

**OKLAHOMA STATE REGENTS FOR HIGHER EDUCATION**

655 Research Parkway, Suite 200, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

**MINUTES**

**Eight Hundred and Forty-seventh Meeting**



March 27, 2025

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of the**

**Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education**

March 27, 2025

1. **ANNOUNCEMENT OF FILING OF MEETING NOTICE AND POSTING OF THE AGENDA IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE OPEN MEETING ACT.** The Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education held a regular meeting at 9:00 a.m. on Thursday, March 27, 2025, at the State Regents Office in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. Notice of the meeting had originally been filed with the Secretary of State on September 11, 2024, and amended on January 8, 2025. A copy of the agenda for the meeting had been posted in accordance with the Open Meeting Act.
2. **CALL TO ORDER.** Chair Dennis Casey called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. and presided. Present for the meeting were State Regents Jack Sherry, Dennis Casey, Steven W. Taylor, Jeffrey W. Hickman, Michael C. Turpen, Ken Levit, and Courtney Warmington. Regents Phillip Mitchell “Mitch” Adwon and Dustin J. Hilliary were absent.
3. **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS.** Regent Taylor moved, seconded by Regent Turpen, to approve the minutes of the State Regents’ meetings in February 2025. Voting for the motion were Regents Sherry, Casey, Taylor, Hickman, Turpen, Levit and Warmington. Voting against the motion were none.
4. **COMMENTS FROM THE CHAIR.** Chair Casey thanked Governor Stitt for reappointing him to serve on the State Regents board and noted that he looks forward to continuing to work with his fellow Regents. Chair Casey reminded Regents that Higher Education and Oklahoma’s Promise Day at the State Capitol is scheduled for Tuesday, April 15 and Senate President Pro Tempore Lonnie Paxton and Speaker Kyle Hilbert are

confirmed speakers for the formal program in the House Chamber that day. Chair Casey concluded by reminding Regents that the April 2025 State Regents meetings will be held offsite at Northeastern State University in Tahlequah and Broken Arrow.

5. **COMMENTS FROM THE CHANCELLOR.** Chancellor Burrage began his comments by congratulating Chair Casey on his reappointment to the board. He then shared leadership updates from the campuses. The University of Oklahoma Board of Regents approved the selection of Dr. Shane Hunt as the 18<sup>th</sup> President of Cameron University, effective July 1. Additionally, earlier this week, the selection of Dr. Don Raleigh as the next President of Rogers State University was announced. Dr. Raleigh will begin his role on June 1. Chancellor Burrage announced that the State Regents are preparing to implement a new academic program review process focused on low-producing programs to ensure greater alignment between academic offerings and workforce needs and to promote the effective use of institutional resources. Finally, Chancellor Burrage thanked the Regents for a very productive retreat the preceding day. He is encouraged by the thoughtful discussion that occurred regarding the development of a new funding formula, institutional scope and function, geographic service areas, and the financial health of state system colleges and universities.
6. **LEGISLATIVE UPDATE.** Chair Casey introduced Senate Education Committee Chair Adam Pugh to provide an update on educational priorities during the current legislative session. Senator Pugh believes that our country's system of higher education is one of the strongest in the world, and he noted the impact of higher education on his career trajectory. He asked the Regents to keep in mind affordability, the cost of attendance, and the value proposition for students to pursue higher education. He noted he wants to collaborate with the State Regents and he wants higher education to be nimble, agile and flexible. He believes that institutions should focus on the things they do well and to not try to be all things to all people. He encouraged consideration of closing programs not aligned with workforce needs. Senator Pugh noted the funding investments the Legislature has made in higher education over the last few years. The Legislature wants to invest in things that work and asked for metrics to demonstrate success. He wants to see continued collaboration

between the K-12, CareerTech, and higher education system. He closed by noting the correlation between educational attainment and a state's overall economic growth and prosperity. Chair Casey thanked Senator Pugh for his comments. Regent Taylor noted that several of the priorities he outlined align with issues the State Regents have been discussing. Regent Hickman mentioned that the previous day the State Regents held a retreat to discuss the development of a new performance funding formula, are looking to review low-producing programs, and are appreciative of Senator Pugh's efforts to shine a light on the higher education budget process.

