement these initiatives.

- E. CLASSIFIED STAFF ASSOCIATION REPORT:** The Classified Staff Association will continue Denim Day Wednesday each month to support local nonprofits. In January and February, \$110 was raised for the ECC Food Pantry, \$140 for the Franklin County Foster Closet, and \$95 for the Cuba Animal Shelter. A generous, anonymous donor will match all amounts. The Executive Council recently encouraged members to support the CSA Scholarship Fund through payroll deductions to ensure the association can continue to award two \$500 scholarships per year. That effort raised \$924, and one member gave an additional \$500. The fund is now secure for another year. CSA has a new Vice President, Jennifer Komo. The Spotlight Award is in its nomination phase, with a new recipient to be announced soon.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT: President Bauer noted students and employees remain active in the community, from recognizing teachers to highlighting the work of students and staff.

Spring enrollment shows a 2.4% decrease in headcount but a 0.5% increase in credit hours. Most of the decline is in dual credit due to schools losing qualified instructors. This affects more students but has less impact on total credit hours. Overall, spring is steady. Summer enrollment is up significantly and fall enrollment will begin soon.

Prop ECC community presentations are underway and will continue. Funds from Prop ECC will support capital projects and operations. After last year's election, voters asked for more details on spending plans. In response, a campus map was created to show proposed project locations. One project includes a 7,500-square-foot welding center, which will provide better space for welding and allow room for expanding or adding another skilled trade program. These projects will go through the usual bid and Board approval process. All projects will be managed by the Board of Trustees. Several weeks remain to continue sharing this message with the community.

The Rolla renovation project, funded by state and federal dollars, is moving forward. Design work continues, and the team met with faculty last week. Construction is expected to begin late summer or early fall. Initial work will include demolition and asbestos abatement. Full construction will follow in the fall. The project remains on track for a Fall 2027 opening.

At the state level, the House is currently working on the budget. Another bill in progress would expand transfer and articulation options for students. It passed the House last year but stalled in the Senate. There is optimism for progress this year.

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At the federal level, we are tracking the reconciliation process. One item of interest is potential changes to how Pell Grant funds are taxed. Unlike at four-year schools, our lower tuition means students often use remaining funds for other expenses, which can create tax implications. It is unclear if this will be addressed in the final legislation. The process will likely extend through the end of the calendar year.

President Bauer mentioned that Spring sports are underway. There is an ECC student performance tomorrow and an ECC faculty recital on Friday.

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion: To **adjourn** the March 3, 2025, regular meeting of the Board of Trustees and enter executive session per RSMo2004, Section 610.021 (3) Personnel at 6:58 p.m.

Motion by J.T. Hardy; Seconded by Cookie Hays

The following roll call vote was taken, and the motion carried.

<u>Yes</u> A. Hartley	<u>Yes</u> E. Park	<u>Yes</u> A. Freitag
<u>Yes</u> J. Stroetker	<u>Yes</u> C. Hays	<u>Yes</u> J.T. Hardy

President, Board of Trustees

Secretary, Board of Trustees