



NORTHWEST ARKANSAS COMMUNITY COLLEGE

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Monday, January 12, 2026 - Immediately Following Annual Meeting - Burns Hall Third Floor
Boardroom

AGENDA

1. **Call to Order**
2. **Recognition, Awards, and Informational Items**
3. **Attendance**
4. **Minutes**
 - 4.1 Regular Board Meeting – November 10, 2025
ACTION - Approval of November 10, 2025 Minutes
5. **ENDS Monitoring Report**
 - 5.1 E-103: Expansion of Instructional Support
(Dr. Diana Johnson)
ACTION - Approval of E-103
6. **Executive Limitations Monitoring Report**
 - 6.1 EL-204: Treatment of Staff
ACTION - Approval of EL-204
7. **Committee Reports**
 - 7.1 Finance Committee (Amber Latimer)

8. Presidential Report

8.1 Enrollment Update

8.2 Facilities Update

8.3 Personnel Update

9. Student Government President Report

9.1 SGA Updates

10. Chair Report

10.1 ADHE Trustees Conference Little Rock Takeaways

10.2 Statement of Financial Interest

*Deadline to submit to Sammantha is Friday,
January 23.*

10.3 Committee Chair Appointments

11. Other Board Action Items and Considerations

12. Adjourn

Please see the Board of Trustees Calendar of Upcoming Events document in the binder's front pocket for Upcoming events.

**NORTHWEST ARKANSAS COMMUNITY COLLEGE
BOARD OF TRUSTEE MEETING
Monday, November 10, 2025 - Immediately Following Joint Board Reception
SCGBD Room B103**

MINUTES

Members Present: Todd Schwartz (Chair), Amber Latimer (Secretary), Ashley Pointer, Lori Frank, Ron Branscum, Mark Scott, Mary Schneider, and Joe Spivey

Members Absent: Rachel Harris (Vice Chair)

Also in Attendance: Dr. Dennis C. Rittle

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 4:35 pm.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Recognition, Awards, and Informational Items

3.1 CRA Program 25 Year Celebration

Dr. Rittle recognized Starlinda Sanders and her team for their Certified Retail Analyst 25-year Celebration event.

3.2 Trail Blazing Award: C-TEC

Dr. Rittle recognized the Trails and Trades School for their Trail Blazer Award given to them for the C-TEC Building.

3.3 Athletics

Dr. Rittle recognized the Men's and Women's Cross Country teams for their performance at the National Championship. The Men's Team finished 20 in the nation and the Women's Team finished 9 in the nation.

He also recognized the eSports Teams for winning their successful season and making the playoffs.

4. Attendance

5. Minutes

- 5.1 Regular Board Meeting – October 6, 2025: **ACTION**
ACTION: Approval of October 6, 2025 Minutes

Passed Unanimously

Mr. Scott motioned and Ms. Frank seconded the motion to approve the minutes of the Regular Board Meeting on October 6, 2025.

6. ENDS Monitoring Report

- 6.1 E-104: Concurrent Students & ACCESS (Dr. Justin White and Amber Roth): **ACTION**
Dr. Justin White and Amber Roth both presented information. Amber introduced her team and their roles and clarified some key terms that she'll be using throughout the presentation. Amber expressed why K-12 partnerships are important to the college. She explained that NWACC currently has MOUs with 38 partners, which is the highest in NWACC history. NWACC has seen a 51% increase in ECE headcount and a 57% increase in ECE SSCH from 2021 to 2025. She further explained that high school students have options for taking classes at their high school, online, or on the NWACC campus. Another option includes attending a secondary career center where they can participate in career and technical programs. NWACC's Secondary Career Centers introduced two new programs: Robotics and Practical Nursing. NWACC has Secondary Career Centers in multiple locations across NWA. The ultimate goal is to help students become college-ready and introduce them to Associate's Degree. The number of degrees and certificates obtained while in high school have increased 90% over the last 5 years. ECE students excel in every unit measurement including higher GPAs, stronger ACT scores, and excel in college courses. This model has proven to be successful and builds confidence in students. ECE students have higher high school GPAs, college GPAs, and ACT scores than traditional students.

