

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT MEETING MINUTES
KASKASKIA COLLEGE - COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT 501
TRENTON EDUCATION CENTER
TUESDAY – JULY 23, 2024**

WELCOME

President George Evans opened the meeting at 11:55 a.m. and welcomed everyone to the Community Engagement Meeting.

Trustee Louis Kalert and Student Trustee Connor Wademan were in attendance.

Kaskaskia College employees in attendance included Jenna Astroth, Alan Boerngen, Rachael Burkhardt, Michael Christensen, Cary Day, George Evans, Joy Fitts, Colton Leidner, Mark Litteken, Traci Masau, Justine Milicevic, Julie Obermark, Karol Potter, Christine Wheeler, Nathan Wilkins, Kylee Williams, Josh Woods, and Amy Zanton

Community members in attendance included Dana Bower, Joey Deiters, DJ Deiters, Darla Duggins, Amanda Ennen, Jennifer Filyaw, Teri Foster, Barb Gerstner, Paola Guazzini, Tara Hall, Elizabeth Ketchum, Ryan Ketchum, Lauri Kirkpatrick, Brad Knolhoff, Ray Krausz, Nicholas Lampen, Galen Mahle, Bob Marsh, Katie Newman, Dennis Perez, Jillian Pratt, James Rahm, Chris Rarick, Shelby Rensing, Ashley Rensing, Donna Richter, Katie Smith, Danielle Solis, Cheryl Timmermann, Dan Travous, Steve Wallace, and Bailey Wilson.

INTRODUCTIONS

Those in attendance introduced themselves.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

President Evans led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

STATE OF KASKASKIA COLLEGE UPDATE

ENROLLMENT UPDATE

Vice President of Student Services Amy Zanton shared the current Enrollment Credit Hour Report and reported the College is doing very well enrollment wise. For the same date compared to last year, Summer 2024 semester enrollment is up 8.3% in head count and 15.7% in credit hours. For the same date compared to last year, Fall 2024 semester enrollment is up 17.7% in head count and 16.4% in credit hours. The College has rebounded from the pandemic and continues to see increases in both head count and credit hours above pre-pandemic enrollment numbers. Two years ago, the College set a goal to reach the pre-pandemic 2019 (2018SU, 2018FA, 2019SP) total credit hours of 68,982. In 2024 (2023SU 2023FA, 2024SP) the College reached 70,554 credit hours surpassing that goal. Last year the College set a goal to increase by 1% the 3-year average of pre-pandemic credit hour totals and the College was able to surpass that average number by 8%.

NEW PROGRAMS UPDATE

Provost and Vice President of Instructional Services Julie Obermark presented information on two recent programs added at the College.

- The Precision Agriculture Certificate is a new 25-credit hour certificate program that will be offered beginning with the Fall 2025 semester (August 2025). This two-semester certificate was developed in response to identified industry need for skills and training specific to the growing field of precision agriculture. The need for students to be trained in a short period of time and available for the workforce was consideration given for the one-year certificate. Students will gain knowledge and skills in computer technology, global navigation satellite systems, agriculture mapping software, precision agriculture equipment, unmanned aerial systems, and agronomy.
- The Hybrid and Electric Vehicle Technology Certificate program began last year with two students. This certificate was developed not only for students who have already taken several automotive college courses, but also for individuals who are already in the automotive workforce who need training with hybrid and electric vehicles. With funding assistance provided through the Illinois Green Economy Network, the Workforce Equity Initiative grant, and the Rev Up EV grant, the College has been able to renovate the Automotive Technology lab to a state-of-the-art facility to train students in automotive technology and in hybrid and electric vehicle technology. This new certificate program addresses the need for trained technicians in the workforce to work on electric vehicles owned by individuals in the district.

REVIEW OF THE PRESIDENT'S REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY

President Evans shared highlights from the President's Report to the Community provided to attendees and available on the College website under "From the President."

