



August 15, 2025, Board of Regents Meeting Minutes

8/15/2025 10:30 AM CDT @ Eastern Oklahoma State College Board of Regents
Conference Room, Second Floor of the Bill H. Hill Library Building, 1301 W.
Main Street, Wilburton, Oklahoma 74578

Members Present:

Latt Jeffrey, Chair
Jerry Hamilton, Vice-Chair
Larry Spradley, Secretary
Cara Bland, Member
Leland Walker, Member

Absent:

Eric Bilderback, Member
Brian Lott, Member

Staff:

Dr. Randy Harp, President
Helen Scott, Executive Administrative Assistant to the President & Secretary to the Board
Dr. Anna Peery, VP of Student Affairs
John Spradling, VP of Academic Affairs
Trisha White, VP of Business Affairs
Anne Brooks, Dean of the McAlester Campus/Assistant VP of Academic Affairs
Andrea Smallwood, Faculty Council President
George Larson, Chief Data Officer
Gina Bullock, Director of Nursing
Rene' McCracken, Dean of Agricultural Sciences

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Regent Jeffrey at 10:30 a.m.

II. ROLL CALL/DECLARATION OF QUORUM

Mrs. Scott conducted the roll call. A quorum was confirmed with Regents Bland, Hamilton, Jeffrey, Spradley, and Walker present.

III. INTRODUCTIONS OF GUESTS

Dr. Harp introduced new members of the Eastern family. Dr. Anna Peery was welcomed as the Vice President for Student Affairs, Ms. Renee McCracken as the new Dean of Agriculture, Mr. John Spradling as Vice President for Academic Affairs, and Mrs. Andrea Smallwood as the new Faculty Council Chair. Mrs. Helen Scott was introduced as the

new Executive Administrative Assistant to the President and Secretary to the Board of Regents. Ms. Gina Bullock and Ms. Ann Brooks were acknowledged for their ongoing contributions to Eastern. Mr. George Larson was mentioned as a presenter scheduled later in the meeting.

IV. ACTION

A. Board Minutes

1. Minutes from July 14, 2025 Special Meeting

Motion: Regent Bland moved to approve the minutes as written, seconded by Regent Hamilton.

Vote: Ayes: Regent Bland, Regent Hamilton, Regent Jeffrey, Regent Spradley, Regent Walker; Noes: None; Abstentions: None; Absent: Regent Bilderback and Brian Lott. The motion passed unanimously.

B. Finance Committee Report

1. Payroll & Misc Claims

Ms. Trisha White, chair of the Finance Committee, presented the committee report. The Finance Committee met on August 8th to review payroll and claims for June and July. Questions previously emailed were addressed during the meeting, and the detailed minutes were included for review. Board members expressed appreciation for the expanded narrative in the minutes.

Motion: A motion to approve the payroll and claims for June 2025 and July 2025 was made by Regent Spradley and seconded by Regent Hamilton.

Vote: Ayes: Regent Bland, Regent Hamilton, Regent Jeffrey, Regent Spradley, Regent Walker; Noes: None; No Abstentions; and Absent: Regent Bilderback and Brian Lott. The motion passed unanimously.

C. Legal & Compliance Committee Report

1. Policy Review

Regent Bland reported on behalf of the Legal Compliance Committee. Regent Lott, the chair of the committee, was unable to attend. The committee reviewed policy updates, including the library policy, athletic handbook, and financial aid policy. Minor wording changes were noted, with the student handbook containing the disciplinary procedures referenced in the athletic

handbook. These policies were recommended for approval followed by discussion and clarification about policy references.

Motion: Regent Bland moved to approve the library policy, athletic handbook, and financial aid policy, seconded by Regent Spradley.

Vote: Ayes: Regents Bland, Regent Hamilton, Regent Jeffrey, and Regent Spradley; Noes: Regent Walker; No Abstentions; and Absent: Regent Bilderback and Brian Lott. The motion passed.

D. External Affairs Committee Report

The External Affairs Committee, chaired by Latt Jeffrey, began with a discussion of the Regents Impact Award, recognizing individuals who contribute significantly to the institution. The committee decided to open nominations to the entire Board, with submissions directed to Mrs. Scott or the committee chair.

Dr. Harp presented on ongoing external affairs initiatives. He detailed a meeting with a county commissioner. Efforts with the Choctaw Nation were highlighted, including Camp Chata activities, new Native American Studies programming, and outreach to the other four of the five civilized tribes in Oklahoma. Higher Learning Commission confirmation of the certificate program was reported. Marketing materials and flyers had been distributed to McCurtain County superintendents to promote enrollment.

Discussion ensued regarding support for Native American students in the nursing program, specifically a scholarship from the Chief of the Choctaw Nation, and the LPN to RN program enrollment. Board members emphasized the importance of recruitment efforts, marketing alignment, and collaboration with new administrative staff, including Dr. Peery.

Dr. Harp also reported on partnerships with Southeastern campuses, including visits with the Interim President and Assistant Vice President for Academic Affairs. Plans to strengthen presence in southeast Oklahoma and western Arkansas were discussed. Concurrent enrollment fee adjustments were being considered to remain competitive with other institutions.

September 8, Dr. Harp will meet with Shelley Free of Kiamichi Technology Center. Dr. Harp explained during the External Affairs Committee meeting Jacob Sitton provided an update on marketing initiatives and advertising. He further stated Ms. Stephnie Giacomo provided an update on grants and the Brownfield Grant Conference.

