

ISOTHERMAL

COMMUNITY COLLEGE

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MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
MARCH 31, 2026

The Board of Trustees of Isothermal Community College met on Tuesday, March 31, 2026, at 12:30 p.m. at Isothermal Community College's Rutherford Campus in Spindale, NC. The following trustees were present: Steve Bedford, Tony Helton, Dave Hunt, James Hutchins, Amy Jenkins, Bill Miller, Seema Daigle, Jordan Barnes, Danna Stansbury, and Bryson Smith. The following personnel were present from the College: President Margaret Annunziata, DeeDee Barnard, Leeann Cline-Burris, Mike Gavin, Thad Harrill, Scott Queen, Madeline Smith, Greg Thomas, and Robby Walters.

Chairman Bill Miller called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone. He announced the Board Conference with the Board of Trustees earlier and requested a copy of the agenda be attached to today's meeting minutes.

Ethics Statement

Dr. Seema Daigle asked Board members if they knew of any actual conflict of interest or the appearance of a conflict of interest which exists concerning any matter coming before the Board of Trustees. No conflicts were noted.

Agenda Confirmation

Chairman Miller presented the agenda. Mr. Dave Hunt made a motion to approve the agenda, and Dr. Seema Daigle seconded the motion. Mr. James Hutchins requested that the Personnel Committee make their report before the report and consideration of the budget from the Finance Committee. Following clarification regarding proposed actions from the Personnel Committee regarding salaries, the agenda was approved as presented.

Consent Agenda

Chairman Miller presented the Consent Agenda. The Consent Agenda contained the Budget Revisions and Minutes from the February 05, 2026, meeting. Mr. Dave Hunt made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda and Mr. Tony Helton seconded the motion. After discussion regarding budget revisions, the Consent Agenda was approved.

Chairman Miller announced that he will make appointments to the Nominating Committee. He requested that Board Members contact him if they are interested in different committees or other roles on the Board.

Trustee Items

Mr. Dave Hunt gave the Executive Committee report, he announced that the Committee met twice in March. At the March 10th meeting, the Executive Committee discussed the committee structure and meeting schedule. The Executive Committee determined that the current committee structure works best and recommend no changes.

The Committee recommends revisions to the Board Bylaws that you received in your packet. No action today, these will be presented for action at the next meeting. The revisions include:

- Recordings of meeting

- Use of college email
- Updated titles and language

At the March 17th meeting, the Committee reviewed the agendas for today's conference and meeting.

The Committee received notice that the NC Community College State Board increased the student activity fee from \$50.00 to \$51.35 and the College will implement this increase in the fall.

The Committee was informed that full-time college employees will receive a bonus from the performance funding in their March salary.

On behalf of the Executive Committee, Mr. Hunt made a motion to include Dr. Margaret Annunziata for the performance bonus. The Board discussed how the performance bonus funding is established. Dr. Annunziata announced that it is roughly two percent of the overall state budget and may be carried forward by colleges. The College may determine how to spend the bonus. The dollar amount for qualifying employees is \$975.00. The motion passed unanimously to include Dr. Annunziata in the bonus.

The Executive Committee heard a report from the Personnel Committee regarding Dr. Annunziata's salary compared to the remaining 57 community colleges. We learned that the state portion of the president's salary is capped and is based on the size of the college. Dr. Annunziata receives two supplements which are provided by our local counties. Mr. Hunt reported that the Personnel Committee also met with the Finance Committee and requested Dr. Annunziata's salary proposal be added in the budget requests for Rutherford and Polk County.

Mr. Dave Hunt gave the Facilities Committee report. He announced that the Committee received an update on the Health & Sciences Center and Library, which the Trustees toured this morning.

Mr. Hunt informed the Board that the Facilities Committee heard a recommendation for the demolition of an older structure between the Health & Public Services and Communications Building. Dr. Madeline Smith described this as the white structure that once housed the electrical classes and currently is used for storage. On behalf of the Facilities Committee, he made a motion to approve the demolition of the 1,296 square foot structure located between the Health & Public Services and Communication's Building. The motion passed.

Mr. Dave Hunt gave the Finance Committee report. The Finance Committee met on March 24, 2026.

Mr. Hunt informed the Board that the College has two 3-1 Forms for Capital Projects that need updating:

- 1- The Health & Sciences Center project has received additional payments from donors and income from interest. We need to update the form to reflect the additional funds in hand.
- 2- The College needs to close out an older project transferring remaining funds to other projects.

On behalf of the Finance Committee, Mr. Hunt made a motion to approve the updates to the 3-1 Forms for the Health & Sciences Center, the motion passed.

On behalf of the Finance Committee, Mr. Hunt made a motion to approve the updates to the 3-1 Forms to close out projects, the motion passed.