- The College did exceptional in the mid-cycle review by the Higher Learning Commission, the College's accrediting body. Without this accreditation, the College cannot offer Title IV funding or receive state grants.
- The College is approaching the final phase of the renovation projects on main campus. This completes the planned renovations except for the new gymnasium. The original gymnasium was built as a practice gym. Bids for the new gymnasium have been issued and the bid opening will be held the first week of August. In 2021 the Board approved the issuance of bonds at a low interest rate of 2.25% locked in for 17 years. With those sources of funding and additional assistance from grant funds, Protection, Health, and Safety funds, and institutional funds, the College has been able to resurface almost every parking lot on the main campus and has modernized classrooms with state-of-the-art technology, modern student-friendly furniture, new flooring, new lighting, and new HVAC systems. The classroom renovations will be completed and ready for the start of the Fall semester in August.
- Mental health issues among students have increased substantially since the pandemic. Through grant funds, the College is able to offer students access to an onsite licensed clinical professional counselor. The College also offers students mental health assistance through TimelyCare, an online platform that provides students with virtual mental health counseling and resources with self-guided tools to

help students with mental health issues. Students have access to peer committees through an online venue.

KC NOW PROGRAM AND AIM PROGRAM

President Evans explained the difference between dual credit and dual enrollment courses. A dual credit course is taught by a high school teacher who is credentialed by the Higher Learning Commission to teach college courses. The College waives all tuition for dual credit courses. A dual enrollment course is taught to high school students by a college faculty member whether online, in person, or in a hybrid type format.

- Provost and Vice President of Instructional Services Julie Obermark presented information on the KC Now Program. Not every high school in the district has the financial capacity to offer students courses in career and technical education or courses which require labs such as automotive courses. The KC Now Program involves dual enrollment courses taught by college faculty that high school students can enroll in now for courses that are not offered by their high school. The KC Now Program started with the 2021 academic year with four students and two schools participating in the Residential and Commercial Electricity Program offered at the Trenton Education Center. With the Fall 2024 semester, twenty-five KC Now students will be studying residential and commercial electricity. Each year the College adds more programs through KC Now. Courses in automotive, cosmetology, criminal justice, HVAC, childcare, nursing assistant, and business management are now being offered through the KC Now Program.
- Dean of Workforce Engagement & Industrial Career Services Joy Fitts introduced the Aspirations in Manufacturing (AIM) Program. In advisory board meetings and meetings with manufacturers, local industry partners expressed concern over the lack of an available workforce and the lack of interest of high school students to enter careers in manufacturing. Industry partners asked the College for help in addressing this concern. In response to this request, the College developed the AIM Program which is a one-year program that introduces high school students to careers in manufacturing. Students in the program take three manufacturing courses and one technical math course that focuses on measurements. Students also tour local manufacturing facilities and receive mentoring from manufacturing representatives. At the end of the program the students are issued a manufacturing technology certificate and earn their OSHA 10 certification. Last year there were four students in the program and this year there are eight students in the program.
- Dean Fitts also discussed the apprenticeship programs offered to students through collaboration with local employers and the College. There are currently eight students participating through the College in registered apprenticeship programs with the Department of Labor. If a business or industry has need for the recruitment or development of students to transition into the workforce, the College can help meet those needs through an apprenticeship program. Businesses that sponsor a registered apprenticeship program receive a \$3,500 tax credit per apprentice. If the apprentice lives in an unserved area or the business resides in an unserved area, sponsors receive an additional \$1,500 tax credit. The goal of the apprenticeship program is to provide businesses with the opportunity to recruit students early on who help the students go to school and graduate with little debt while learning the skills needed to become employed by the business upon graduation.

- The Kaskaskia College Mobile Manufacturing Lab is a mobile trailer that brings education and training to the communities in the College district. The trailer has been equipped with tools and machinery for the trades and will be transported to junior highs and high schools in the district to introduce students to the different vocational trades such as industrial technology, welding, and HVAC. Industry partners can also use the trailer to train their workforce on skills specific to their industry. The College has employed a full-time facilitator who will collaborate with schools and industry partners in developing programs for using the trailer for their students and workforce.

