

**EAST CENTRAL COLLEGE
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
Monday, October 13, 2025**

CALL TO ORDER: The regular meeting of the Board of Trustees was called to order at 5:33 p.m. by Board President Ann Hartley. Other Board members present at 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 Academic Affairs Robyn Walter, Vice President of External Relations Joel Doepker, Vice President of Student Development Sarah Leassner, and Vice President of Finance & Administration Chris Hoelzer; Faculty – Faculty Association President Tracy Mowery, ECC-NEA President Reg Brigham, and Precision Machining Program Coordinator Blake Poertner; Other Staff – Executive Director of Institutional Effectiveness & Research Bethany Lohden, Classified Staff Association Vice President Jennifer Komo, Professional Staff Association President Todd Tracy, Director of Rolla Christina Ayres, Human Resources Director Carrie Myers, Communications & Marketing Director Gregg Jones, Foundation Director Bridgette Kelch, Rolla Director Christina Ayers, and Executive Assistant to the President Stacy Langan.

RECOGNITION OF GUESTS: Public Relations Director Gregg Jones recognized Chris Parker from the *Missourian*, ECC Student Government Association officers, and community member Roy Kramme.

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 October 13, 2025, meeting of the Board of Trustees.

Motion by Eric Park; Seconded by Joseph Stroetker; Carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: The Board approved the minutes of the August 25, 2025, Ad Valorem Tax Hearing and regular meeting of the Board of Trustees and the September 4, 2025, special meeting of the Board of Trustees.

TREASURER’S REPORT AND FINANCIAL REPORT: Vice President Hoelzer reviewed the financial statements as of August 31, 2025. He noted that the annual audit will be presented at the December meeting.

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 Audrey Freitag; Carried unanimously.

BIDS: President Bauer noted that the infrastructure switches are five to seven years old and that network issues have occurred due to failing switches. Information Technology will install the new switches once they are received.

Motion: To **approve** the purchase of 10 Fortinet infrastructure switches from InfiniTech of Columbia, MO in the amount of \$29,828.00 to be funded 75% with Technology fees and 25% with Information Technology funds.

Motion by Audrey Freitag; Seconded by Cookie Hays; Carried unanimously.

October 13, 2025, Board Minutes

Vice President Robyn Walter reviewed the equipment purchases, which will replace items that are no longer operational. It was noted that this represents a positive enhancement for the College, to be funded through vocational enhancement grant funds.

Motion: To **approve** the purchase of two Lincoln PowerWave welders and accessories from Ozarc Gas Equipment and Supply, Inc. of Union, MO at a cost of \$30,078.52 to be funded 75% with Vocational Enhancement Grant funds and 25% with institutional funds.

Motion by Joseph Stroetker; Seconded by Eric Park; Carried unanimously.

Vice President Walter noted that the new mill will replace one that is no longer operational. Faculty member Blake Poertner explained that CNC machines typically have a longer lifespan in K–12 settings because they are used less frequently; however, in a college environment, the instructional relevancy of this equipment is approximately five to seven years.

Motion: To **approve** the purchase of a TRAK TMC5 CNC mill from Greenway & Associates of Iowa, a sole source provider, at a cost of \$51,425 to be funded 75% with Vocational Enhancement Grant funds and 25% with institutional funds.

Motion by Audrey Freitag; Seconded by Cookie Hays; Carried unanimously.

Vice President Hoelzer reported that the College is recommending Byrne and Jones for the paving project, the most heavily used roads and parking lots on campus. A key difference in this project is the inclusion of a two-inch mill. Work could begin as early as October 27 and is expected to be completed within five to seven days. Communication will be sent to the campus community, as the entrance from the roundabout will be closed during construction. This project is funded through the College's annual state maintenance and repair appropriation, which requires a dollar-for-dollar match. The College has met that requirement and is allocating all of this year's maintenance and repair funds to this project. Although the College has advocated for additional state funding without success, each Missouri institution receives an allocation from this fund.

President Bauer emphasized that this project represents only one part of a broader set of maintenance needs that must be addressed, including HVAC and roof replacements. This project represents only one phase of the College's larger deferred maintenance plan. Base work has already been completed on the upper lots, where water lines were repaired and gravel remains. It is anticipated that three additional phases of resurfacing will be needed to complete the remaining roads and parking lots on campus.

Motion: To **award** the Phase 1 Campus Paving project bid to Byrne & Jones Construction of Earth City, MO at a cost of \$218,719 to be funded 50% with Missouri State Maintenance & Repair funds, and 50% with institutional funds.

