

BROOKDALE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

**Board of Trustees
Board Retreat Meeting Minutes**

April 11, 2025

**Brookdale Community College
Caroline Huber Holistic Wellness Center
765 Newman Springs Rd.
Lincroft, NJ 07733**

Present	Trustees	Administration:
	Ms. Mary Pat Angelini, Trustee	
	Ms. Latonya Brennan, Chair	
	Mr. Steve Clayton, Trustee	
	Mr. Paul Crupi, Trustee	
	Dr. Stephanie D'Alessio, Trustee	
	Ms. Dyese Davis, Trustee	
	Ms. Barbara Horl, Vice-Chair	
	Mr. Jean Guerdy Paul, Trustee	
	Mr. James McCracken, Trustee	
	Dr. Les Richens, Trustee	
	Dr. David Stout, Secretary	
	Ms. Cyndie Williams, Trustee	Ms. Cynthia Gruskos
Absent	Ms. Tracey Abby-White, Trustee	
Facilitator	Mr. Michal Knapp, ACCT Consultant	

Chair Brennan called the meeting to order at 5 PM.

Ms. Gruskos read the following statement: "In compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act, N.J.S. 10:4-6 et seq., advance written notice of this meeting of the Board of Trustees was provided in the following manner:

On January 23, 2025 at 10 am advance written notice of this meeting was posted at Brookdale Community College website; emailed to the Star Ledger and the Asbury Park Press and filed with the Clerk of the County of Monmouth.

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Topic and Discussion	Votes Taken	Action and Follow-up Actions
Adoption of Agenda for Public Business Meeting	A motion to adopt the meeting agenda was made by Trustee Abby-White and seconded by Vice-Chair Horl. Motion passed.	
Public Comment on Agenda Items		
There was no public comment made at the meeting.		
Board Professional Development Session		
The Board Retreat was facilitated by Michael Knapp. The evening session opened with a team-building activity in which Trustees were grouped together to share their personal goals and motivations for serving on the Board.		
Accreditation Process		
The Board reviewed and discussed the specific elements of the Brookdale MSCHE re-accreditation timeline outlined below:		
April 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Board of Trustees Retreat focuses on preparation for Middle States Self-Study.Stout briefs Trustees at Executive Committee and public Board meeting.Middle States VP Liaison will meet with the College Trustees for the Self Study Preparation Visit.	
May 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Stout provides Board of Trustees with revised Self-Study Design reflecting Middle States VP liaison feedback.Stout briefs Trustees at Executive Committee and public Board meeting.	
August 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Steering Chairs distribute Annotated Evidence Inventory and Self-Study Narrative outline to college community for feedback on content and accuracy.Trustee liaisons selected to serve as resources to each Working Group.Stout briefs Trustees at Executive Committee and public Board meeting.	
Fall 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Stakeholder feedback solicited as described in the Communication Plan.Working Groups update their narratives and evidence in response to new developments and feedback. Working Group Co-Chairs submit revised draft to Steering. Trustees serve as resources to each Working Group.Stout briefs Trustees at Executive Committee and public Board meeting.	
January 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Stout briefs Trustees at Executive Committee and public Board meeting.	
Feb.-Mar. 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Working Groups update their narratives and evidence in response to Steering feedback. Trustees serve as resources to each Working Group.Stout briefs Trustees at Executive Committee and public Board meeting.	
April 1, 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Revised Working Group narrative due to Steering co-chairs.	

Topic and Discussion		Votes Taken	Action and Follow-up Actions
Apr.-May 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chairs distribute revised draft to the College community for feedback. Feedback from the College community integrated into Self-Study draft. Stout briefs Trustees at Executive Committee and public Board meeting. 		
June 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stout presents Self-Study draft to Board of Trustees prior to transmitting the Self-Study draft to Visiting Team Chair. Preliminary visit by Team Chair; feedback on Self-Study draft. Visiting Team Chair may request to meet with members of the Board of Trustees. Stout briefs Trustees at Executive Committee and public Board meeting. 		
July 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Edit/revisions to Self-Study based upon feedback from Visiting Team Chair. Final Board of Trustees endorsement of Self-Study. 		
August 1, 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The final version of Self-Study is produced and sent to the visiting team. 		
Sept.-Oct.2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> College engages in Visiting Team simulations. 		
Oct./Nov. 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Middle States Visiting Team meets with Board of Trustees. 		
Spring 2027	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MSCHE meets to determine reaccreditation action. 		

