



**THE DISTRICT BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
OF VALENCIA COLLEGE  
REGULAR MEETING**

**Minutes**

**September 5, 2024**

Valencia College – West Campus  
Building 8, Room 111  
and  
Zoom Meeting

Members Present

Trustee Michael Sasso, Chair  
Trustee John Davis, Vice Chair  
Trustee Blair Bradley  
Trustee Shawn Hindle  
Trustee Belinda Kirkegard  
Trustee John Martinez  
Trustee Tracey Stockwell

Dr. Kathleen Plinske, Secretary of the Board and President of the College

**Call to Order**

Chair Sasso called the Regular Meeting of the District Board of Trustees of Valencia College to order at 9:34 a.m. A quorum was present.

**Approval of Minutes,  
August 8, 2024  
Organizational  
Meeting, and August  
8, 2024, Workshop**

Trustee Stockwell moved to approve the meeting minutes of the August 8, 2024 Organizational Meeting, and the August 8, 2024 Workshop, as presented. Trustee Kirkegard seconded the motion, and the motion was approved unanimously.

**President's Report**

Dr. Plinske reported that the College is in the third week of the Fall semester. She expressed her gratitude to the entire Valencia team, especially Dr. Lesley

Frederick, Vice President, Student Affairs, and the Financial Aid team, for their effective work while responding to the demand for post-secondary education in the community.

Dr. Plinske shared that Valencia celebrated the fifth anniversary of its Downtown Campus on Monday, August 26, 2024. The Downtown Campus was established in partnership with UCF and was designed in part to provide opportunity to residents who live in the surrounding community, and to provide students at the nearby Academy Center for Excellence (ACE) School with the chance to see and experience college in their neighborhood, so they could envision themselves in college in their own future. Dr. Plinske shared that UCF and Valencia College believe that the Downtown Campus can become a model of an educational ecosystem, a place where a student can go seamlessly from K-12 to community college, and then to a four-year university.

Dr. Plinske stated that the College moved its Culinary and Hospitality programs to the Downtown Campus, and due to its great partnership with Walt Disney World, Valencia has established state-of-the-art culinary kitchens, and a first-rate hospitality school, the Walt Disney World Center for Culinary Arts and Hospitality. Many of Valencia's graduates transfer to UCF's Rosen College of Hospitality Management to continue their educational experiences.

Dr. Plinske indicated that while the College's culinary and hospitality students get a lot of the headlines, the Downtown Campus has much more to offer, such as giving Valencia's students the chance to earn an associate degree in classes alongside their peers at UCF, while UCF students can take the same lower-division classes with Valencia students. Dr. Plinske shared that the Downtown Campus also offers seven associate in science degree programs, including the culinary and hospitality degree programs, digital media, new media communications, and health information technology, as well as mechatronics and electronic board assembly.

Dr. Plinske reported that the State again has invested in funding to support nursing programs. The Nursing Education (PIPELINE) awards distribute funds based on college pass rates on the National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX), and number of nursing graduates. Dr. Plinske shared that the Valencia received \$2.1 million of the \$40 million allocated to the 28 state colleges via PIPELINE, placing the College as fifth most in the State. The Linking Industry to Nursing Education (LINE) provides matching funds to match financial contributions provided by local healthcare providers, such as the College's hospital partners. Valencia received a match from the State of \$732,000, which is 5.3% of the \$13.8 million allocated to all institutions in Florida, placing the College as the sixth highest amount in the State.

Dr. Plinske described a recent procedural update related to College Policy 6Hx28: 5-02 – Speech, Expression, and Commercial Activity on College Property, which was distributed to the Board. Dr. Plinske indicated that the College performs procedural updates as needed, which do not require formal Board approval. Dr. Plinske stated that this procedural update clarifies already existing language and provides specific examples of conduct that would already be prohibited.