Motion by Cookie Hays; Seconded by Audrey Freitag; Carried unanimously.

EMPLOYEE DENTAL, VISION, LIFE, & DISABILITY INSURANCE: Human Resources Director Carrie Myers noted that the Board previously approved a zero percent increase for medical insurance earlier this year. She reported that ancillary coverage is now being presented for approval. Dental insurance initially came in at a 19 percent increase, so the College sought bids, with Delta Dental providing the lowest proposal.

President Bauer expressed appreciation to Human Resources, the ECC employees who serve on the Insurance Committee, and the College's insurance broker for their efforts. He noted that ECC had budgeted for a five percent increase and that securing a no-cost increase for medical coverage is a

significant achievement. The dental increase represents a minimal adjustment in comparison to medical coverage costs.

Motion: To **approve** employee ancillary insurance coverage for 2026, including dental insurance provided by Delta Dental with a two-year rate lock at an increase of 4.74%; Vision insurance provided by Anthem Blue Cross Blue Shield with no premium cost increase; and basic life/accidental death & dismemberment, and long-term disability insurance benefits provided by The Standard Group with no premium cost increase.

Motion by Joseph Stroetker; Seconded by Audrey Freitag; Carried 5-0, with Cookie Hays abstaining.

BOARD POLICIES & PROCEDURES CHAPTER 3 REVISIONS: President Bauer noted that this item is a first reading and will return for action in November. Work on Chapter 4 is currently underway. Vice President Sarah Leassner expressed appreciation to the committee and the Shared Governance Council for the time and effort dedicated to this process. She reviewed key highlights by area, noting that changes to scholarships and financial aid will make it easier for students to access scholarship funds. The revisions also add artificial intelligence use under academic dishonesty and formally transition the Behavioral Intervention Team to the CARE Team. It was explained that the shaded sections represent policy, while the unshaded text beneath each shaded section up to the next policy represents related procedures. The color coding reflects additions and deletions recommended by the committee.

GALLAGHER CLASSIFICATION & COMPENSATION STUDY: President Bauer reminded the Board that Gallagher was approved last year to conduct the Classification and Compensation Study. He noted that this presentation is for information only and that no action is required at this time.

Human Resources Director Carrie Myers explained that the study was finalized in July following the addition of the Job Analysis Questionnaire (JAQ), which provided valuable insight into job duties. Employees and supervisors completed the questionnaires as part of the process. The study was divided into two parts: classification and compensation. The classification portion ensured compliance with the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), maintained internal equity, and supported operational needs. All exempt and non-exempt classifications were confirmed to be accurate.

The compensation portion of the study focused on maintaining competitiveness for both current and future employees. Gallagher used data from five major national survey companies in addition to a survey sent to peer institutions. Their recommendations include adopting a pay scale with 16 pay grades and 21 steps.

Myers reported that the findings have been shared with staff associations, the administrative team, Cabinet, and now the Board. Next, Human Resources will meet individually with employees to confirm their correct placement on the scale and to address any questions. She emphasized that no employee will experience a salary reduction as a result of these changes, even if their current pay exceeds the new scale. Some positions will be reclassified or receive title adjustments to reflect years of service or revised responsibilities.

President Bauer and Director Myers both noted that engaging Gallagher provided an objective and data-driven review, reinforcing the College's commitment to remaining competitive in recruiting and retaining high-quality employees.

COURSE SUCCESS RATES: Vice President Robyn Walter presented the Course Success Report to the Board. The overall course success rate is 82.7 percent, defined as students earning a grade of A, B, C, or Pass. The comparison reflects data from spring 2024 to spring 2025. Although not part of IPEDS reporting, this measure allows the College to track progress from spring to spring.

In terms of growth and achievement, veteran students continue to perform well, with a success rate of 84.8 percent. Student success reflects the collective impact of College resources and support services. The gap between Pell-eligible and non-Pell-eligible students continues to narrow, and work in that area remains a priority. Compared to peer community colleges, ECC remains above the 50th percentile. Retention continues to serve as an important indicator for enrollment, with part-time and developmental students showing greater variability in success rates.

Vice President Walter also reviewed the program accreditations held by ECC, emphasizing their importance and value to the institution. She expressed appreciation to faculty and deans for their commitment to pursuing and maintaining accreditation. The Industrial Engineering Technology and Computer Information Systems programs will undergo an ATMAE site visit in the spring. The Radiologic Technology program is awaiting official accreditation approval from JRCERT. The LPN program received full accreditation from the Missouri State Board of Nursing. The Respiratory Care program currently holds provisional accreditation from CoARC, and the Health Information Management program recently completed a virtual visit for full accreditation.