Mr. Hunt announced that the Finance Committee reviewed the budget request for Rutherford County at \$3,728,517, which is a 14% increase from the 2026 allocation with much of the increase due to the Health & Sciences Center. The Committee also reviewed the Polk County Budget request at \$291,400, which is a 7%

increase vastly due to repairs of facilities at the Polk Campus. In addition, he announced that the Finance Committee reviewed the increase for the President's Salary at 4% and included the increase in the two budget requests. On behalf of the Finance Committee, he made a motion to approve the Polk and Rutherford County Budget requests. After discussion regarding the drivers for the increase in each request and the president's salary proposal in the two requests, Chairman Miller reminded the Board, that the salary in the local budget requests is for budgeting purposes and will be considered following the evaluation. The budget requests for Polk and Rutherford County were approved.

Mr. Hunt announced that the Finance Committee received an update from Mr. Kurt Hennek of Atlanta Consulting Group on the market and the year-end report for the Powers & Furches Scholarship accounts. Copies of those reports were made available to the Trustees.

Mr. Hunt informed the Trustees that he and a committee of College staff are in the process of reviewing insurance bids.

Mr. Jordan Barnes gave the Personnel Committee report and announced that the committee met and reviewed the requirements for the president's evaluation. The evaluation will open on April 01 and remain open through the end of the month. In addition, he informed the Board that the committee reviewed the salaries of presidents across the state and made a request to add an increase for the president depending on the outcome of the evaluation. Dr. Annunziata informed the Board that each Board member has a document providing them with a recap for the last year. This was a request from last year.

Mr. Franklin gave the Student Success (formerly Programs) report and announced that the committee reviewed fees for the nursing programs.

The Committee heard the recommendation to change the nursing testing fees for all programs offered in the nursing programs (LPN, LPN to ADN, and ADN).

Dr. Annunziata discussed the fee structure over time so that it does not impact students all at once. This new fee program will include software and textbooks for students. This recommendation is based on the research of nursing faculty, and the faculty feels this program better aligns with the curriculum to better prepare students for licensure exams. The College will pay the fees upfront and the students' financial aid will reimburse the College. The College will assume some risk, but the nursing programs have a high retention rate. The change in the fee structure for the nursing program:

ADN from \$1,000 to \$2,375
LPN to ADN from \$1,300 to \$2,590
LPN from \$1,400 to \$3,000

On behalf of the Student Success Committee, Mr. Franklin made a motion to approve the nursing fees. The motion was passed unanimously.

Mr. Franklin announced that the Committee reviewed the revisions in curriculum programs.

The Committee reviewed programs for termination. Dr. Annunziata discussed the option of offering these programs/licensures for employment through a continuing education program. Some of the terminations are based on current economic development data. In addition, a change in faculty is part of the reason behind realigning the equine programs.

The programs considered for termination:

- a) Agribusiness Technology - Equine
- b) Agribusiness Technology - Livestock Management
- c) Computer Engineering Technology
- d) Equine Business
- e) Equine Business - Equine Science Pathway (Certificate)
- f) Equine Business - General Business (Certificate)
- g) Equine Business (Certificate)
- h) Equine Business (Diploma)
- i) General Occupational Technology
- j) General Occupational Technology - (Certificate)
- k) General Occupational Technology - (Diploma)

Dr. Annunziata discussed the changes in programs with pathways to provide a seamless transfer process to four-year universities that will align with the students' pathways.

The College will offer transfer programs in:

- a) Associate in Arts - Health Transfer
- b) Associate in Arts - Pre Dental
- c) Associate in Arts - Pre EMS
- d) Associate in Arts - Pre Nursing

On behalf of the Student Success Committee, Mr. Franklin made a motion to approve all curriculum changes. The changes were approved. Dr. Scott Queen announced through Perkins funding, the footing material at the Agribusiness Center is being budgeted for upgrades.

Dr. Margaret Annunziata gave the President's report. She discussed efforts by the John M Belk Endowment in partnership with the Governor's Office, philanthropy, and the NC General Assembly to rebuild Western North Carolina following Helene. The objective is to make the region stronger with better programs and jobs. Dr. Annunziata discussed how this initiative and collaborations with others like the trip last fall to Singapore will lead to programs that will create and foster family sustaining wages in western North Carolina.

The California and North Carolina Exchange is an initiative to help communities rebuild after devastation. Dr. Annunziata was asked to represent North Carolina in the collaboration for better understanding disaster recovery. This is supported by the Lumina Foundation. The first meeting was in California and now representatives from California will be traveling to Asheville to continue to work on disaster recovery.

Commencement is May 16, 2026, at 10 and 2 with students having the opportunity to choose which ceremony works best for them and their families.

NC Legislative Day is an opportunity for Community Colleges to meet and showcase their programs in Raleigh with the Legislators on May 6, 2026.

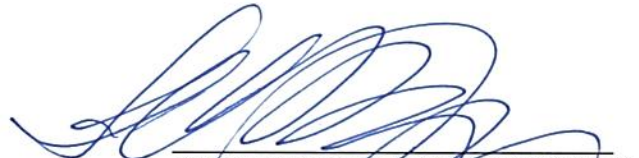
The Board of Trustees discussed the status of budget talks with the state.

Chairman Miller reviewed the upcoming meetings and events on campus.

Mr. Dave Hunt made a motion to adjourn, and Mr. Jordan Barnes seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned.



CHAIRMAN
MR. BILL MILLER



PARLIAMENTARIAN/SECRETARY
DR. SEEMA DAIGLE