It was noted that in planning for the 2026 Board Calendar, that we may need to hold a public business meeting in July 2026, based on the current timeline.

The board then reviewed and discussed the Standards for Accreditation, the role of BCC's accrediting body, Middle States Commission for Higher Education, the importance of accreditation to the institution and students, and then delved specifically into the board's role in Standards #1 and #7.

The Board participated in a substantive discussion on the role and value of college accreditation, emphasizing its importance not only as a compliance measure but as a strategic tool for continuous improvement and institutional excellence.

Key Takeaways included the following:

1. Trustee Engagement is Essential

Trustees play a critical role in the accreditation process. Their involvement demonstrates institutional accountability and a shared commitment to meeting high standards of governance, student success, and fiscal responsibility. It was also noted that continuity of our Board members is important in the accreditation process.

2. Accreditation as a Governance Tool

Accreditation provides an opportunity for Trustees to reflect on and strengthen their governance practices. It encourages self-assessment, fosters informed decision-making, and ensures alignment with the college's mission, vision, and strategic priorities.

3. Strategic Planning and Future Building

The accreditation process serves as a roadmap for the future, guiding the institution in setting goals, measuring progress, and addressing areas for growth. Trustees recognized the value of using accreditation feedback to inform strategic planning and resource allocation.

4. Institutional Integrity and Public Confidence

Successful accreditation reaffirms the college's integrity and helps build trust with students, families,

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<p>funderson, and the broader community. Trustees acknowledged their role in upholding this trust through their oversight and advocacy.</p> <p>5. Opportunities for Continuous Improvement Rather than viewing accreditation as a one-time event, the Board agreed on the importance of adopting a culture of ongoing assessment and improvement, integrating lessons learned into daily operations and long-term visioning.</p> <p>Mission, Vision and Strategic Plan</p> <p>Dr. Stout reviewed that in January 2024, the Board directed him to review and revise the mission, vision and values. He reviewed the steps taken and the town halls conducted in the spring of 2025 to collect collegewide input. He will provide an update on the process at the April Board meeting.</p> <p>Dr. Stout reviewed the process for the development of the next strategic plan, Strategic Plan 2030: The North Star, Illuminating the Path Forward, which will be focused on the North Star Goal of increasing credential completion to 60% by 2030. He reviewed the Board’s role in their review, refinement and approval later in 2025.</p> <p>Board Self-Evaluation/Board Operations</p> <p>The Board reviewed the action items taken from their previous year’s retreat in 2024 . The following action items were completed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board Leadership Succession – the Board By-laws were revised and approved on November 26, 2024, to designate terms limits for the Board Chair of no more than 2 consecutive years, and a requirement to have 2 academic years of service prior to seeking election as Board Chair. • There was a modification of the composition of items addressed at the Board Committee level to create a balance in the review of materials. • Improved communication in the areas of reporting out on the strategic plan, a simplified organizational chart, and improved definitions of Evergreen Priorities . • Improved efficiency of the Public Business meetings was implemented to communicate how to make public comment in a hybrid meeting. <p>The evening concluded with the Trustees reviewing their collective feedback on their most recent self-evaluation conducted in February 2025. An area of focused discussion was Board level succession and the election process. The Board engaged in a thoughtful discussion on board-level succession planning and the election process. Topics included the importance of leadership continuity, the development of a diverse pipeline of future officers, and the need for transparency and fairness in nominating and electing Board leadership. Trustees expressed varying perspectives on the structure and timing of elections, as well as the criteria for leadership readiness and effectiveness. Due to lack of time, they decided to continue the discussion at the morning retreat and come to a consensus on any changes in their processes.</p>		
<p>Public Comment</p> <p>There was no public comment made at the meeting.</p>		

Topic and Discussion	Votes Taken	Action and Follow-up Actions
Old/New Business No old or new business was discussed.		
Adjournment at 9 PM	A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Trustee Davis and seconded by Trustee Abby-White.	

Respectfully submitted:

David M. Stout, Ph.D., Secretary