GRANT SUCCESSES

The College has been successful in receiving over \$16,000,000 in state and federal grants for the 2023-2024 academic year. President Evans spoke about several grants specifically:

- The Early Childhood Access for Equity (ECACE) Grant addresses the lack of daycare providers. With these grant funds, the College was able to provide daycares in the district with STEM, social-emotional, and general curriculum materials and the Children’s Learning Center with instructional items to enhance the experience of the College practicum students.
- Through funds received from the Innovation & Bridge Program Transition (IBT) Grant, the College hosted career exploration workshops tailored for individuals ages 16-24. The students participated in hands-on activities with instructors in labs and visited local manufacturers and industry partners.
- The College has been awarded \$859,000 through the Workforce Equity Initiative (WEI) Grant for the upcoming academic year. This grant focuses on the minority population in the College district and helps remove the barriers minority students have in education improving completion rates of these students. Through funding provided by the Workforce Equity Initiative (WEI) Grant, the College can offer free tuition and resources to minority students. The WEI Program provides life-changing education in a short length of time (one year or less) and equips these individuals with the training needed to enter a career field making a wage 30% above the living wage.

COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

President Evans opened the floor to the attendees to ask any questions and to provide feedback on issues related to the College.

- Brad Knolhoff from the Clinton County Board thanked the College for being instrumental in the County being able to get the emergency radio system going and for offering space for the tower. The County was also appreciative of the electrical program students installing all the wiring in the new health department building. Providing this service saved the County and taxpayers a large amount of money.
- President Evans shared several different ways College programs have provided volunteer work to non-profit organizations as an opportunity to give back to the communities the College serves while giving students hands-on experience.

INTRODUCTION OF MIKE CHRISTENSEN – KC FOUNDATION UPDATE

President Evans introduced Executive Director of Development Michael Christensen who provided an update on the Kaskaskia College Foundation.

- In calendar year 2023, the Foundation raised over \$2,000,000 in support of Kaskaskia College students. The Foundation supports students not only through scholarships but by purchasing equipment and items needed for programs that help support student successes. In the 2023-2024 academic year, the Foundation awarded over \$361,000 in scholarships to over 364 Kaskaskia College students.
- The Foundation partners with the College in support of the KC Now Program by covering 50% of tuition costs for students in the KC Now Program. The Foundation offers wraparound support for students to address financial barriers students may encounter in attaining their higher education and provides funding to the College for tutoring and for purchasing vital equipment needed in the classrooms to train students to enter the workforce of local employers. In addition, for students with a need identified through the Financial Aid process, the Foundation offers an additional scholarship program which covers 25% of the remaining KC Now tuition.
- The annual Gala hosted by the Foundation is scheduled for November 16, 2024, on the main campus as an opportunity to showcase the renovations.

KC REGIONAL IMPACT AND REVIEW OF 2024 ECONOMIC IMPACT STUDY

President Evans presented highlights of the Economic Impact Study completed on FY 2022-2023 data by Lightcast, an external third-party company. The study provides a snapshot of the economic impact the College has on the district. A copy of the Economic Impact Study was provided to attendees and is available on the College website.

- Without a doubt, manufacturing is the biggest employer and biggest revenue producer in the district followed by wholesale trade and agriculture. Retail trade has also increased in the district and health care careers continue to increase in the district. President Evans shared information from the analysis completed on income by major industry sector in the district and jobs by major industry sector in the district. The College is putting its focus on the needs in the district in manufacturing, health care, and agriculture.
- Rarely is there a positive net return on an investment for a publicly funded education. From an investment point of view, for every \$1.00 invested in the College, the taxpayer received a return on investment of \$1.10 in added tax revenue and public sector savings.
- For every \$1.00 students invest in their education, they receive a return of \$6.40 in higher future earnings.
- The College currently serves a ratio of fifty percent of students pursuing degrees or certificates in career and technical programs while the remaining fifty percent of students are earning an associates degree and transferring on to a university.
- If a student does not qualify for financial aid, a two-year degree at the College will cost the student \$12,500. This is without any dual credit, KC Now credit, PEL, or MAP funding.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 12:55 p.m.

Chair, Board of Trustees
Kaskaskia College

Secretary, Board of Trustees
Kaskaskia College