



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

Minutes

October 16, 2025

Valencia College – Osceola Campus
Building 1, Room 123
and
Zoom Meeting

Members Present

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

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

Members Absent

Trustee John Martinez

Call to Order

Chair Sasso called the Regular Meeting of the District Board of Trustees of Valencia College to order at 9:32 a.m. A quorum was present.

**Approval of Minutes,
September 11, 2025,
Regular Meeting**

Trustee Kirkegard moved to approve the meeting minutes of the September 11, 2025, Regular Meeting, as presented. Trustee Stockwell seconded the motion, and the motion was approved unanimously.

President's Report

Dr. Plinske recognized Osceola County Commissioners Peggy Choudhry, Brandon Arrington, Cheryl Grieb, Viviana Janer, and Ricky Booth, and thanked them for their unwavering belief and prudent investment in

Valencia's students, in celebration of the success of the Osceola Prosper program. Dr. Plinske shared that nearly 5,000 students are enrolled in the Osceola Prosper program this Fall, and currently more than one in ten Valencia students in an Osceola Prosper student. Dr. Plinske reported that more than 10,000 students have participated in the Osceola Prosper program since Fall 2022. Since that time, the Osceola Prosper program has produced more than 1,100 associate degree completers, more than 800 students completing a technical certificate, and more than 900 completing a trades program in Valencia's Accelerated Skills Training (AST) and the Osceola Technical College Program (OTech). Dr. Plinske celebrated that Osceola County's college-going rate has moved from 61st to 3rd in the state.

Dr. Plinske thanked the Osceola County Commissioners on behalf of Valencia's students, and shared that the College will recognize them with an honorary degree from Valencia College at its Commencement Ceremony, to be held on Wednesday, December 10, 2025, at the UCF Addition Financial Arena.

Dr. Plinske discussed her recent trip to Tallahassee where she, Dr. Georgia Lorenz, and Mr. Fred Hawkins, (Chair and Vice Chair of the Association of Florida Colleges (AFC) Council of Presidents (COP), respectively) met to advocate for the Florida College System with Senate President Allbritton, Senate President Designate Boyd, Senator Hooper, Chair of Appropriations, Senator Bradley, Vice Chair of Higher Education Appropriations, Speaker Designate Garrison, and Representative Canady, Chair of the Education and Employment Committee. Dr. Plinske stated that she also had the opportunity to attend the House Careers and Workforce Subcommittees, where Mr. Alex Kelly, Florida's Secretary of Commerce, specifically praised Valencia College.

The Board thanked the Osceola County Commissioners for their support and efforts on behalf of Valencia students.

Dr. Plinske discussed her visit to the Florida Department of Education on Oct 13-15, 2025, where she met with Chancellor Kathy Hebda, Executive Vice Chancellor José Arévalo, the Executive Director of the Office of Articulation Shannon Mercer, and the Vice Chancellor for the State University System (SUS) Emily Sikes. Dr. Plinske was joined by Dr. Brandon McKelvey, Executive Vice President, Administrative Services, Dr. Roberta Carew, Vice President, Academic Affairs and Institutional Effectiveness and Planning, Dr. Carla McKnight, Vice President, Institutional Advancement and Chief of Staff, Dr. Wendy Givoglu, Provost, General Education, and Dr. Yolanda Brown, Provost, Workforce Education, and the College's Assistant Vice Presidents of Academic Affairs. Questions that Valencia had about the content and scope of newly adopted statutes and rules related to general education were discussed, as well as about matters regarding the statewide

articulation agreement and transfer, the statewide course numbering system, and the adoption of instructional materials.

Dr. Plinske reported that, led by an initiative of the Florida Talent Center, Valencia partnered with the Florida Chamber of Commerce to host a Data Hub Roundtable on October 15, 2025. The College gathered with leaders from 30 employers in a variety of industries throughout Central Florida to engage in an interactive session that explored the workforce and talent insights available through the new Florida Talent Center Data Hub and identify opportunities to strengthen our region's talent pipeline.

Dr. Plinske stated that she and others from Valencia attended the State University System's Annual Safety Summit, which took place at the UCF Fairwinds Alumni Center, on Wednesday, October 8, 2025.

Dr. Plinske reported that, on September 26, 2025, the College held a Faculty Forum titled "The Intersection of Policy and Teaching and Learning" open to all full-time faculty. New and updated laws and rules related to general education and the selection of textbooks for courses were discussed. Dr. Carew and her team are planning similar events for faculty and will continue the work to improve teaching and learning, and ensure compliance with state law throughout the year.

Dr. Plinske stated that the College hosted Florida Attorney General James Uthmeier and Florida Department of Education Commissioner Anastasios Kamoutsas on the West Campus for a press conference focused on the importance of addressing violent extremism on college campuses. Dr. Plinske thanked Chair Sasso and Vice Chair Davis for their participation and comments offered during this event.

Dr. Plinske reported that, on September 24, 2025, she was invited to attend the State Board of Education meeting held in Niceville to present Valencia's proposal for the first ever Specialized Associate in Arts Transfer (SAAT) degrees to be offered in the state of Florida. The State Board unanimously approved Valencia's new SAAT's in civil, electrical, and mechanical engineering, biology, and health sciences. Dr. Plinske stated that these new degrees will allow students to complete all their required program prerequisites prior to transfer to UCF, will extend financial aid opportunities for some students, and will also guarantee that they transfer with junior status into their major.