Discussions included partnerships with local high schools and the Choctaw Nation to expand concurrent enrollment opportunities, particularly in Choctaw Language I. Limitations exist due to concurrent enrollment eligibility (only juniors and seniors) and fee disparities between tribal and non-tribal students. The board was informed that efforts are underway to reduce fees to align with other institutions and ensure equitable access.

The President highlighted the importance of maintaining the institution's autonomy in its geographical region and the need to address potential competition from larger universities offering concurrent courses in the same area. Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) were suggested to protect local offerings while allowing external institutions to teach programs not offered locally.

V. GENERAL INFORMATION/REPORTS REQUIRING NO ACTION BY THE BOARD

A. President's Report-Dr. Randy Harp

Dr. Harp provided a copy of the new Organizational Chart to the Board Members. Dr. Harp noted that he has made changes to some of the committees. The Executive Council includes the President, Vice Presidents, the Assistant Vice President and the new Chief of Staff. The Leadership Team includes academic deans, directors, and faculty/staff chairs and they will have monthly meetings. John Spradling, Vice President of Academic Affairs, will lead the Deans Council, consisting of academic deans and the faculty council chair. The Deans Council will focus on academic matters.

Certain direct reports were reassigned from the President to Vice Presidents to improve operational efficiency, including Athletics reporting to the VP of Student Affairs.

A new Chief of Staff/Legislative Liaison role was introduced. This position serves as the President's representative at external events, legislative meetings, and community functions. The Chief of Staff does not hold supervisory authority over staff but interacts with them through council meetings.

Since August of the previous year, the institution has welcomed approximately 35–40 new hires. Dr. Harp provided a list of all of the new employees hired since August 2024. The board was informed that opportunities will be provided to meet new employees during future meetings.

The Fall Faculty Forum and assessment meetings were recently held. Dr. Chris LaFata of the Northwest Arkansas Community College spoke to faculty and some staff about Artificial Intelligence (AI).

Dr. Harp provided an enrollment update. The Eastern enrollment is up 4.14% and due to late enrollment, he hopes this number will continue to increase. Two hundred forty-seven students have registered to live in the residence housing. The external Goddard area renovations are continuing, and we will work on the internal renovations at a later time.

The soccer team moved into the dorms the first weekend of August. The President's Leadership Class (PLC) will continue again this year and will have their first meeting on Monday, August 18, at Boonies. London White and other clubs and organizations have planned activities for the first weekend and week of the semester.

Regent Jeffrey asked if there was an update regarding the GEAR UP grant. Dr. Harp stated we do not expect to hear anything regarding GEAR UP until the end of September. Ms. White stated if a GEAR UP grant is received, it will start on October 1.

The TRIO Student Support Services received a five-year extension of the grant. We are currently seeking to fill the positions of TRIO Director and Advisor.

Trisha White is working to secure another 15-passenger van to accommodate the athletic and student group travel.

Dr. Harp asked George Larson to discuss computer security. Mr. Larson stated due to cyber security threats, he is requesting a policy that will restrict the use of stick drives on Eastern's campus. There is no current issue, this is to thwart any possible threats. Ms. White stated she would add that to the policies she will prepare for the next Board meeting. A time for staff and faculty to adjust to the new policy will be provided.

B. Chairperson and Regent's Report

Regent Jeffrey stated we are working on projects across the highway from the main campus. These projects begin at the Goddard Building and move east to the duplex housing with new fencing. Old fencing is being sand blasted to prepare it for new paint. The repair of the rock wall at the front of campus has begun. A suggestion was made to purchase some signs or banners to bring recognition to partners that have been very supportive of Eastern.

He stated we have had new hires, and this is the second meeting for him to Chair and the first meeting for Ms. Scott. Regent Jeffrey expressed his appreciation for everyone's patience during this transition. There is excitement with the start of the college fall semester, the enrollment numbers look good. Campus

improvements, student life, and community partnerships are big objectives we want to improve upon.

VI. Dates to Remember

- A. Next Board Meeting
 - September 19, 2025
- B. Committee Meetings

The next committee meeting is **Friday, September 12, 2025**.
Finance-9:00 am via ZOOM.
Student Affairs-10:00 am via Zoom
Academic Affairs-11:00 am via Zoom

VII. ADJOURNMENT

Motion:

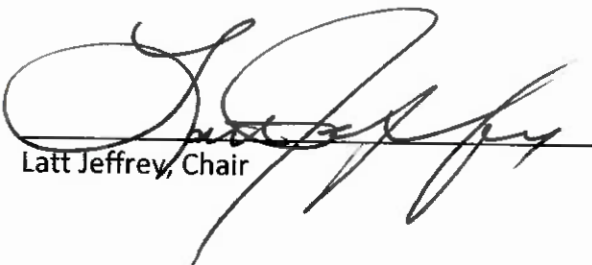
Regent Spradley moved to adjourn the meeting and Regent Hamilton seconded the motion.

The motion was approved by roll call vote with Regents Jeffrey, Spradley, Bland, Hamilton, and Walker voting in favor. Noes: None; No Abstentions; and Absent: Regent Bilderback and Brian Lott. The motion passed unanimously.

Lunch was provided in the Ballroom following the meeting. No official business was conducted during this time.

CERTIFICATE

I, Larry Spradley, the duly appointed Secretary of the Board of Regents for Eastern Oklahoma State College, do hereby certify that the above and foregoing are true and correct copies of the minutes of this Board at a Regular Scheduled Meeting hereof, truly, and lawfully held on August 15, 2025.



Latt Jeffrey, Chair



Larry Spradley, Secretary