## OKLAHOMA STATE REGENTS FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

655 Research Park in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

## MINUTES OF THE COMMITTEE-OF-THE-WHOLE

Thursday, May 29, 2025

- 1. ANNOUNCEMENT 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 1:00 p.m. on Thursday, May 29, 2025, at the State Regents Office in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma Notice of the meeting had been filed with the Secretary of State on Wednesday, September 11, 2024 and amended on May 15, 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 1:00 p.m. and presided. Present for the meeting were State Regents Jeffrey W. Hickman, Jack Sherry, Dennis Casey, Steven W. Taylor, Phillip Mitchell "Mitch" Adwon, Ken Levit. Regents Dustin J. Hilliary and Michael C. Turpen were absent. Regent Hickman left the meeting at 1:25 p.m. Regent Warmington left the meeting at 2:55pm.

## 3. STATE SYSTEM INSTITUTIONS.

a. Northwestern Oklahoma State University. President Bo Hannaford provided an update on institutional activities at Northwestern Oklahoma State University (NWOSU). He reported that NWOSU has experienced three consecutive years of enrollment growth and has maintained flat tuition and mandatory fees for the past five years. Programs in Nursing, Education, Accounting, Psychology, and Agriculture continue to thrive in alignment with workforce needs, and NWOSU was recently recognized as a Profession-Focused institution under the new Carnegie Classification. All academic departments now have advisory boards in place. President Hannaford shared positive workforce-alignment data, noting that the incoming junior class in Nursing is 30 percent larger than last year, and 85 percent of Spring 2025 Nursing graduates plan to remain in Oklahoma. By Spring 2026, the university will have graduated 60 students with a Doctorate for Nurse Practitioners, including 13 in that class alone. Participation in the Inspired to Teach program increased from 110 to 132 students this year, and all micro-credentials are embedded within existing programs. Nearly 80 percent of NWOSU graduates remain in Oklahoma for at least five years, and nearly half graduate with no student debt; those who do incur debt still remain below the national average. Through the GEER II grant, 122 students received support to complete their degrees, and an additional 19 students returned through the adult education grant. NWOSU also received a \$2 million donation dedicated to nursing scholarships and raised more than \$2.7 million overall this year. In response to Regent Casey's question, President Hannaford attributed the recent enrollment growth to regional economic activity, including an oil boom and increased ranching. While the nursing program is expected to be at capacity soon, NWOSU collaborates with other institutions to meet student demand. Housing remains tight, but deferred maintenance funds will support additional housing projects, including a new apartment complex. Finally, President Hannaford and Regent Hickman discussed concurrent enrollment strategies.

