

BROOKDALE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

**Board of Trustees
Public Business Meeting Minutes**

January 27, 2026

**Brookdale Community College
Student Life Center, Navesink Rooms
765 Newman Springs Rd.
Lincroft, NJ 07738**

Chair Horl called the meeting to order at 5:30 P.M. and roll call was taken.

Present	Trustees	Administration:
	Ms. Barbara Horl, Chair	Dr. Katie Lynch
	Ms. Tracey Abby-White, Trustee, Vice-Chair	Ms. Nancy Kaari
	Mr. Steve Clayton, Trustee	Dr. Yesenia Madas
	Mr. Paul Crupi, Trustee	Ms. Bonnie Passarella, Esq.
	Dr. Stephanie D'Alessio, Trustee	Mr. Kornipibob Kanthanjan
	Ms. Dyese Davis, Trustee	Ms. Nancy Kegelman
	Ms. Stephanie L. Hoitt, Trustee	Dr. Teresa Manfreda-Foley
	Dr. Les Richens, Trustee	
	Mr. Montez Swartz, Trustee	
	Dr. David Stout, Secretary	
	Ms. Cyndie Williams, Trustee	Ms. Cynthia Gruskos
Absent	Ms. Mary Pat Angelini, Trustee	
	Mr. James McCracken, Trustee	
College Counsel	Mr. Mitch Jacobs, Esq., General Counsel	

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 21, 2026 at 1:30 PM advance written notice of this meeting was posted on the Brookdale Community College website; emailed to *The Asbury Park Press* and *the Star Ledger* and filed with the Clerk of the County of Monmouth.

Mr. Jacobs read the statement on procedures and requirements for making public comment during the public meeting.

Chair Horl led the pledge of allegiance followed by a welcome to those in attendance.

Chair Horl read our mission statement:

Brookdale Community College opens doors to education with courage and care, guiding diverse learners toward a lifetime of growth and success.

The meeting began with a moment of silence led by Dr. Stout in memory of Pat McQuire and Vicki Burnham, both who recently passed away in January.

Topic and Discussion	Votes Taken	Action and Follow-up Actions
Adoption of Agenda	A motion to adopt the agenda was made by Trustee Crupi and seconded by Vice-Chair Abby-White. Motion passed.	
President’s Report – Dr. Stout Dr. Stout provided an update on the Middle States self-study process, noting that all working groups completed their first draft chapters at the end of the fall semester and that the steering committee has reviewed them and provided recommendations. Working groups are now incorporating feedback in collaboration with institutional leads, and preparations continue for the evidence inventory review. The college remains on track to release a full draft for campus review on March 2. Dr. Stout also announced plans to align each Board committee with a Middle States standard so that Trustees can provide targeted feedback once the draft is distributed.		

Reports from the Board Committees and Liaisons

A. Finance & Facilities Committee – Vice-Chair Abby White reported that the committee reviewed progress on approximately 16 major facilities projects, including HVAC modernization, infrastructure upgrades, ADA improvements, automation controls, and carbon monoxide detector installation. Classroom renovations are advancing to bid, and the Freehold water remediation project is under engineering review. Financially, operating revenue for November 2025 reached \$58.5 million, up 8.7% from the prior year, while expenses totaled \$34.9 million, reflecting increases in utilities, insurance, and services. Natural gas costs remain an area of concern, though solar production offsets electric costs by up to \$180,000 annually. The committee also reviewed 16 purchases, including major IT upgrades and facilities improvements. Grants total \$3.4 million to date, with strong foundation performance supported by a major \$1.6 million bequest.

FY27 budget modeling shows an ongoing structural deficit of approximately \$3 million, and tuition options—including folding general fees into tuition for improved transparency—were discussed, with final recommendations expected in February.

B. Audit Committee – Trustee Dr. Richens reported that the FY25 Single Audit review was completed via an email approval process beginning January 16. The audit issued a clean, unmodified opinion with no material weaknesses, deficiencies, or compliance findings, and confirmed Brookdale as a “low-risk auditee.” Approximately \$23 million in federal awards and \$27 million in state awards were reviewed without exceptions, and the committee recommended acceptance of the audit.

C. Governance Committee - Trustee Clayton summarized that the committee recommended revisions to policy 6.9000 Athletic Policy, modernizing language, strengthening inclusivity, and adding clearer structural sections. The committee also recommended rescinding Policy 2.1003 on COVID-19 vaccination and weekly testing because existing emergency policies provide sufficient presidential authority to deal with a health crisis. Trustees reviewed results of the December board self-evaluation, which showed strong alignment and satisfaction with governance processes, and discussed interest in developing a board mission statement. Plans for the April 18 Board Retreat were discussed, and updates were provided on ACCT events and Middle States Standard 7.

