



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

Minutes

February 5, 2026

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

Members Present

Trustee Michael Sasso, Chair
Trustee John Davis, Vice Chair (via Zoom)
Trustee Blair Bradley
Trustee Shawn Hindle
Trustee Belinda Kirkegard
Trustee Sean Milligan
Trustee Tracey Stockwell

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

Members Absent

Trustee Rick Pullum
Trustee Dan Sherfield

Call to Order

Chair Sasso called the Regular Meeting of the District Board of Trustees of Valencia College to order at 9:30 a.m. A quorum was present.

**Approval of Minutes,
December 4, 2025,
Regular Meeting**

Trustee Kirkegard moved to approve the meeting minutes of the December 4, 2025, Regular Meeting, as presented. Trustee Stockwell seconded the motion, and the motion was approved unanimously.

Chair Sasso introduced and welcomed Mr. Sean Milligan, newly appointed to serve on the District Board of Trustees.

Appointment of Trustee Representative to the Board of Directors of the Valencia College Foundation

Chair Sasso noted a vacancy in the position of Trustee Representative to the Board of Directors of the Valencia College Foundation following Trustee Martinez's departure. In accordance with Florida law, the Chair is required to appoint a trustee to serve on an interim basis until the Board's next Organizational Meeting.

Following a discussion, Trustee Hindle volunteered to serve as Interim Trustee Representative. The Board unanimously accepted Trustee Hindle's appointment through the next Organizational Meeting, scheduled for August 6, 2026.

President's Report

Dr. Plinske highlighted the College's partnership with Lift Orlando to replicate the Osceola Prosper scholarship program for students at Evans and Jones High Schools, resulting in an 86% increase in enrollment from those two high schools.

This year, Lift Orlando expanded the scholarship program to include every student, not just seniors, at Jones High School, with the announcement made on January 7, 2026, and receiving It was covered by local media coverage as well as on news stations in Tennessee, North Dakota, Utah, Texas, and the national NBC Nightly News.

Dr. Plinske recognized Mr. Eddy Moratin, Co-Founder and President of Lift Orlando, for his leadership and partnership.

Dr. Plinske also reported on recent legislative meetings in Tallahassee with members of the Florida Legislature, higher education budget committees, and the Governor's Office for Policy and Budget.

Dr. Plinske reported on proposed Senate and House Bills, as follows:

- **SB7038 – Committee Bill for Higher Education:** reflects language to codify the funding formula, including specifying a requirement that the formula which the legislature uses for the allocation of funds to Florida College System (FCS) institutions, include a minimum level of funding per Full-Time Enrollment (FTE) for every college. The bill passed unanimously on February 4, 2026, by the Education Postsecondary committee, and was submitted and reported favorably as a committee bill.
- **SB1246 – Health Science Workforce Shortages, and HB1325 – Linking Industry to Nursing Education Fund:** requests expansion of allowable use of funds for renovation and remodeling projects,

which would allow the College to secure philanthropic gifts from local hospital partners and have them matched by state funds to support the construction of a nursing simulation lab. It may also allow the funds to be used to support a limited number of allied health programs in high demand, in addition to nursing.

Dr. Plinske indicated that SB1246 was passed unanimously on Feb 4, 2026, by the Appropriations Committee on Higher Education, and HB1325 was passed unanimously by the Careers and Workforce Committee.

Dr. Plinske shared that, as the United States celebrates its semi-quincentennial anniversary, the state of Florida is celebrating throughout the year, and Valencia is leading the way in terms of creating educational opportunities for its students and community to celebrate and learn more about the founding of the nation.

Faculty Association Report

Ms. Nissa Hopkins, President, Faculty Association, Hopkins reported on the College’s faculty current initiatives since the start of Spring 2026, including the overview of faculty policy amendments, and teaching projects.

Student Government Association Report

Ms. Annese Williams, SGA President, presented the report, which was distributed to the Board. The report included a recap of the SGA’s recent events, including Weeks of Welcome and Resource Fair, Constitution Voting and SGA Applications, Spring Food Drive – VCentials, FCSSGA February Advocacy Conference in Tallahassee, and upcoming events.

Public Comments

No public comments were offered.

New Business

- 1. Affordability Report:** Dr. Plinske presented the report, which was distributed to the Board. The report included a draft Board Resolution detailing several notable accomplishments and achievements realized by the College for the benefit of our students in maintaining a focus on affordability issues and affirming the Board’s commitment to College Policy 6Hx28: 1-12 – Educational Affordability.