The ACCESS Law provides state funding for high school students in grades nine through twelve to enroll in college courses. Any public, private, or homeschool student who meets eligibility requirements can take advantage of this. The goal of this law is to enhance access to college coursework for high school students. ACCESS does not cover non-credit courses or dual credit courses. Cost breakdown is as follows:

- *In-district: \$51.50 per credit hour*
 - *3-hour course: \$154.50*
 - *A to A Scholarship - Subtract \$195.00*
 - *Total - \$34.50*
- *Out of district: \$84.50 per credit hour*
 - *3-hour course: \$253.50*
 - *A to A Scholarship - Subtract \$195.00*
 - *Total - \$58.50*

The Board asked questions about the following:

- *The number of typical number of hours that high school students take on average and how many college credit hours they're graduating with.*
- *Transfer agreements with in-state or out of state institutions.*
- *Market saturation with 38 partners.*
- *Are we tracking how many students don't have a degree by the time they graduate high school but do go on to obtain an Associate's Degree?*
- *Are there any other threats or areas of improvement?*
- *How are we reaching homeschool students?*

Amber and Dr. White answered with the following:

- *Students are taking roughly 3-4 courses per semester and can graduate with upwards of 62 credit hours.*
- *Transfer agreements with all in-state institutions but not as much out-of-state.*
- *Have reached out to every school they could reach and some have decided not to pursue a partnership with NWACC, despite the efforts of the NWACC team.*
- *NWACC is tracking and sees about 15-20% of ECE students; NWACC team has this as a priority.*
- *Other schools are biggest threat due to the financial component and specific programs high school students prefer.*
- *NWACC works with homeschool hubs to reach students and helps the students pay for the classes by being reimbursed through the State.*

ACTION: Approval of E-104 - Concurrent Students & ACCESS

Passed Unanimously

Mr. Branscum motioned and Mr. Spivey seconded the motion to approve the ENDS-104 Monitoring Report.

7. Executive Limitations Monitoring Report

7.1 EL-206: Asset Protection: ACTION

ACTION: Approval of EL-206 - Asset Protection

Passed Unanimously

Mr. Spivey motioned and Mrs. Latimer seconded the motion to approve the Executive Limitations Monitoring Report.

8. Committee Reports

8.1 None

9. Presidential Report

9.1 Takeaways from ACCT New Orleans

Dr. Rittle shared with the Board that he learned about badges for Trustees as they are onboarded onto the Board they serve and all level one are delivered online. Additional levels will be made available in the future.

He also shared his appreciation to Chair Schwartz, Dr. Diana Johnson, Dr. Justin White, and Mrs. Teresa Taylor for their dedicated work to the presentation they gave at the conference discussing the lessons learned from the cyber attack last year.

9.2 Academic Update

Dr. Rittle informed the Board that NWACC submitted a two Letters of Intent to ADHE to request the addition of the AAS in Artificial Intelligence and the AS in Data Science.

9.3 Enrollment Update

Spring enrollment is underway. Opened three weeks early and is currently going very well.

10. Chair Report

10.1 Takeaways from ACCT New Orleans

The Trustees who attended the ACCT Leadership Congress in New Orleans shared their key takeaways from the event.

Mark - Student Success for non-traditional students and their challenges with getting back into college. Advocacy for the college's needs on a legislative level. Athletics - flag football for women is gaining traction. Other trustees commented on NWACC and their presentation on the cyber attack.

Todd - Focus was on building a stronger board through partnerships and evaluations. Nominated Mary Schneider to serve 3 years on the Southern Regional Caucus and was unanimously approved. ACCT has an opening for Leadership Congress position - asked BOT if they are interested in pursuing this. Attended an event hosted by Lansing Community College about setting standards for the Board.

10.2 ACCT National Legislative Summit - February 8-11, 2026

Reminder to the Board.

10.3 January Annual Meeting - January 12, 2026

Reminder to the Board.

10.4 Statement of Financial Interest

Reminder to the Board.

10.5 Commencement Regalia

Consensus vote is reached to move forward. Custom, uniform regalia will be ordered for the Board.

10.6 Board of Trustees Evaluation (See BOT Book)

Reminder to the Board.

11. Other Board Action Items and Considerations

11.1 Nomination and Election of 2026 Board Officers: **ACTION**

The Board discussed each member's interest in serving in a leadership position.

ACTION: Nomination and Election of 2025 Board Officers

Passed Unanimously

Mr. Schwartz announced that the Board will hold open nominations of officers.

Mr. Schwartz opened the nominations for the office of Chairman of the Board. Mr. Branscum nominated Mr. Schwartz for the office of Chair and Mr. Scott seconded. There being no other nominations, by acclimation Mr. Schwartz was elected as Chair of the Board of Trustees for NorthWest Arkansas Community College by unanimous vote.

Mr. Schwartz opened the nominations for the office of Vice-Chair of the Board. Mr. Branscum nominated Mrs. Latimer for the office of Vice-Chair and Mr. Scott seconded. There being no other nominations, by acclimation Mrs. Latimer was elected as Vice Chair of the Board of Trustees for NorthWest Arkansas Community College by unanimous vote.

Mr. Schwartz opened the nominations for the office of Secretary of the Board. Mr. Spivey nominated Mrs. Schneider for the office of Secretary and Mr. Scott seconded. There being no other nominations, by acclimation Mrs. Schneider was elected as Secretary of the Board of Trustees for NorthWest Arkansas Community College.

12. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 5:59 pm.