D. Student Success & Educational Excellence Committee - Trustee D’Alessio reported that Spring 2026 enrollment is slightly down—0.8% in headcount and 1.4% in FTE—but improvements are expected with delayed dual-enrollment registrations. Fourteen targeted enrollment campaigns supported advising, financial aid, and persistence outreach, reducing nonpayment drops from 1,776 to 219. One-stop services handled over 11,000 calls since September. Financial aid audits for 2023–24 and 2024–25 had zero findings, and poverty-informed aid and scholarships increased. The committee recommended approval of two new academic options: (1) Hospitality, Event & Tourism Management Program, Sports Management Option, A.S., and (2) Communications Media Program, Esports Production & Management Option, A.A.S, both aligned with labor market needs. Middle States Standard 3 progress remains on schedule, with strengths noted in teaching innovation, equity, and data-driven decision-making.

E. Graduate Trustee Report - Graduate Trustee Swartz reported on the last GTAC meeting held with academic leadership and with Senator Andy Kim, where discussions included student protections, wellness resources, and campus safety. He also described the Esports Club’s fundraising livestream event, participation in the Winter Nursing Pinning Ceremony, and his upcoming role in Civility Week

facilitating a civil-dialogue demonstration for students.

F. Ad-Hoc Credential Expansion - Trustee Williams reported that the committee received a statewide credential update from NJCCC representative, Catherine Starghill, including development of an industry-valued credentials list that will affect future funding eligibility. The committee discussed New Jersey Pathways Initiative opportunities in areas such as data science, AI, biotechnology, and film production. Brookdale is working to better integrate credit and noncredit pathways with improved systems and advising. The committee reviewed high-demand credential areas including education, healthcare, IT certifications (CompTIA, Cisco), AI/data, and skilled trades, and requested ongoing inventories and labor market data. The committee strategy will align with statewide recommendations, with quarterly meetings scheduled.

G. Brookdale President's Community Advisory Committee - Trustee Clayton reported that the committee met earlier in the day, where Dr. Stout reviewed Brookdale's updated mission, vision, and commitments. The college's new North Star Goal—doubling credential completion by 2030—was highlighted, with strategies focused on adult learners, first-generation students, stackable workforce credentials, meta-majors, proactive advising, improved scheduling, and dual enrollment pathways. Stakeholders raised transportation barriers, and Brookdale shared that a grant is funding free NJ Transit passes for students and employees. Additional feedback addressed financial barriers and first-generation student needs, with the college outlining outreach and mentoring programs supported through the Center for Transformative Learning. The next meeting is scheduled for April 21 at the Culinary Center in Asbury Park.

H. Foundation Update - Vice Chair Abby White reported that the Foundation reviewed finances and is seeking new board members with an emphasis on fundraising responsibilities. Donor engagement trends were reviewed, with a recommendation to better educate donors on unrestricted scholarships. Planning for the April 24 Scholarship Bash continues, including new sponsorship levels, themed activity areas tied to college values, and a focus on securing creative experiential auction items.

I. NJCCC - Chair Hall reported attending statewide legislative and higher-education events, including the Legislature's reorganization, the governor's State of the State address, and the launch of Future Ready New Jersey. Several Opportunity Agenda bills passed, including those establishing statewide credential initiatives and expanding social services at county colleges. Planning for state budget advocacy is underway amid a challenging fiscal environment. Dr. Stout also reported on NJCCC's new statewide AI partnership with Princeton, Rutgers, Rowan, NJIT, Stevens, and NVIDIA, which includes building a supercomputer and developing statewide AI workforce training

Public Comment on Agenda Items

No public comment was made and Ms. Gruskos confirmed no written public comment was submitted.

Review of Consent Agenda

A motion to adopt the consent agenda was made by Trustee Crupi and seconded by Vice-Chair Abby-White.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any item may be removed from the consent agenda for discussion by any voting member of the Board of Trustees. <p>A. Acceptance of Consent Agenda</p>	<p>Motion passed.</p>	
<p>Approval of Public Business Meeting Minutes - December 16, 2025</p>	<p>A motion to approve the minutes from the Public Business Meeting on December 16, 2025, was made by Trustee Swartz and seconded by Trustee Davis.</p> <p>Motion passed</p> <p>ABSTENTIONS: Trustee Crupi</p>	
<p>Approval of Consent Agenda</p> <p>A. Approval of Human Resources B. Acceptance of Gifts C. Acceptance of Grants D. Emergency Purchase in Excess of \$44,900 and New Jersey "Pay-to-Play" bids, and Pursuant to the New Jersey "Pay to Play" Process, in Excess of \$17,500 Purchase(s) E. Purchases in Excess of \$44,900 and New Jersey "Pay-to-Play" bids, and Pursuant to the New Jersey "Pay to Play" Process, in Excess of \$17,500 F. Open Invoice Payment Requests for Vendor, Student and Employee Payments G. Monthly Financial Reports H. Capital Project Update</p>	<p>A motion to approve the consent agenda was made by Trustee Crupi and seconded by Vice-Chair Abby-White.</p> <p>YES: Trustees Abby-White, Clayton, Crupi, D'Alessio, Davis, Hoitt, Richens, Swartz, Williams and Chair Horl</p> <p>NO: None</p> <p>ABSTENTIONS: None</p>	
<p>Acceptance of Brookdale Community College's FY25 Single Audit</p>	<p>A motion to accept the Brookdale Community College's FY25 Single Audit was made by Trustee D'Alessio and seconded by</p>	

