

COLLEGE OF THE SEQUOIAS COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT  
Board of Trustees Meeting  
May 12, 2025

**CONSENT CALENDAR**

**5**

Minutes of Previous Meetings

**Status:**

**Action**

Presented by:

Brent Calvin, Ed.D.  
Superintendent/President

**Issue**

Minutes of the COS Board of Trustees meetings are being presented for approval.

- April 21, 2025 – Regular Meeting

**Recommended Action**

Approval of the Board of Trustees minutes is recommended.

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
OF THE  
COLLEGE OF THE SEQUIOIAS COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT**

**Monday, April 21, 2025**

**4:30 pm** – Closed Session

**5:00 pm** – Regular Session

**Location**

College of the Sequoias, Visalia Campus  
Board Room  
915 S. Mooney Blvd.  
Visalia, CA 93277

**Board of Trustees**

Greg Sherman, Kenneth Nunes, Raymond Macareno, Connie Diaz, John Lehn,  
Brent Calvin, Superintendent/President; Toby Shirk, Student Trustee

**MINUTES**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Connie Diaz, John Lehn, Raymond Macareno, Ken Nunes, Greg Sherman,  
Toby Shirk

**SENIOR MANAGEMENT PRESENT:** Brent Calvin, Jennifer La Serna, John Bratsch, Kristin Robinson, Dali  
Öztürk

**CLOSED SESSION**

**I CALL TO ORDER**

President Macareno called the meeting to order at 4:30 PM.

**II PUBLIC COMMENT**

- Public Comments Concerning Items **On** the Closed Session Agenda – None.

**1. CONFERENCE WITH LEGAL COUNSEL – ANTICIPATED LITIGATION**

- Initiation of litigation pursuant to Section 54956.9(d)(4): one case.

**2. CONFERENCE WITH LABOR NEGOTIATOR (GC §54957.6)**

- Agency designated representative: Brent Calvin  
Employee Organization: College of the Sequoias Adjunct Faculty Association (COSAFA)
- Agency designated representative: Brent Calvin  
Employee Organization: California School Employees Association (CSEA), Chapter 408
- Agency designated representative: Brent Calvin  
Employee Organization: College of the Sequoias Teachers Association (COSTA)

**OPEN SESSION**

**IV CALL TO ORDER**

President Macareno called the meeting to order at 5:05 PM.

- Closed Session Reportable Actions – None.
- Pledge of Allegiance – Trustee Nunes led the pledge of allegiance.

**V PUBLIC COMMENT**

- Public Comments Concerning Items **On** Agenda –

Dr. Juan Arzola addressed the Board regarding Board Policy and Administrative Procedure 2340. He expressed concern that the proposed language implies that a board member's request to add an item to the agenda would be subject to approval by the majority, which could be perceived as gatekeeping. He emphasized that all board members are equal in their authority and should be able to place items on the agenda, provided they align with the district's strategic and master plans. Dr. Arzola respectfully requested the Board reconsider the language to ensure members can fully represent their constituencies.

Dr. Calvin clarified that the agenda item regarding how board members may request to add items was brought forward at the request of Trustee Diaz and Jose Sigala, City of Tulare Councilmember. While the proposed revisions were not specifically authored by them, Dr. Calvin noted that he drafted the suggested language based on language used by the City of Tulare. He emphasized that the item, if pursued by the Board, would follow the full shared governance process—going through the Academic Senate and DGS in the fall—before returning to the Board for final consideration. He reiterated that the Board was not revising language at this meeting, but initiating the standard review process that allows for input over the next several months.

- Public Comments Concerning Items **Not** on the Agenda –

Sebastian Walker, formerly known as Savannah Walker, addressed the Board to publicly come out as transgender. Walker shared that while they initially hesitated to come out due to toxic and hateful rhetoric on campus, they felt compelled to speak in support of inclusion, safety, and well-being for LGBTQ+ students.

Walker urged the college to establish a designated Safe Place on campus—a physical space where LGBTQ+ students can find comfort, support, and community. They emphasized the need for more than symbolic gestures, requesting tangible resources such as dedicated counselors, peer support groups, workshops, and mentorship programs focused on LGBTQ+ needs.

