

ISOTHERMAL

COMMUNITY COLLEGE

ISOTHERMAL COMMUNITY COLLEGE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES AUGUST 25, 2026

The Board of Trustees of Isothermal Community College met on Tuesday, August 25, 2026 at 12:30 p.m. at Isothermal Community College's Rutherford Campus in Spindale, NC. The following trustees were present: Jordan Barnes, Steve Bedford, Mike Benfield, Tony Helton, David Herndon, Dave Hunt, James Hutchins, Amy Jenkins, Brian King, Bryan King, Bryson Smith, Danna Stansbury. The following personnel were present from the College: President Margaret Annunziata, DeeDee Barnard, Leeann Cline-Burris, Thad Harrill, Scott Queen, Madeline Smith, and Robby Walters.

Chairman Dave Hunt called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone. Mr. Bryan A. King and Mr. David Herndon recited the oath of office as an Isothermal Community College Trustee.

Ethics Statement

Ms. Danna Stansbury 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

Mr. Dave Hunt presented the agenda. Mr. Tony Helton made a motion to approve the agenda, and Mr. Steve Bedford seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

Committees and Chairs

Chairman Hunt presented the committee chairs and appointments to committees. Mr. Mike Benfield made a motion to approve the committee chairs, and Mr. Tony Helton seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Consent Agenda

Chairman Hunt presented the Consent Agenda. The Consent Agenda contained the Budget Revisions, Donations, and Minutes from the July 15, 2026 meeting. Mr. Jordan Barnes made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda and Mr. Bryan King seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Executive Committee

Mr. Benfield gave the Executive Committee report. During the committee meeting, Dr. Annunziata gave an update on how the nursing fees will be applied for each semester. The Committee reviewed the equipment audit which detailed unaccounted pieces in the amount of \$444.61. The Committee also heard a report regarding NC Session Law 2026-21 and that the NC Community College System is working with colleges on how to implement the law. Mr. Shatley summarized the new law that requires the elimination of programs of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI). Colleges must affirm that the college is not endorsing divisive concepts. Schools can continue to teach or instruct on related historical topics but must not endorse any concepts relating to DEI. Colleges are required to provide certification annually that they are following the law. In addition, Isothermal is reviewing all policies that may be impacted by the law. Mr. Shatley announced that Isothermal was not critically

impacted by the update in law, whereas other colleges had made a DEI statements or positions which included some funding. These colleges must work with the system office to remove these statements and determine how to reallocate the funds. Dr. Annunziata announced that Isothermal has added a statement in all course syllabi. *"The faculty member's role in this class is to provide instruction and facilitate academic discussion of course content. The inclusion or discussion of any idea, perspective, or viewpoint should not be interpreted as an endorsement by the faculty member or the institution. The purpose is to support students' learning, critical thinking, and engagement with the subject matter."*

On behalf of the Executive Committee, Mr. Benfield made a motion to elect Mr. Grady Franklin and Mrs. Jackie Godlock to emeritus status. Mr. Franklin served twenty years, and Mrs. Godlock served sixteen years as board members. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Benfield announced that the Executive Committee has requested that the Facilities Committee begin working on a plan for maintenance and a closing date for the pool. Mr. Hunt requested an assessment of maintenance, repairs, and costs to run the pool. This assessment will be a guide that will be presented to the County Commissioners and other community members. The Board discussed the groups that utilize the pool daily. Mr. Bryan King discussed the cost to install a new pool, which is estimated at \$73 million. This has been studied by Rutherford County.

Facilities Committee

Mr. Benfield announced no formal report. He discussed some of the projects on campus and the upcoming ribbon cutting for the Dr. Bobby F. England Health & Sciences Center on October 12.

Finance Committee

Mr. Helton informed the Board that the Finance Committee had not met. Mr. Hunt announced that the report from Atlanta Consulting Group that was included in the meeting packet has a value of \$15.7 million at the beginning of the last quarter in the Powers Fund. In the Furches Fund, the balance was \$3.3 million.

Personnel Committee

Mr. Jordan Barnes announced that the Personnel Committee report will be given in closed session.

Student Success

Chairman Hunt announced no formal report from the Student Success Committee.

President's Report

Dr. Margaret Annunziata announced that Isothermal Community College has posted the position for Vice President of Student Success and Chief Academic Officer with the departure of Dr. Greg Thomas. She informed the Board that applications were being submitted and that the campus will provide input with campus wide meetings with finalists. In the interim, Dr. Scott Queen is providing support in these areas.

Dr. Annunziata announced an increase in fall enrollment. Compared to the first day of classes in fall of 2025, FTE is up 5% and Headcount is up 4.5% for the curriculum programs. There will be additional opportunities for enrollment growth in workforce short term programs. This is important with the update in the NC Propel funding model that provides additional funding for workforce programming. She announced that students may continue to enroll for the second term and therefore we will continue to see increases in enrollment.

Dr. Annunziata presented the Strategic plan draft with input from across campus. This plan continues to be adjusted with the goal of having a final draft at the next meeting. The current draft has been updated to remove

some language that has become politically charged. Dr. Annunziata informed the Board that Isothermal Community College is here to serve all students, and Mrs. Leeann Cline Burris has worked to modify the language that makes the message clear in a manner that will not be scrutinized. Dr. Annunziata requested that the Board of Trustees propose revisions or changes. Dr. Annunziata presented Isothermal Community College's mission, vision, and values for review. Mr. Tony Helton discussed meeting with Mrs. Burris and her description and details of the plan. He appreciated the meeting and encouraged Board members to review the plan and ask questions and provide input.

Dr. Annunziata shared the Unlocking Opportunity program from the Aspen Institute that supports students in accessing pathways to jobs with market value salaries. She announced that Isothermal has been selected as one of nineteen to participate in the program. She discussed the work of Isothermal in being proactive in implementing pathways and services prior to applying for the program.

Upcoming events were shared with the Board of Trustees, and they were reminded of the ribbon cutting ceremonies for the Nyoka Melton Library & Learning Commons on September 22 at 4:00 p.m. and the Health & Sciences Center on October 12.

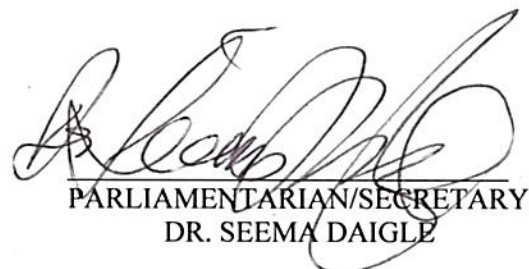
Mr. Tony Helton made a motion to go into closed session under General Statute 143-318.11.6 of the North Carolina General Statutes to consider the qualifications, competence, performance, character, fitness, conditions of appointment, or conditions of initial employment of an individual public officer or employee or prospective public officer or employee; or to hear or investigate a complaint, charge, or grievance by or against an individual public officer or employee. Mr. Bryan King seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Mr. Jordan Barnes made a motion to return to open session. Mr. Helton seconded the motion. The motion passed.

The meeting was adjourned.



CHAIRMAN
MR. DAVE HUNT



PARLIAMENTARIAN/SECRETARY
DR. SEEMA DAIGLE