ENROLLMENT UPDATE: Vice President Sarah Leassner reported that since the Board last met, the College has passed the census date. ECC experienced both a headcount increase and a credit hour increase, reflecting strong enrollment growth across the state. Statewide data show that ECC achieved the largest percentage increase in headcount among Missouri community colleges.

Vice President Leassner noted that the College experienced enrollment declines in fall 2023 and fall 2024 but has since implemented significant efforts to reverse that trend. Strategic enrollment goals include increasing the fall census to 3,000 students, improving the application yield rate from 55 percent to 60 percent, and implementing a comprehensive college-wide recruitment plan. She highlighted the addition of new academic programs that align with community and workforce needs, along with strengthened articulation agreements and program interest forms that help gauge student demand. Enrollment optimization efforts have focused on financial aid improvements, including earlier scholarship awards, encouragement to complete the FAFSA, and a more streamlined financial aid packaging process.

Vice President Leassner also discussed enhanced high school partnerships through dual credit, the Early College Academy, and increased on-site presence in local schools. The College continues to promote a strong narrative that positions ECC as the best first choice for higher education, supported by initiatives such as Falcon First and expanded community engagement. In addition, efforts to serve adult learners remain a priority, including outreach to reconnected learners, ATD project initiatives, and partnerships with local employers to strengthen educational pathways.

***PERSONNEL:** The Board **accepted** the retirement of John Hardecke as Assistant Professor of English, effective December 15, 2025. The Board **approved** the appointment of Duane Clonts as the full-time Industrial Engineering Technology (IET) Instructor/Program Coordinator, effective September 22, 2025, with an annual salary of \$73,923.72, and Ben Johnson as the full-time HVAC Instructor/Program Coordinator, effective September 8, 2025, with an annual salary of \$72,401.26.

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

REPORTS:

- A. FACULTY ASSOCIATION REPORT:** Tracy Mowery, Faculty Association President, no report
- B. ECC-NEA:** Dr. Reg Brigham, ECC-NEA President, reported that the ECC-NEA hosted a Labor Day picnic for faculty on September 1. Labor Day picnics are a longstanding labor tradition, and the event provided an opportunity for faculty to gather and connect. ECC-NEA will also host its second annual Fall Feast in November as part of its ongoing effort to strengthen community among faculty outside of the bargaining process. The ECC-NEA bargaining committee has been formed and will meet with the administration this week to establish ground rules for this year's bargaining sessions.
- C. PROFESSIONAL STAFF ASSOCIATION REPORT:** PSA President Todd Tracy reported that the ATD Data Team will host the first annual Data Walk October 20–24, to promote engagement with data supporting student success, with displays at all ECC locations and opportunities for feedback. East Central College received three Medallion Awards at the NCMPR District 5 Conference in Kansas City, earning first place for Short Form Writing, third place for Long Form Writing, and third place for Podcast. The third annual Manufacturing Summit featured 20 manufacturers, presentations from ECC programs and the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis, and hands-on activities for 160 middle school students from Sullivan and Union.
- D. CLASSIFIED STAFF ASSOCIATION REPORT:** Jennifer Komo, CSA Vice President, reported that Denim Day will take place at the Union and Rolla campuses. Spotlight Award nominations opened today, and the recipient will be recognized with an award and reception. Planning is also underway for the annual Christmas outreach, during which CSA partners with a local charity to provide gifts for one or two families. She noted that CSA and PSA have been meeting jointly to present a more collaborative front.
- E. STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION REPORT:** Caleb Gunn, President, and Sarah Scharfenberg, Vice President, had no report.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT: President Bauer reported continued discussions with the School District of Washington and anticipates bringing a recommendation for the Washington Practical School of Nursing program to the Board in November. He shared that the RCCA Conference, held September 17–19, brought approximately 150 colleagues from across the country to campus and was very well received. He also noted that the upcoming Service Awards on Wednesday will provide an opportunity to recognize employees for their dedication and contributions. President Bauer expressed appreciation to all faculty and staff for their efforts supporting student success through initiatives such as Title III, ATD, and enrollment management. A more detailed report on Rolla will be provided next month. The early bid package for the Rolla project is down to the punch list, and the general contractor will mobilize once complete. The project remains on track to open in January 2027.

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion: To **adjourn** the October 13, 2025, regular meeting of the Board of Trustees at 7:22 p.m.

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