
*Rogue Community College District
Special Board Meeting (OCCA Discussion) – December 17, 2013 Meeting Minutes*

1. **Call to Order** – Kevin Talbert, Vice Chair, called the Rogue Community College (RCC) Board of Education (Board) Special meeting to order at approximately 1:15 p.m., Tuesday, December 17, 2013, Redwood Campus (RWC) 3345 Redwood Highway, Grants Pass, OR. Due notice was given.
2. **Determine Presence of Quorum** – A quorum of the Board was present including Pat Ashley, Ron Fox, Brett Johnson, Tim Johnson, Kevin Talbert and Joseph Zagorski. Dean Wendle was absent.
3. **Introduction of Guests and Public Comment** – RCC District employees in attendance included Peter Angstadt, Kori Bieber, Kirk Gibson, Curtis Sommerfeld and Denise Nelson.

4. **Review Purpose of Discussion and Intended Outcome (Kevin Talbert)**

With the changes in structure at the state level and the creation of the Higher Education Coordinating Commission, the Oregon Community College Association (OCCA) Board appointed a strategic -conversation committee to help guide OCCA through a thoughtful reassessment of the role and purpose of the organization to ensure OCCA continues to be a vibrant service and leadership organization that serves the needs of the 17 community colleges.

OCCA provided seven questions and a summary of the current services they provide for all community college boards to utilize during discussion.

5. **Strategic Conversation Regarding Future of OCCA**

1. **What functions that OCCA provides are most valuable?**

There was agreement that all the functions currently provided have value, but that the functions grouped under “Government Relations Services” were the essence of the value of OCCA and are the most important. All agreed that monitoring legislative functions and advocacy were critical for our college. RCC also values how OCCA allows community colleges to “speak with one voice.

Another important function is consulting. College leaders noted the Oregon Department of Community College and Workforce Development (CCWD) is the source of much “what and how” information for the colleges, but that OCCA provides a place where administrators can call and ask, “What if...” about state regulations or how to carry out legislative or Board of Education policies or requirements. Sometimes the important questions OCCA can advise the college on are how to get around requirements in ways that do not disadvantage our students. This is the kind of critical consulting CCWD or state agencies cannot provide.

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It was also noted that OCCA, through the annual conference and summer institute, provides valuable training to Board members on program and policy issues.

Executive leadership thought that OCCA's presence (Andrea Henderson specifically) at their council meetings was very valuable for disseminating information, advising, and coordination.

2. Is there anything that OCCA is doing now that they should stop doing?

Nothing specific was identified although there were observations that if a particular service was available elsewhere (i.e., Oregon School Board Association (OSBA), CCWD, private consultants, etc.), OCCA does not need to provide it.

3. As we look to the future, are there additional ways that OCCA can help the colleges?

This depends on what happens with CCWD. One member of the leadership team noted that most people at the college do not differentiate between what OCCA does and what CCWD does (especially during the Cam Preus era). RCC recognizes that the OCCA role may need to evolve over the next few years as the roles of the Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC), Oregon Education Investment Board (OEIB), the universities, and other higher education stake holders become more established.

One area discussed was whether OCCA should encourage the development of a Political Action Committee (PAC). Members of the Board and college leadership were split on the question with some opposed to moving this direction while other noted that if K-12, the universities and other higher education constituencies were developing PACs, the community colleges should too.

4. Are there specific services or coordination efforts that you would like to request?

Nothing specific at this time although it was noted that, under the broad range of activities listed as Board Member Services, areas that have been provided by CCWD like cooperative purchasing and grant writing are really essential and if CCWD no longer provides these services, OCCA should consider stepping in.

There was also discussion of the potential for fee-based services for areas such as Board facilitation, bond election analysis, issue research, and help with specific functional areas. Some colleges might want to take advantage of these services if they were offered.

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It was agreed that the answers to question numbers 5 and 6 could be combined.

5. **Are there services needed by small colleges that are not needed by larger colleges?
and**
6. **Are there services needed by larger colleges that are not needed by smaller colleges?**

It was agreed that RCC falls more into the middle of this dichotomy since RCC is a medium sized college. It was suggested that factors such as rural or urban and distance from Salem may be just as significant as size. For RCC, the ability to have a presence in the legislature and state agencies through OCCA is more important than it may be to those located closer to the capital. RCC also serves a partially rural district and some of our needs differ than more urban institutions as the rural-urban gulf in economic opportunity is widening. The group also noted that larger colleges do have “institutional infrastructure capacity” that is lacked by the smaller institutions and OCCA can help coordinate some of these areas.

7. What other thoughts or recommendations do you have about OCCA?

The group noted that it is important for OCCA to consider issues of succession and capacity-building. We are very dependent on OCCA staff Andrea, Karen, and John for certain expertise and leadership in lobbying. OCCA should find ways to mentor and encourage other leaders.

Another observation was that the needs of staff and administrators for OCCA services is operational and often very specific or granular having to do with interpretation and implementation of laws or administrative requirements, while Board needs are often more about the 30,000 ft. view of the higher education landscape.

6. **Closing Remarks** – Dr. Talbert thanked everyone for their input. He volunteered to distribute written notes to Board members and after input is received from members, will work with Denise Nelson to send a formal letter to OCCA.
7. **Adjournment** - The meeting adjourned at 2:55 p.m.