7. **NEW PROGRAMS.** Regent Turpen presented Agenda Item #7, which is a request from Tulsa Community College to offer the Associate in Science in Physical Sciences, and asked Dr. Stephanie Beauchamp, Interim Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs, to explain the request. Dr. Beauchamp indicated that degree is a 60-credit hour program that designed for students who are curious about the foundational laws that shape the universe and will pave the way for careers in various fields such as medicine, astronomy, physics, chemistry, forensic science, environmental conservation, engineering, and other science-related fields. Regent Turpen moved, seconded by Regent Sherry, to approve TCC's request offer the Associate in Science in Physical Sciences. Voting for the motion were Regents Casey, Taylor, Hickman, Turpen, Levit, Warmington, and Sherry. Voting against the motion were none.
8. **PROGRAM DELETION.** Regent Turpen presented Agenda Item #8, which is a request from Tulsa Community College to delete the Certificate in Biotechnology. He indicated that it appears no students will be negatively impacted by the deletion. Regent Turpen moved, seconded by Regent Levit, to approve TCC's request to delete the Certificate in Biotechnology. Voting for the motion were Regents Taylor, Hickman, Turpen, Levit, Warmington, Sherry, and Casey. Voting against the motion were none.
9. **ACADEMIC POLICY.**

- a. Chair Casey noted that Item #9-a is the posting of proposed revisions to the Undergraduate Transfer and Articulation of Courses policy. This item is for posting only at this time.
  - b. Chair Casey noted that Item #9-b is the posting of proposed revisions to the Student Assessment Plan policy. This item is for posting only at this time.
  - c. Regent Turpen presented Agenda Item #9-c, which is a request from Cameron University for an exception to the State Regents' Concurrent Enrollment policy to continue allowing 10th-grade students to enroll at the institution during the 2025-2026 academic year. Of 10th grade students allowed to participate under Cameron's current exception, 81 percent earned either As or Bs in concurrent classes. Regent Turpen moved, seconded by Regent Sherry, to approve the request. Voting for the motion were Regents Hickman, Turpen, Levit, Warmington, Sherry, Casey and Taylor. Voting against the motion were none.
10. **EARLY COLLEGE PROGRAMS.** Regent Turpen presented Agenda Item #10, which is a request from Murray State College to implement an additional Early College High School Program with Durant Public Schools. Staff analysis of Murray State College's proposal determined that it is a well-designed, robust early college program. The program will begin in Fall 2025 with a five-year approval concluding in Spring 2030. An interim report on program outcomes will be submitted at the conclusion of the Fall 2028 semester. Regent Turpen moved, seconded by Regent Taylor, to approve the request. Voting for the motion were Regents Turpen, Levit, Warmington, Sherry, Casey, Taylor, and Hickman. Voting against the motion were none.
11. **STATE AUTHORIZATION.**
- a. Regent Turpen presented Item #11-a, which is approval of ATA College's request for authorization to operate as a degree-granting institution in Oklahoma. After reviewing the application and required documentation, State Regents' staff

determined that this institution meets the authorization requirements established in the OSRHE Institutional Accreditation and State Authorization policy. Regent Hickman asked if this is the first institution to pay a fee for authorization under the new policy. Vice Chancellor for Administration Kylie Smith confirmed that it is. Regent Turpen moved, seconded by Regent Warmington, to approve the request for state authorization from ATA College. Voting for the motion were Regents Levit, Warmington, Sherry, Casey, Taylor, Hickman, and Turpen. Voting against the motion were none.

- b. Regent Turpen presented Item #11-b, which is a request to approve continuation of Oklahoma's membership in the State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement. SARA requires states to renew membership biennially. The SREB last approved renewal of Oklahoma's SARA membership in June 2023; therefore, Oklahoma must submit a state renewal application to the SREB S-SARA Regional Steering Committee (RSC) at its June 2025 meeting to be approved for membership through June 2027. Regent Turpen moved, seconded by Regent Taylor, to approve the request. Voting for the motion were Regents Warmington, Sherry, Casey, Taylor, Hickman, Turpen, and Levit. Voting against the motion were none.