Following a discussion, Trustee Stockwell moved to accept the Affordability Report and approve the Educational Affordability Resolution, as presented. Trustee Kirkegard seconded the motion, and the motion was approved unanimously.

- 2. 2026-2027 Operating Budget Framework:** Mr. Oscar Cristancho Mercado presented the report, which was distributed to the Board. Mr. Cristancho Mercado stated that, consistent with Valencia’s established multi-year financial model and approval process, the 2026-2027 Valencia College budget framework is presented to the District Board of Trustees

for preliminary review and approval. The final 2026-2027 College budget will be presented to the District Board of Trustees for consideration and formal approval at the June 11, 2026, Regular Meeting.

Following a discussion, Trustee Stockwell moved to approve the 2026–2027 Operating Budget Framework as a preliminary step toward the formal adoption of the final 2026-2027 operating budget, which is scheduled to be presented for consideration and approval at the Board’s June 11, 2026, Regular Meeting. Trustee Bradley seconded the motion, and the motion was approved unanimously.

- 3. 2026-2027 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) Framework:** Mr. Cristancho Mercado presented the report, which was distributed to the Board. Mr. Cristancho Mercado reported that the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) is developed to identify, document, and justify legislative funding requests for the major categories of capital projects, remodeling, renovation, deferred maintenance, and new construction. The final Capital Improvement Plan will be presented for formal approval to the District Board of Trustees at its June 11, 2026, Regular Meeting.

Following a discussion, Trustee Bradley moved to approve the Capital Improvement Plan Framework for the Fiscal Year 2026-2027, as presented. The formal approval of the Capital Improvement Plan is scheduled to be recommended at the District Board of Trustees Regular Meeting on June 11, 2026. Trustee Kirkegard seconded the motion, and the motion was approved unanimously.

- 4. Transfer of Funds from Fund 1 to Fund 7 for Capital Related Projects:** Mr. Cristancho Mercado presented the report, which was distributed to the Board. The College recommends the transfer of non-recurring funds from the Operating Fund (Fund 1) into the Capital Outlay Fund (Fund 7) related to the following projects included in the previously approved Carryforward Fund Balance Spending Plan:

- Renovation of Laboratory Spaces - \$2,744,382: These funds will enable the College to upgrade laboratory classrooms and expand capacity where appropriate, thereby enhancing both the learning environment and student access. The College anticipates project completion by June 30, 2027.

The project described above is included in the attached Budget Amendment Request form, which must be submitted to the Florida Department of Education for the Chancellor’s review following Board approval. The transfer of these funds from Fund 1 into Fund 7 will allow the college to track these capital projects over multiple fiscal years to ensure funds are spent as approved.

Following a discussion, Trustee Stockwell moved to approve the Budget Amendment Request form and the funds transfer of \$2,744,382 from Operating Funds (Fund 1) to the Capital Outlay Fund (Fund 7). Trustee Kirkegard seconded the motion, and the motion was approved unanimously.

Consent Agenda

A motion was made by Trustee Stockwell and seconded by Trustee Kirkegard to consider, accept, and approve items 5, 6, and 7 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:

5. Policy Amendments

- *Amend Policy 6Hx28: 3C-01.2 – Faculty Workload*
- *Amend Policy 6Hx28: 4-04 – Student Learning Outcomes and Course Outlines*
- *Amend Policy 6Hx28: 4-05 – Course Syllabus*
- *Amend Policy 6Hx28: 4-09 – Instructional Materials*

6. Additions, Deletions or Modifications of Courses and Programs

7. Property Deletion

Reports

- A. Spring Enrollment Report:** Dr. Lesley Frederick presented the report, which was distributed to the Board. Dr. Frederick stated that 20 days after semester start, unduplicated headcount for Spring 2026 is 49,341, representing Valencia's highest ever Spring enrollment. The total number of students enrolled at Valencia increased 4.3% from Spring 2025 to Spring 2026, and full-time equivalent (FTE) enrollment increased 2.8%. The report included a summary of enrollment by student and degree type, and enrollment by instructional modality.

Dr. Frederick thanked the Student Affairs, OIT, and Academic Affairs teams, for their work.

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

B. Audit Update Report

C. Financial Report

D. Valencia College Foundation Report

Board Comments

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

Adjourn

Chair Sasso adjourned the Regular Meeting at 10:48 a.m.

Secretary

Chair