Dr. Plinske reported that, at the June 20, 2024 Regular Board meeting, the College had an update on the inspection for State requirements for educational facilities, where some items could not be immediately resolved. Dr. Plinske announced that, as of September 4, 2024, the work has been completed, and the items at issue have been cleared.

**Faculty Association Report**

Mr. Chris Borglum, President, Faculty Association, presented a summary of the College's faculty workload redesign project for 2024-2025.

**Student Government Association Report**

Mr. Ahmed Salam, SGA Vice President, and Mr. Shemar Hamid, Downtown Campus Senator, presented the report, which was distributed to the Board. The report included an introduction of the 2024-25 SGA Executive Board, SGA Senators, and the SGA Academic Year Goals.

**Public Comments**

No public comments were offered.

**New Business**

**1. Union Status Update and Part-Time Faculty/Instructor Salary Rate Adjustment:** Dr. Plinske presented the report, which was distributed to the Board. Dr. Plinske reminded the Board that in January 2023, it approved the first collective bargaining agreement (CBA) between Valencia College and the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Florida Public Services Union which recognized SEIU as the exclusive collective bargaining representative for Valencia's part-time teaching faculty and part-time instructors. This CBA expired in January 2024, and no second agreement was ever reached. On April 23, 2024, as required by state law, SEIU filed an application to renew its registration with the Florida Public Employees Relations Commission (PERC) and the information provided to PERC by SEIU reflected that of the 1,449 Valencia employees eligible for representation, only 19 employees (1.3%) actually paid dues - well below the 60% (for Valencia, 870 employees) required by law. Ultimately, PERC revoked SEIU's certification to be recognized as the exclusive collective bargaining representative for Valencia's part-time teaching faculty and part-time instructors. Accordingly, SEIU no longer represents our part-time faculty and part-time instructors, and the College can now engage with part-time faculty and instructors in the same way as all other college employees.

Following a full discussion, Trustee Martinez moved to approve the provision of a 2.25% salary rate increase for part-time teaching faculty and part-time instructors, effective Fall 2024, in alignment with the Board-approved standard salary rate increase already provided to other Valencia College employees. Trustee Stockwell seconded the motion, and the motion was approved unanimously.

Trustee Davis commended Valencia's team for their work.

2. **Carryforward Spending Plan for 2023-24 Fund Balance:** Mr. Cristancho Mercado, Chief Financial Officer, presented the report, which was distributed to the Board. Mr. Cristancho Mercado shared that, in accordance with Florida law, each Florida College System institution with a final FTE (Full Time Equivalent) enrollment of 15,000 or greater that retains an operating fund balance exceeding seven percent shall submit to the State Board of Education a spending plan for its excess carry forward balance. Currently, Valencia College maintains \$62,857,065 in operating carry forward funds.

Following a full discussion, Trustee Stockwell moved to approve the carryforward spending plan for the 2023-24 Fund Balance, as presented. Trustee Martinez seconded the motion, and the motion was approved unanimously.

The Board thanked Mr. Cristancho Mercado, and his team, for their work.

3. **Authorization to Seek Regional Accreditation from a New Accrediting Agency: Higher Learning Commission:** Dr. Plinske presented the report, which was distributed to the Board. Dr. Plinske stated that to ensure that Valencia College students are eligible to receive federal student aid from the U.S. Department of Education (USDOE) for postsecondary study, Valencia must be accredited by a nationally recognized accrediting agency. Since its beginning years, Valencia College has been accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC). The SACSCOC has traditionally served as the body for the accreditation of degree-granting higher education institutions in the Southern states. In 2020, the U.S. Department of Education (USDOE) revised federal regulations to remove geographical boundaries and restrictions on institutions seeking accreditation.

Recently enacted state law prohibits Florida's public postsecondary education institutions from being accredited by the same accrediting agency or association for consecutive accreditation cycles. Valencia's SACSCOC institutional accreditation was reaffirmed this past year. The law requires in the year following reaffirmation to the College to identify

accrediting agencies or associations that are recognized by the database created and maintained by the USDOE and are identified by the State Board of Education from which to seek accreditation and seek and obtain accreditation before their next reaffirmation date.