	<p>Trustee Hoitt.</p> <p>Motion Passed</p> <p>YES: Trustees Abby-White, Clayton, Crupi, D'Alessio, Davis, Hoitt, Richens, Swartz, Williams and Chair Horl</p> <p>NO: None</p> <p>ABSTENTIONS: None</p>	
<p>II. Approval of New Degree/Certificate Presenter: Chair Horl</p> <p>A. New Program Option: Communications Media Program, Esports Production & Management Option, A.A.S.</p> <p>B. New Program Option: Hospitality, Event, and Tourism Management Program, Sports Management Option, A.S.</p>	<p>A motion to approve by resolution the new program options listed below was made by Vice-Chair Abby-White and seconded by Trustee D'Alessio</p> <p>A. New Program Option: Communications Media Program, Esports Production & Management Option, A.A.S.</p> <p>B. New Program Option: Hospitality, Event, and Tourism Management Program, Sports Management Option, A.S.</p> <p>Motion Passed</p> <p>YES: Trustees Abby-White, Clayton, Crupi, D'Alessio, Davis, Hoitt, Richens, Swartz, Williams and Chair Horl</p> <p>NO: None</p> <p>ABSTENTIONS: None</p>	

<p>Approval of Revised Policies</p> <p>A. 1.3035 Presidential Search Process (new title)</p> <p>B. 4.1000 Tuition and Fees</p>	<p>A motion to approve the revised policies listed below was made by Trustee Davis and seconded by Trustee Crupi.</p> <p>A. 1.3035 Presidential Search Process (new title)</p> <p>B. 4.1000 Tuition and Fees</p> <p>Motion Passed</p> <p>YES: Trustees Abby-White, Clayton, Crupi, D'Alessio, Davis, Hoitt, Richens, Swartz, Williams and Chair Horl</p> <p>NO: None</p> <p>ABSTENTIONS: None</p>	
<p>Lodging of Rescinding Policy 2.1003 COVID-19 Vaccination or Weekly Testing Requirement</p>	<p>A motion to lodge the rescinding of Policy 2.1003 COVID-19 Vaccination or Weekly Testing Requirement was made by Vice-Chair Abby-White and seconded by Trustee Williams</p> <p>Motion Passed</p> <p>YES: Trustees Abby-White, Clayton, Crupi, D'Alessio, Davis, Hoitt, Richens, Swartz, Williams and Chair Horl</p> <p>NO: None</p> <p>ABSTENTIONS: None</p>	

<p>Lodging of Revised Policy 6.9000 Athletic Policy</p>	<p>A motion to lodge revised policy 6.9000 Athletic Policy was made by Trustee D’Alessio and seconded by Trustee Hoitt.</p> <p>Motion Passed</p> <p>YES: Trustees Abby-White, Clayton, Crupi, D’Alessio, Davis, Hoitt, Richens, Swartz, Williams and Chair Horl</p> <p>NO: None</p> <p>ABSTENTIONS: None</p>	
<p>Public Comment -</p> <p>No public comment was made and Ms. Gruskos confirmed that no written public comments were submitted.</p>		
<p>Old/New Business –</p> <p>No old or new business was discussed.</p>		
<p>Resolution to Hold a Closed Meeting</p>	<p>A motion to approve by resolution (Attachment A) to hold an Executive Session was made by Vice-Chair Abby-White and seconded by Trustee Crupi.</p> <p>Motion passed</p>	
<p>Motion to Re-Open the Meeting to the Public</p>	<p>A motion to reopen the meeting to the public was made by Trustee Clayton and seconded by Trustee Davis.</p>	

	Motion passed.	
Adjournment Meeting adjourned at 7:51 PM	A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Trustee Crupi and seconded by Trustee Davis. Motion passed	

BROOKDALE COMMUNITY COLLEGE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING EXECUTIVE SESSION

WHEREAS, while the Sen. Byron M. Baer Open Public Meetings Act (N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 et seq.) requires all meetings of the Brookdale Community College Board of Trustees to be held in public, N.J.S.A. 10:4-12(b) sets forth nine (9) types of matters that may lawfully be discussed in "Executive Session," i.e. without the public being permitted to attend, and