Mr. Todd Schwartz, Chair

Mrs. Schneider, Secretary

POLICY TITLE: TREATMENT OF STAFF

Policy 204: With respect to the treatment of paid and volunteer staff, the President shall not cause or allow conditions, which are unfair, undignified, and unclear or present a conflict of interest.

Definition: Conditions are defined as official actions, policies, and procedures. Unfair refers to legally defined discriminatory acts, policies, or procedures. Undignified refers to disrespectful treatment or language. Unclear refers to ambiguously written or oral presentation. A conflict of interest is defined where a party shall receive direct personal monetary gain, or an advantage in the workplace as a result of official college decisions they are in a position to make.

Narrative: NWACC administration encourages the development of a campus culture that exemplifies a spirit of mutual support, respect and civility. This expectation of a collaborative spirit is projected throughout the college in meetings, Expanded Cabinet, Deans Council, Faculty Senate, Staff Council and in open forums.

Employee recognition occurs often and is celebrated both formally and informally as a means of acknowledging individual and team accomplishments. Examples include: the New Employee Luncheons, Celebrate Learning Days, Administrative Professionals Day, an annual recognition of outstanding faculty and staff at the Arkansas Community Colleges Association, and various national conferences, Summer Employee picnic, and Holiday gatherings. Open Forums occur twice a year on each campus, and Final Friday Forums are held virtually. Additionally, the annual “Employee Recognition and Awards Ceremony” recognizes employee years of service, outstanding faculty and staff, and other honors awarded to any employee of NWACC.

In order to promote lifelong learning, all full-time college employees or their dependents are eligible to receive up to twelve hours per semester of tuition assistance at NWACC. Part-time employees and Early College Experience faculty are eligible for three hours of tuition assistance per semester.

Full-time non-faculty employees with ten or more years of service as a state employee receive a “career service bonus” annually in recognition of continuous service; faculty receive additional compensation based upon higher level academic achievement.

Mandatory, as well as elective training programs are available to all employees through the College’s online learning management compliance training platform, to assure that employees receive the required compliance training on HIPAA, FERPA, Title IX, Clery, and other important laws and safety issues.

To help create awareness and promote ethical accountability, the College strives to maintain an atmosphere of acceptance for employees to openly express concerns and issues regarding the College without fear of retaliation. The College does not condone any unfair or illegal discriminatory personnel actions or the existence of a conflict of interest within any college department. The Human Resources Office has an employee relations' contact who is available for all faculty and staff to express concerns regarding College-related issues. To ensure a healthy conducive work environment, this person has the autonomy to address any issue that may arise. The College also utilizes a third-party online anonymous reporting platform, "EthicsPoint", for any member of the college or the public to use to report ethics violations. The link is located on the main NWACC website: <https://secure.ethicspoint.com/domain/media/en/gui/15781/index.html>.

The College also promotes ongoing professional development training and continued review and updates of College policies and procedures in order to foster a values-based culture.

Further, without limiting the scope of the foregoing by this enumeration, he or she shall not:

1. Operate without written personnel policies, which clarify personnel rules for faculty and staff, provide for the effective handling of grievances, and protect against wrongful conditions.

Definition: Personnel policies, which address these provisions, are included in the online NWACC Policy and Procedures database.

Narrative: The policy database, "Policy Stat", contains college-wide policies affecting employees and students; it outlines the operations framework for the College. Included in this manual are policies related to the management of grievances, identification of processes and regulations, and protection for employees from wrongful conditions. College administrators are expected to operate within the parameters of these policies and procedures. To ensure that each policy is clearly defined and legally sound, policies are reviewed regularly and updated as needed.

2. Fail to make available to staff in a timely manner all personnel rules that affect them.

Definition: Making policy and procedure available to staff in a timely manner refers to having a complete copy of the NWACC Policy and Procedures manual available online for all employees. This electronic format supports open access and also ensures that policy and procedure updates are completed regularly and communicated efficiently.

Narrative: As policies and procedures are updated, they are reviewed by Cabinet, Expanded Cabinet, and Deans Council, as needed. If required by the policy process, information on potential policy changes are provided by email in order to allow employee feedback

immediately. Instructions for locating the policies and other key informational resources are included in new employee orientation.

A comprehensive benefit package is available to employees, which includes a wide range of health and wellness benefits, voluntary products, and paid leave. Benefits are explained to eligible employees in both verbal and written formats. Additionally, annual forums may be held for employees every year to discuss health care changes and other topics pertinent to employees.

In order to enhance employee's understanding of their total compensation package and to assist them during their initial employment period, new employees are required to attend new hire orientation.

3. Continue in employment or employ any person serving on the Board.

Definition: Employees who are elected to the Board will be asked to resign immediately upon election. The college may not employ any current Board members.

Narrative: The College does not employ any current members of the Board of Trustees.

I am reporting in compliance with Executive Limitation #204.

Dennis C. Rittle, Ph.D.
President
January 12, 2026