

# **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.



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:



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Dennis Casey, Chair



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Steven W. Taylor, Secretary