- b. Redlands Community College. President Jena Marr provided an update on institutional activities at Redlands Community College. She highlighted the development of new microcredentials designed to meet workforce needs and reported growth in the nursing program, with 15 recent graduates and an expected 24 graduates next year. Redlands launched a new Associate of Applied Science degree in drone technology and established new external advisory councils for the Criminal Justice and Agriculture programs. The college has expanded hands-on internship opportunities and built partnerships with local healthcare providers, law enforcement agencies, and agricultural businesses. A shared career readiness coordinator position was created in collaboration with the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma. Redlands' service learning classes are coordinating a large community event to connect students with local nonprofits to fulfill service hours. The college foundation continues to add scholarships to help reduce student debt. Redlands has not requested a tuition or fee increase in the last eight years and participates in multiple consortiums and shared staffing arrangements with other institutions. The college maintains over 30 articulation agreements and transfer pathways with four-year universities. President Marr noted enrollment increases for the past seven consecutive semesters. Campus housing is currently at full capacity, with a waiting list for Fall 2025. She also addressed concerns about students who enroll in concurrent courses but do not matriculate as full-time freshmen after high school graduation.
- Northern Oklahoma College. President Diana Watkins provided an update on institutional activities at Northern Oklahoma College. She highlighted several newly developed micro-credentials in areas such as Corrections, Child Development Associate Prep, Spanish for Healthcare Workers, and Cinema Set Design, along with the addition of new courses and programs aimed at strengthening workforce connections. A new concurrent enrollment advisory board was established, adding to the many existing advisory boards at the college. NOC has resumed hosting Native American Youth Leadership Day, which has proven effective in promoting enrollment. To improve access and affordability, the college is offering evening FAFSA workshops, virtual advising options, enhanced scheduling for concurrent courses, and printed marketing materials in multiple languages. Currently, 85 percent of students receive financial assistance, with a goal of reaching 100 percent. NOC collaborates closely with Northwestern Oklahoma State University and Oklahoma State University and was the first college in the state to utilize P3 funding. During the update, Regent Casey inquired about CareerTech partnerships with Redlands, and Regent Warmington requested additional information on the Student Needs Assessment.
- 4. **BLUEPRINT 2030.** Dr. Cass Minx, Associate Vice Chancellor for Workforce and Economic Development, provided an update on initiatives related to the Career Services Council, aligned with Strategies #3C and #3D of Blueprint 2030. She reported on ongoing discussions focused on training career services professionals and improving service delivery to students. OSRHE partnered with Travis Lightsey, Director of Career Development at Rose State College, to develop a State Regents' certified micro-credential. This training will be provided at no cost to one staff member per institution to ensure every campus has a certified career services professional. Mr. Lightsey, who will serve as the Master Trainer, shared an overview of the course fundamentals with the Regents. Dr. Minx also demonstrated the Lightcast elmpact tool, which supports workforce alignment and is updated daily. The Regents commended Dr. Minx and the Career Services Council for their efforts in advancing this important work.
- 5. **CAMPUS SAFETY.** Associate Vice Chancellor for Communications Angela Caddell provided an update on the Campus Safety and Security Task Force. She shared information about the upcoming

bi-annual summit, scheduled for November 12, 2025, at the University of Central Oklahoma. This statewide summit typically draws more than 300 participants. Eight strong session proposals were submitted, covering key topics such as interacting with students on the autism spectrum, trauma-informed care, cybersecurity, and other critical issues. The Oklahoma Department of Emergency Management will also provide an update at the summit. Associate Vice Chancellor Caddell noted that a keynote speaker is still being confirmed.

- 6. **BUDGET REPORT AND REVENUE UPDATE.** Vice Chancellor for Budget and Finance Mark Tygret provided the Regents with an update on the state budget and revenue outlook. He reported that year-over-year sales tax collections are down and oil and gas prices remain moderate. Vice Chancellor Tygret also reviewed state appropriations to higher education, noting a change in how the Legislature accounts for funding to the Oklahoma's Promise program, the appropriation of \$20 million designated for the Prep 3.0 initiative, and the acceleration of deferred maintenance funding. In response to a question from Regent Casey, Vice Chancellor Tygret confirmed that the overall operating budget for higher education is flat.
- 7. **LEGISLATIVE UPDATE.** Vice Chancellor for Government Relations Dr. Jarrett Jobe provided the Regents with an overview of current legislative activity. He noted that sine die adjournment was expected by the end of the day, pending final action on veto overrides. Dr. Jobe congratulated Regent Casey on his reappointment as a State Regent. He reviewed several policy bills of potential impact that were still awaiting the Governor's signature, including the Oklahoma's Promise bill for teachers, the University of Oklahoma tutoring bill, and the Rising Scholars program. He reported that the National Guard bill passed without the Governor's signature, and that the Master Lease, student government, and OTEG bills also passed. Dr. Jobe discussed the broader legislative climate and emphasized that concurrent enrollment would be a key focus in the coming year, as lawmakers are raising questions about delivery methods, costs, and reimbursement rates.
- 8. **PROPOSED EXECUTIVE SESSION.** Mr. Chris Turner, Deputy General Counsel for the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education, advised State Regents that an executive session was not needed at this time.
- 9. **"BEST OF HIGHER EDUCATION."** Regents received the update on institutional activities via e-mail on May 28, 2025.
- 10. **CALENDAR OF EVENTS.** The calendar of events was distributed in written form to the Regents.
- 11. **ADJOURN.** With no other items to discuss, the meeting was adjourned.

ATTEST:

Dennis Casey, Chair

Dennes Cosey

Steven W. Taylor, Secretary