WHEREAS, the Brookdale Community College Board of Trustees has determined that **1** issues are permitted by N.J.S.A. 10:4-12(b) to be discussed without the public in attendance and shall be discussed during an Executive Session to be held on **January 27, 2026 at approximately 6:35 PM** the nine (9) exceptions to open public meetings set forth in N.J.S.A. 10:4-12(b) are listed below, and next to each exception is a box which will be marked when the issues to be privately discussed fall within that exception, and after each exception is a space where additional information that will disclose as much information about the discussion as possible without undermining the purpose of the exception shall be written.

"(1) Any matter which, by express provision of Federal law, State statute or rule of court shall be rendered confidential or excluded from public discussion." The legal citation to the provision(s) at issue is: _____ and the nature of the matter, described as specifically as possible without undermining the need for confidentiality is _____

"(2) Any matter in which the release of information would impair a right to receive funds from the federal government." The nature of the matter, described as specifically as possible without undermining the need for confidentiality is _____

"(3) Any material the disclosure of which constitutes an unwarranted invasion of individual privacy such as any records, data, reports, recommendations, or other personal material of any educational, training, social service, medical, health, custodial, child protection, rehabilitation, legal defense, welfare, housing, relocation, insurance and similar program or institution operated by a public body pertaining to any specific individual admitted to or served by such institution or program, including but not limited to information relative to the individual's personal and family circumstances, and any material pertaining to admission, discharge, treatment, progress or condition of any individual, unless the individual concerned (or, in the case of a minor or incompetent, his guardian) shall request in writing that the same be disclosed publicly." The nature of the matter, described as specifically as possible without undermining the need for confidentiality is _____

Approved: January 27, 2026 - RESOLUTION

"(4) Any collective bargaining agreement, or the terms and conditions of which are proposed for inclusion in any collective bargaining agreement, including the negotiation of terms and conditions with employees or representatives of employees of the public body

"(5) Any matter involving the purchase lease or acquisition of real property with public funds, the setting of bank rates or investment of public funds where it could adversely affect the public interest if discussion of such matters were disclosed." The nature of the matter, described as specifically as possible without undermining the need for confidentiality – **real estate: consideration of selling or leasing real property**

"(6) Any tactics and techniques utilized in protecting the safety and property of the public provided that their disclosure could impair such protection. Any investigations of violations or possible violations of the law." The nature of the matter, described as specifically as possible without undermining the need for confidentiality is:

a) "(7) Any pending or anticipated litigation or contract negotiation in which the public body is or may become a party. Any matters falling within the attorney-client privilege, to the extent that confidentiality is required in order for the attorney to exercise his ethical duties as a lawyer." The parties to and docket numbers of each item of litigation and/or the parties to each contract discussed are and the nature of the discussion, described as specifically as possible without undermining the need for confidentiality is:

"(8) Any matter involving the employment, appointment, termination of employment, terms and conditions of employment, evaluation of the performance, promotion or disciplining of any specific prospective public officer or employee or current public officer or employee employed or appointed by the public body, unless all individual employees or appointees whose rights could be adversely affected request in writing that such matter or matters be discussed at a public meeting." Subject to the balancing of the public's interest and the employee's privacy rights under South Jersey Publishing Co. v. New Jersey Expressway Authority, 124 N.J. 478 (1991), the employee(s) and nature of the discussion, described as specifically as possible without undermining the need for confidentiality...:

"(9) Any deliberation of a public body occurring after a public hearing that may result in the imposition of a specific civil penalty upon the responding party or the suspension or loss of a license or permit belonging to the responding party as a result of an act of omission for which the responding party bears responsibility." The nature of the matter, described as specifically as possible without undermining the need for confidentiality is a

WHEREAS, the length of the Executive Session is estimated to be 30 minutes after which the public meeting of the Brookdale Community College Board of Trustees shall (select one) reconvene and immediately address or reconvene and proceed with business where formal action will be taken.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Brookdale Community College Board of Trustees will go into Executive Session for only the above stated reasons; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Brookdale Community College Board of Trustees hereby declares that its discussion of the aforementioned subject(s) will be made public at a time when the public's interest in disclosure is greater than any privacy or governmental interest being protected from disclosure.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board Secretary, at the present public meeting, shall read aloud enough of this resolution so that members of the public in attendance can understand, as precisely as possible, the nature of the matters that will privately discussed; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board Secretary, on the next business day following this meeting, shall post this Resolution on the Board website and furnish a copy of this Resolution to any member of the public who requests one at the fees allowed by N.J.S.A. 47:1A-1 et seq.