## 12. **TUITION AND FEES.**

- a. Regent Hickman presented Item #12-a, which is the posting of legislative tuition and mandatory fee limits for resident and nonresident undergraduate, graduate, and professional programs for Fiscal Year 2026 and posting of institutional requests for changes to academic services fees for Fiscal Year 2026. He asked Vice Chancellor for Budget and Finance Mark Tygret to explain the item. Vice Chancellor Tygret provided an overview of legislative tuition and mandatory fee limits as outlined in 70 O.S. § 3218.8. State Regents staff compiled a comparison of Oklahoma institutions' tuition and fees to peer institutions in the Big 12, surrounding states, and similar professional programs. While many peer institutions increased their rates in FY25, Oklahoma's average resident tuition and fees remain below peer averages: 71.1% of the Big 12 average for research universities (up 0.3 percentage

points), 81.4% for regional universities (down 3.8 percentage points), and 63.6% for community colleges (down 0.4 percentage points). Vice Chancellor Tygret also reported on academic services fee changes for FY2026. Nineteen of the state's 25 public institutions submitted a total of 241 requests—an increase of 45 from the prior year—including 82 new fees, 115 modifications, and 44 deletions. The requested changes cover categories such as special instruction, facility and equipment utilization, testing and clinical services, classroom and lab supplies, and other special fees. Regent Hickman moved, seconded by Regent Taylor, to approve the posting. Voting for the motion were Regents Sherry, Casey, Taylor, Hickman, Turpen, Levit, and Warmington. Voting against the motion were none.

- b. Chair Casey noted that Item #12-b is the announcement of the public hearing on tuition and fees as required by statute. The public hearing will take place on Thursday, April 24 at 9:00 a.m. at the Northeastern State University-Broken Arrow Campus, with a Zoom option available.
- 13. **MASTER LEASE PROGRAM.** Regent Hickman presented Item #13, which is a request to authorize for submission to the Council of Bond Oversight the 2025 Real Property Master Lease Series. Projects from four institutions total approximately \$37.9 million. Regent Hickman moved, seconded by Regent Turpen to approve the request. Voting for the motion were Regents Casey, Taylor, Hickman, Turpen, Levit, Warmington, and Sherry. Voting against the motion were none.
  - 14. **REVENUE BONDS.** Regent Hickman presented Item #14, which is a is a request to certify to the Attorney General of Oklahoma that the Statement of Essential Facts for OSU's General Revenue and Refunding bonds – Series 2025A (tax-exempt) and Series 2025B (taxable) – in the amount of \$35 million is substantially accurate. The Series 2025 financing is currently anticipated to generate net present savings from the refinancing of Master Lease Real Property Bond Series 2015A in the amount of approximately \$436,451, or 3.7%. Regent Hickman moved, seconded by Regent Taylor, to approve the request.



Voting for the motion were Regents Taylor, Hickman, Turpen, Levit, Warmington, Sherry, and Casey. Voting against the motion were none.

15. **EPSCoR.** Regent Hickman presented Item #15, which is a request to approve an allocation in the amount of \$30,000 to Northeastern State University for EPSCoR's annual Oklahoma Research Day. Regent Hickman moved, seconded by Regent Taylor, to approve the request. Voting for the motion were Regents Hickman, Turpen, Levit, Warmington, Sherry, Casey, and Taylor. Voting against the motion were none.

Regent Warmington exited the meeting at 9:45 a.m.

16. **CONTRACTS AND PURCHASES.** Regent Hickman presented Agenda Item #16, which is a request to approve purchases exceeding \$100,000. Regent Sherry moved, seconded by Regent Levit, to approve the request. Voting for the motion were Regents Turpen, Levit, Sherry, Casey, Taylor, and Hickman. Voting against the motion were none.
17. **INVESTMENTS.** Regent Taylor indicated that there were no investment manager recommendations for Regents' action at this meeting. He noted that the Investment Committee met with Tim Westrich with Mercer by Zoom earlier this week. During the meeting, they received a performance update and reviewed performance estimates through March 15th. While the portfolio saw small declines in February and March, the Fiscal Year-to-Date composite return is still positive at 4.2%.
18. **COUNCIL OF PRESIDENTS POLICY.** Chair Casey noted that Item #18 is the posting of proposed revisions to the Constitution of the Council of Presidents policy. This item is for posting only at this time.
19. **HIGH SCHOOL INDICATORS REPORT.** Regent Sherry presented Item #19, which is a request to acknowledge receipt of the 2023 High School Indicators Report, and asked Dr. Stephanie Baird, Associate Vice Chancellor for System Analysis and Reporting, to review the report. This report is required by state statute and is made up of the four