Faculty Association Report

Ms. Nissa Hopkins, President, Faculty Association, Hopkins provided an update on the College's collaborative project related to faculty observations and evaluations.

Student Government

Ms. Annese Williams, SGA President, presented the report, which was

Association Report

distributed to the Board. The report included a recap of the SGA's recent events, upcoming initiatives, and upcoming events.

Public Comments

No public comments were offered.

New Business

- 1. Orange County Public Schools (OCPS) School District of Osceola County (SDOC) Memoranda of Understanding:** Dr. Plinske and Dr. McKelvey presented the report, which was distributed to the Board. Dr. Plinske stated that Valencia College has established collaborative partnerships with both of its service area school districts, OCPS and SDOC, to increase the college readiness and assist with the transition to college for high school graduates in Orange and Osceola counties. Historically, these partnerships have supported thousands of students with everything from enrolling in dual enrollment courses to completing the FAFSA and Valencia application, and have provided support to the Valencia Outreach and Recruitment team in facilitating events both in high schools and at Valencia campuses. Sample outcomes for these programs include remarkable gains in the college-going rates: from 41.3% (among the lowest in the state) in 2011 to 62.9% in 2023 in SDOC, as well as a 130% increase of student participation in Valencia dual enrollment over the last decade across both school districts. In support of these ongoing efforts, Valencia seeks to renew the Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) to continue to supplement and enhance the effectiveness of the Dual Enrollment Articulation Agreement (Articulation Agreement), as entered into between the College and the school districts.

A full discussion ensued.

Following the full discussion, Trustee Stockwell moved to authorize the College to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with each school district in the College's two county service areas, Orange County Public Schools and School District of Osceola County, in support of Valencia College access goals and to improve high school graduation, college readiness, and successful college enrollment for students, and to further authorize the expenditure of up to \$618,026 in support of the College Transition personnel and programs at the high schools, as presented. Trustee Kirkegard seconded the motion, and the motion was approved unanimously.

Vice Chair Davis commended Valencia's team for their good work in this regard.

- 2. Award of RFQ 2026-10, Construction Manager, Nursing Simulation Lab:** Mr. Cristancho Mercado, Chief Financial Officer, presented the report, which was distributed to the Board. Mr. Cristancho Mercado shared that, on August 8, 2025, the College issued Request for

qualifications (RFQ) 2026-10, Construction Manager, Nursing Simulation Lab. The solicitation sought a qualified contractor to provide construction management services for a new high-fidelity nursing simulation lab in the Health Sciences Building (HSB) at the West Campus. The renovated 16,000 SF (approx.) facility will include a ten-bed simulation classroom, a lecture classroom, ICU simulation rooms, control rooms, immersive learning rooms, and administrative spaces (offices, conference/briefing rooms). Proposals received in response to the RFQ were opened on September 5, 2025.

A full discussion ensued.

Following a full discussion, Trustee Stockwell moved to approve the evaluation committee's ranking and simultaneously authorize commencement of negotiations with the top ranked firm, DPR Construction. Should the College not be able to negotiate a satisfactory contract with DPR Construction, then negotiations will commence with the next highest ranked firm, and if necessary, proceed through the ranked firms in order until a fair, competitive and reasonable agreement is reached. Trustee Bradley seconded the motion, and the motion was approved unanimously.

3. **Valencia College Foundation Annual Audit Review/Affirmation of Certification of Valencia Foundation:** Mr. Cristancho Mercado presented the report, which was distributed to the Board. Following a full discussion, Trustee Stockwell moved to accept the Valencia College Foundation's Internal Revenue Service Application for Recognition of Exemption (Form 1023), Internal Revenue Service Return of Organization Exempt (Form 990), and the Audit report as presented, reviewed, and discussed. Trustee Stockwell then moved that the District Board of Trustees affirm its previous certification that the Valencia College Foundation continues to operate in a manner consistent with the goals of Valencia College and in the best interest of the state. Trustee Kirkegard seconded the motion, and the motion was approved unanimously.

Consent Agenda

A motion was made by Trustee Stockwell and seconded by Vice Chair Davis to consider, accept, and approve items 4, 5, and 6 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. **Purchase Authorization for LINE Fund Grant, Laerdal Medical Corporation**
5. **Policy Amendments, and Repeal**

- *Amend Policy 6Hx28: 3A-08 – Unpaid Internships and Volunteers*
- *Amend Policy 6Hx28: 3C-07 – Employee Development and Dependent Tuition*
- *Amend Policy 6Hx28: 4-06 – Award of Credit*
- *Repeal Policy 6Hx28: 3A-09 – Volunteers*

6. Property Deletion

Reports

Dr. Plinske stated that the following report items are detailed in the written materials, which have been distributed to the Board:

A. Financial Report

B. Valencia College Foundation Report

Dr. Plinske announced that Ms. Carlee Thomas, Chief Philanthropy Officer and Executive Director, Valencia College Foundation, has accepted a new position at FSU. Dr. Plinske thanked Ms. Thomas for her service to the College.

Strategic Discussion

Dr. Plinske presented the report, which was distributed to the Board. The report included an overview of the College's Access Goals, and Feedback on Policy Revisions.

Following her presentation, the Board engaged in a full discussion.

Board Comments

No Board comments were offered.

Adjourn

Chair Sasso adjourned the Regular Meeting at 11:32 a.m.

Secretary

Chair