Walker also expressed concern over aggressive and inflammatory behavior by certain preachers and religious organizations on campus, calling for stricter regulations to ensure free speech does not come at the expense of student well-being. They cited specific instances of distressing encounters and advocated for clear policies that promote respectful public discourse.

Lastly, Walker asked for easier access to campus board policies and administrative procedures, stressing the importance of transparency so students can understand and engage with campus governance. They concluded by stating that their requests are not radical, but reflect basic human needs and a desire for all students to feel safe, respected, and able to thrive.

Yocelyn Torres, a current COS student and founder of the group No More Hate, shared concerns about the growing presence of religious groups and inflammatory rhetoric on campus, especially targeting LGBTQ+ students and other marginalized communities. Torres described specific incidents involving harassment by members of the YAF club, including following female students, shouting at them, and inviting controversial speakers. While affirming support for free speech, Torres emphasized the need for mutual respect in shared campus spaces, stating that sometimes individuals must forfeit certain expressions to maintain a safe, inclusive environment—comparing it to the way private spaces, like malls, restrict firearms without violating rights.

Torres expressed frustration at the administration's perceived inaction, saying students on the ground feel unsafe and unheard. Torres called on the board to take meaningful steps, such as implementing student surveys, directly engaging with the campus community, and upholding the college's stated commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion.

## VI BOARD AND EXECUTIVE STAFF REPORTS

### a. STUDENT TRUSTEE REPORT

Mr. Shirk's reported the following Student Senate activities:

- Gradfest: Held across all campuses from March 18-20.
- Graduation: Nearly 1,000 graduates expected on May 22.

- Tulare Campus: Hosted a campus-wide Easter egg hunt.
- Visalia Campus: Organized a multi-club carnival.
- Spring Gala: Raised \$3,600 from PACE and the Student Senate for Los Angeles fire victims.

b. BOARD MEMBER REPORTS

Trustee Sherman: Announced the upcoming President's Cup golf tournament this Friday, which is expected to be the best year yet with four major sponsors. The event benefits athletics. Also mentioned a productive joint meeting with the City of Visalia and Visalia Unified School District.

Trustee Nunes: Expressed gratitude to Mr. Foster and his team for their work on the Hall of Fame event, and commented on the honorees and the event's success.

Trustee Diaz: Congratulated MECHA on their successful three-day conference and thanked the two student speakers who participated in public comments.

President Macareno: Attended the swearing-in ceremony for Melissa Hurtado in Tulare, visited Farmersville High School to see the classic guitar class with Dr. Calvin, and recognized efforts to expose students to new experiences, such as the recent trip to Carnegie Hall in New York. Mentioned the upcoming board presentation at Orosi High School this Thursday.

c. FOUNDATION REPORT

Mr. Foster shared the following Foundation report:

- Fund Committees Established: All eight fund committees, including the new Science and Business Fund Committees, are now established. The Science Fund has five volunteers, and the Business Fund has three. More community members are needed.
- Founding Donation for Science Fund: A professor donated \$20,000 to the Science Fund in honor of their late mother, marking the first donation to this fund.
- Hall of Fame Recap: The Hall of Fame event is scheduled for March 21st at 5:30 PM, inducting Dr. Robert Aguilar and the 1987 COS Women's Basketball Team.
- COS Retiree Excursion: The next excursion is on March 27th to Paso Robles and Tin City, with 32 registrants so far. Board members are invited to join.
- Upcoming Events:
  - Visalia CSF Celebration, April 22nd, 12:00 PM - 1:30 PM, Visalia Convention Center
  - Hanford CSF Celebration, April 24th, 12:00 PM - 1:30 PM, Hanford Civic Auditorium
  - President's Cup Golf Tournament, April 25th, 11:00 AM - 5:30 PM, Visalia Country Club
  - Scholarship Night, May 1st, 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM, COS Porter Field House
  - Employer Appreciation Breakfast, May 2nd, 7:30 AM - 9:00 AM, COS Porter Field House
  - Access and Abilities Center Pinning Ceremony, May 2nd, 12:45 PM - 3:30 PM, COS Porter Field House
  - Student Activities Honors Reception, May 2nd, 5:30 PM – 6:30 PM, COS Porter Field House
  - Celebrando Nuestro Futuro, May 3rd, 6:00 PM - 9:30 PM, COS Porter Field House
  - HBCU Tulare/Kings Co. Recognition Ceremony, May 4th, 6:00 PM – 7:30 PM, COS Porter Field House
  - MESA Recognition Ceremony, May 6th, 5:00 PM - 9:00 PM, COS Porter Field House