These changes and the College's recent reaffirmation provide a valuable opportunity for Valencia College to explore the benefits of membership with other regional accrediting agencies recognized by the United States Department of Education (USDOE). Following a detailed review of the 38 USDOE recognized agencies, the State Board of Education has recommended that FCS institutions seek institutional accreditation from one of the following:

- Higher Learning Commission (HLC)
- Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE)
- Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU)

Following a full discussion, Trustee Martinez moved to authorize the College to seek accreditation from a new accrediting agency in compliance with the law and to approve the selection of the Higher Learning Commission as Valencia College's next accrediting agency. Trustee Kirkegard seconded the motion, and the motion was approved unanimously.

### **Consent Agenda**

A motion was made by Trustee Hindle and seconded by Trustee Stockwell to consider, accept, and approve items 4, and 5 under New Business in the manner of a consent agenda. The Board unanimously approved the following items under New Business in the consent agenda, as recommended:

#### **4. Policy Adoptions and Repeal**

- *Amend Policy 6Hx28: 3D-02 – Leaves of Absence*
- *Amend Policy 6Hx28: 3D-10 – Military Leave*
- *Amend Policy 6Hx28: 7A-02 – Acceptable Use of Information Technology Resources*
- *Repeal Policy 6Hx28: 7A-01 – Information Technology Resources Policies*

#### **5. Property Deletion**

### **Reports**

- A. Fall Enrollment Report:** Dr. Frederick presented the report, which was distributed to the Board. Dr. Frederick shared that at present, unduplicated student headcount for Fall 2024 is 49,204 - representing the highest Fall enrollment in the history of the College. Her report included

an overview of enrollment by student type, modality, ethnicity, and Pell eligibility.

Dr. Frederick thanked all who contributed to this historic enrollment success.,

Dr. Frederick also recognized the Board for the business process review and redesign work which they commissioned in October 2021, and provided special thanks to Valencia's Financial Aid team, for their tireless work during the US Department of Education rollout of the new Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) Simplification Act.

- B. Financial Report:** Mr. Cristancho Mercado presented the report, which was distributed to the Board. The report included a summary of the College's current financials, and the Annual Financial Report for the Fiscal Year from July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024.

Mr. Cristancho Mercado thanked the Financial Planning and Analysis, and the Accounting teams for their great work.

- C. Valencia College Foundation Report:** Ms. Carlee Thomas, Chief Philanthropy Officer, and Executive Director, the Valencia College Foundation, presented the report, which was distributed to the Board. The report included a summary of the Fiscal Year 2024-25 fundraising attainment, Fiscal Year 2024-25 scholarship awards, and an overview of the Valencia College Foundation Case for Support, which outlines key fundraising priorities based on the College's Strategic Impact Plan.

Ms. Thomas shared that the Valencia College Foundation's Red, Black and Boundless Gala will be held on Saturday, September 14, 2024, at Epcot's World ShowPlace Pavilion.

## **Strategic Discussion**

Dr. Plinske shared an overview of the 2030 Strategic Impact Plan goal focused on Career Credentials, which was distributed to the Board. Following her presentation, the Board engaged in a full discussion.

Dr. Plinske stated that Valencia continues to engage with the Aspen Institute on Unlocking Opportunity, to expand pathways to high value programs.

## **Board Comments**

Trustee Stockwell commended the College's faculty and staff for a successful start of the Fall semester and thanked the Financial Aid and Office of Information Technology, for their work involved in the FAFSA Simplification Act.

The Board thanked Valencia's leadership, faculty, and staff, for their work.

**Adjourn**

Chair Sasso adjourned the Regular Meeting at 11:30 a.m.

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Secretary

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Chair