following reports: High School to College-Going Rates for Oklahoma High School Graduates to Oklahoma Colleges and Universities, Headcount, Semester Hours, and Grade Point Averages (GPA) Report, Mean ACT Scores by Oklahoma High School Site, and Developmental Education (Remediation) Rates for Oklahoma High School Graduates in Oklahoma Public Higher Education (beginning in 1995). There were 43,946 students graduated from Oklahoma's public high schools during the 2022-23 academic year. Of those graduates, 35.7 percent enrolled as first-time students at an Oklahoma college or university in Fall of 2023, reflecting a 0.9 percentage point increase from the previous year. 6.2 percent of graduates attended an out-of-state institution in Fall of 2023. Of the 14,462 first-time, degree-seeking students in Fall 2023 who earned college credit hours, approximately 53 percent achieved a GPA of 3.0 or higher in freshman-level credit hours. According to ACT, 1,386,335 high school graduates across the United States took the ACT in 2023, marking a 2.7 percent increase from the previous year. Of those test-takers, 38,460 were Oklahoma high school graduates. The statewide average ACT composite score was 18.0, reflecting a 0.1-point decrease from the prior year. Of the 14,887 first-time, degree-seeking students who entered an Oklahoma college or university in Fall 2023, 21 percent enrolled in at least one 0-level remedial course. Regent Sherry moved, seconded by Regent Hickman, to acknowledge receipt of the report. Voting for the motion were Regents Levit, Sherry, Casey, Taylor, Hickman, and Turpen. Voting against the motion were none.

20. **COMMENDATIONS.** Regent Turpen moved, seconded by Regent Sherry, to recognize staff for service on state and national projects. Voting for the motion were Regents Sherry, Casey, Taylor, Hickman, Turpen, and Levit. Voting against the motion were none.
21. **CONSENT DOCKET.** Regent Turpen moved, seconded by Regent Taylor, to approve/ratify the following routine requests which are consistent with State Regents' policies and procedures or previous actions:
  - a. State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement. Possible action to ratify approval of institutional requests for annual renewal of participation in the State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement.

- b. Agency Operations. Personnel. Possible action to ratify personnel appointment.

Voting for the motion were Regents Casey, Taylor, Hickman, Turpen, Levit, and Sherry.  
Voting against the motion were none.

22. **REPORTS.** Regent Hickman moved, seconded by Regent Sherry, to acknowledge receipt of the following Reports.

- a. Programs. Possible action to acknowledge receipt of the Current Status Report on Program Requests.

- b. Annual Reports.

(1) Possible action to acknowledge receipt of the Oklahoma College Savings Plan Update for 2024.

(2) Possible action to acknowledge receipt of the FY2024 System-wide Report on the Value of Institutional Supplemental Pension Obligations and the Cost of Postemployment Benefits Other Than Pensions.

Voting for the motion were Regents Taylor, Hickman, Turpen, Levit, Sherry, and Casey.  
Voting against the motion were none.

23. **REPORT OF THE COMMITTEES.**

- a. Academic Affairs and Student Services Committee. The Academic Affairs and Student Services Committee had no additional items for Regents' action.
- b. Budget and Audit Committee. The Budget and Audit Committee had no additional items for Regents' action.

- c. Strategic Planning, Personnel and Technology Committee. The Strategic Planning, Personnel and Technology Committee had no additional items for Regents' action.
  - d. Investment Committee. The Investment Committee had no additional items for Regents' action.
24. **PROPOSED EXECUTIVE SESSION.** Chris Turner, Interim General Counsel, advised Regents that an executive session was not needed.
25. **ANNOUNCEMENT OF NEXT REGULAR MEETING.** Chair Casey announced that the next regular meetings are scheduled to be held on Wednesday, April 23, 2025 at 10:30 a.m. at Northeastern State University – Tahlequah and Thursday, April 24, 2025 at 9:00 a.m. at Northeastern State University – Broken Arrow. He reminded everyone that the April 24<sup>th</sup> meeting will include the annual public hearing on tuition and fees.
26. **ADJOURNMENT.** With no additional items to address, the meeting was adjourned.

ATTEST:



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Dennis Casey, Chair



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Steven W. Taylor, Secretary