- Equestrian Showcase Dinner, May 9th, 5:30 PM - 8:30 PM, Tulare Campus Arena and Pavilion

d. ACCREDITATION REPORT

Dr. La Serna explained that the ACCJC is using a formative/summative review, which is different from the last accreditation cycle. The peer review team provided three core inquiries to Dr. Calvin and Dr. La Serna. Inquiry #3 is expected to result in a commendation, and for Inquiry #2, the college is working to demonstrate full implementation of evaluation processes in NeoEd for managers and classified staff. Faculty and adjunct evaluations are not yet fully integrated, and technical limitations may prevent NeoEd use for faculty evaluations.

For Inquiry #1, the team initially reviewed 15 online courses from fall and found that the college did not meet the required 85% Regular and Substantive Interaction (RSI) compliance — a legal requirement that is 100%. A second round of 15 spring courses will be submitted for review on June 1. The District is now working with faculty unions and the Academic Senate to develop MOUs, implement training, and ensure compliance. Dr. La Serna thanked Tracy Redden, Danielle Alberti, and faculty leadership for their support.

When the review team returns in September, they will focus only on these three areas. Trustee Diaz inquired about how long RSI requirements have been known. Dr. La Serna clarified that the standards have always been in place, but the enforcement has recently intensified across the state, with sanctions now being issued for compliance issues—especially in distance education. She noted that COS is in good standing in other areas.

Diaz asked for details on corrective steps and training. Dr. La Serna explained that faculty have been receiving support and training from Elise Baker, Distance Education Coordinator, and DECOS for the past two years. All faculty teaching online will be required to add an RSI documentation module to their Canvas shells. Faculty whose courses are out of compliance will be required to complete RSI training and will be evaluated at the end of the semester to ensure they meet requirements.

Trustee Lehn expressed concern about the leniency given to faculty who did not comply initially, questioning why they are granted time to correct deficiencies. He stated that such individuals may be jeopardizing the institution's standing and should be held accountable. (He noted these were personal views, not representative of the board.) Dr. Calvin acknowledged the frustration and emphasized that some faculty may have become lax post-COVID but that the administration, Academic Senate, and unions are now united in addressing the issue. He noted this situation has real implications for the college's ability to offer online courses and agreed that many share Lehn's concern.

e. SUPERINTENDENT/PRESIDENT'S REPORT

- 2025 CCCT Board Elections – Requested board comments or feedback by Thursday. Emphasized selecting a candidate who supports local policies, noting differences between metropolitan and valley areas.

Dr. Calvin congratulated Katie Cain for being named Statewide CSEA Member of the Year. He further reported on athletics, noting that the women's tennis team reached the top 4. The softball team is starting state playoffs this week after winning the CVC conference. Additionally, the swim and dive teams won championships for both men and women. Lastly, Dr. Calvin reported that 40 chamber singers performed at Carnegie Hall, and shared a commendation from a government relations member for John Sorber in recognition of his outstanding chamber singers.

## VII REPORTS

a. ACADEMIC SENATE PRESIDENT'S REPORT/UPDATE

Dr. Arzola announced the faculty service awards on May 14 in Sequoia 1. All are welcome to attend.

- b. **COSTA PRESIDENT’S REPORT/UPDATE**  
Ms. Redden shared her agreement with Dr. Arzola's public comments about board members adding items to the agenda. She commended the student speakers for their bravery in addressing the board during public comment. Additionally, she addressed the MOU regarding RSI, noting that they are giving faculty time to get it right.
- c. **CSEA PRESIDENT’S REPORT/UPDATE**  
Janet Lejia reported that CSEA members are pleased with Dr. Calvin and Dean Bratsch's efforts to communicate about the transparency of NeoEd evaluations. She read excerpts from the eNEWS about Katie Cain being selected as CSEA Member of the Year. Additionally, she announced the PACE year-end staff appreciation lunch, themed "Emerald City," scheduled for May 8 in the COS Visalia Quad, where Giant Award winners will be honored.
- d. **COSAFSA PRESIDENT’S REPORT/UPDATE**  
No report.

## **VIII INFORMATION**

- 1. **PROCEDURES FOR BOARD MEMBERS REQUESTING BOARD AGENDA ITEMS**  
Dr. Calvin presented new language for the board policy and a new agenda request form adapted almost verbatim from the City of Tulare. He clarified that while the language is new, it will need to go through the District’s AP/BP revision cycle this fall. Trustee Diaz thanked Dr. Calvin for addressing this, emphasizing the need for clarity. Trustee Nunes expressed support for the proposed language. President Macareno stated that trustees should have the same process as the public for adding items. Trustee Lehn suggested the superintendent review items to ensure they fall within the board's jurisdiction, and agreed that items should be processed like any other request without needing a preliminary review. Dr. Calvin highlighted the importance of assessing the merit of items before dedicating staff time to them. Trustee Diaz recommended adjusting the submission deadline. Dr. Calvin thanked everyone for their feedback and confirmed the new language would go through the revision process this fall.

## **IX CONSENT CALENDAR**

Trustee Lehn pulled item 5, specifically questioning the \$2,800 banked leave deficit and its reconciliation. Dr. Calvin clarified that the budgeted amount for this period was \$20,000, resulting in a slight shortfall. However, he assured that the district can adjust the banked leave budget as needed by transferring funds between flexible accounts to cover any shortages. Trustee Lehn moved to approve item 5 – Working Budget Approval as presented, seconded by Trustee Nunes. AYES: Diaz, Lehn, Nunes, Sherman, Macareno. NOES: None. ABSENT: None. Motion carried

Trustee Sherman moved to approve the Consent Calendar items 2-4 and 6-7 as presented, seconded by Trustee Diaz. AYES: Diaz, Lehn, Nunes, Sherman, Macareno. NOES: None. ABSENT: None. Motion carried.

- 2. **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING:**
  - March 10, 2025 – Regular Meeting
- 3. **PERSONNEL REPORT 10-2024-2025**
- 4. **PAYMENT OF BILLS**
- 5. **2024-2025 WORKING BUDGET APPROVAL**  
(July 1, 2024, to April 2, 2025)
- 6. **OUT-OF-STATE TRAVEL REQUEST – WESTERN PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION ANNUAL CONFERENCE**  
Permission is requested to allow Research Methods students to attend and travel to the annual Western Psychological Association from May 1-4, 2025 held at the Horseshoe Resort Hotel in Las Vegas, NV.

**7. CURRICULUM: NEW, MODIFIED, DELETED**

Approval of new curriculum as required by Ed Code and Title 5.

**X ACTION**

**8. BOARD POLICIES – 2<sup>nd</sup> READ**

Dr. Calvin presented the following revised policies were reviewed and/or approved by Senior Management, District Governance Senate, and Academic Senate.

- BP 5010 – Admissions
- BP 5015 – Residence Determination

President Macareno stated that the first use of “district” should be changed to the full title “College of the Sequoias Community College District” where applicable in all of these policies.

Trustee Sherman moved to approve the second read of the Board Policies with amendment, seconded by Trustee Nunes. AYES: Diaz, Lehn, Nunes, Sherman, Macareno. NOES: None. ABSENT: None. Motion carried.

**9. BOARD POLICIES – 1<sup>ST</sup> READ**

Dr. Calvin presented the following revised policies were reviewed and/or approved by Senior Management, District Governance Senate, and Academic Senate.

- BP 5032 – Student Transportation Fee – Trustee Lehn prompted a discussion about how TCAG works and its costs. The costs were stated as a \$10 fee for full-time students and \$9 fee for part-time students. Dr. Calvin highlighted that this initiative is a game changer for students in outlying areas, improving their access to campus. Trustee Diaz expressed interest in seeing the impact of this initiative, suggesting a presentation to demonstrate how it positively affects students.
- BP 5040 – Student Records and Directory Information
- BP 5052 – Open Enrollment
- BP 5055 – Enrollment Priorities
- BP 5070 – Attendance Accounting

Trustee Sherman moved to approve the first read of the Board Policies with same amendment as item 8, seconded by Trustee Lehn. AYES: Diaz, Lehn, Nunes, Sherman, Macareno. NOES: None. ABSENT: None. Motion carried.

**XI ADJOURNMENT**

President Macareno adjourned the meeting at 6:37 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

---

Ken Nunes, Board Clerk