



Board of Trustees Meeting – February 26, 2026, 4:00 p.m.

Student Services Building, Harold W. Ritchey Board Room/Zoom

Board Members in Attendance:

Kori Ann Edwards, Chair
William Shafer, Vice Chair
Paul Widdison (remote)
Brent Bishop (remote)
Greg Sanders
Jan Burrell
Sara Toliver
Cori Anderson
Cameron Cook (remote)
Christine Jacobson-Ware (remote)

Board Members not in Attendance:

Jennifer Zundel

OTech Administration:

James R. Taggart, President
Chad Burchell, Vice President for Instructional Services
Johna Howard, Vice President for Student Services
Tyler Call, Vice President for College Services
Maria Milligan, Associate Vice President for College Advancement
Anita Ruiz, Senior Executive Assistant/Board Secretary

Guests:

Jeremy Shaw, Assistant Attorney General
Paige Lee, Law Clerk, Attorney General's Office
Kim Ziebarth, Associate Commissioner for Technical Education

1. STUDENT SPOTLIGHT: STUDENT OF THE YEAR REPRESENTATIVES

KC Strong, Co-Chair for the Student of the Year committee, introduced the student of the year recipients.

Nalleli Espinoza

Nalleli is a first-generation college student in the Medical Assistant program. She is grateful for OTECH's financial assistance and hands-on learning opportunities. She is also a student at OTECH High School and serves as the HOSA State Northern Region Vice President. Her long-term goal is to become a doctor of gynecology.

- Nalleli shared that she enjoys attending OTECH High and she was able to complete her high school classes early, so she is now taking classes at Weber State University.

Kaysen Parkinson

Kaysen is an Automation Technology student and a Manufacturing Technician graduate. OTECH's instruction and holistic student support services have helped him thrive. He is able to apply his learning to his work as a Harrisville Cannery maintenance technician. His long-term goal is to complete the Controls Technology program and pursue a career in the industrial field.

- Kaysen is just about finished with his Automation Technology program and will continue courses for data analysis and robotics.

Morgan Kobe

Morgan is a graduate of the Practical Nursing program. She appreciates OTECH's high-quality instructors, and positive reputation. She will continue her education this spring through Weber State University's RN program. Her long-term goal is to become a nurse anesthetist.

- Morgan is currently working at Ogden Regional, and she recently received a job offer to complete her capstone hours while being paid to do so.

Araceli Mora

Araceli was not able to join us, but her bio was shared with board members.

Araceli is a first-generation college student in the Cosmetology program. She also completed the Nursing Assistant program while still in high school. She attributes her success to OTECH's affordability and flexibility. Her long-term goal is to become a salon owner and continue her education in the field of immigration law.

2. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

The meeting minutes from October 23, 2025, board of trustees meeting were reviewed and approved as written.

Approval of the Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes from October 23, 2025

Motion to approve: Cori Anderson and seconded by Sara Toliver

Final approval: Motion carried unanimously.

3. APPROVAL OF FY26 BUDGET MODIFICATIONS

Vice President Call explained the need for adjustments to the FY26 Budget.

Operating Revenues

- Student Tuition and Fees - An increase of \$1,124,600 is proposed. Actual adult student headcount increased by 10%, an adjustment not incorporated into the initial FY26 revenue projection. This increase will align the budget with actual revenue generation.
- Federal Grants and Contracts - A decrease of \$191,422 is proposed. The current YouthBuild grant is approaching its conclusion in September 2026, and program needs have become clearer following its transition to the Ogden School District. The budget is being adjusted accordingly

- State and Local Grants and Contracts - A decrease of \$3,470 is proposed. The Strategic Workforce Initiative (SWI) Life Sciences grant was reduced by USHE, and another SWI grant included unbudgeted carryforward funds that are now being incorporated.
- Sales and Services of Educational Departments - An increase of \$90,054 is proposed. The Grill sales continue to exceed expectations; 78% of this increase aligns this budget with actual revenues. The remaining 22% will support the continuing education needs in the Custom Fit and Workforce Development department that were identified after the initial budget was developed.
- Auxiliary Enterprise - A net increase of \$256,884 is proposed, reflecting stronger sales in the College Store and increased revenue in the Testing Center. These adjustments reflect increased service demand, expanded internal support for program materials, and new public-facing testing and fingerprinting services.
 - College Store: Increase \$200,000
 - Other (Testing Center): Increase \$56,884

Operating Expenses

- Cost of Goods Sold - An increase of \$50,000 is proposed. The increase supports higher sales volume and associated supply needs in the Culinary Arts program the College Store.
- Salary and Employee Benefits - A net increase of \$721,240 is proposed. The changes reflect unanticipated retirements, new positions, promotions, and adjustments required to fund personnel costs through year-end.
 - Salaries: Increase \$460,500
 - Employee Benefits: Increase \$260,740
- General Expenses - An increase of \$1,838,583 is proposed. This increase realigns expenses previously budgeted as capital to ensure more accurate classification of operational purchases and the increase needed for the additional students that will receive Pell funding.
- Travel - A decrease of \$96,424 is proposed. This decrease is needed as conference and meeting needs continue to decline due to increased use of virtual and electronic platforms.

Non-Operating Revenues

- Federal Grants - An increase of \$500,000 is proposed. This increase is needed to account for an estimated 100 additional students eligible for Pell funding above the original projections.
- State Grants - A decrease of \$81,300 is proposed. The decrease reflects reductions in a Talent Ready Utah grant and a Learn and Work grant.
- Capital Expenditures - A decrease of \$1,633,291 is proposed. This decrease is due

to the reallocation of certain planned expenditures to general expenses to ensure proper classification and alignment with actual needs. The original budget included costs involved in the event center remodel that will not be completed until FY27.

After review of the budget modifications there were no questions from board members.

Approval of the FY26 Budget Modifications

Motion to approve: Greg Sanders and seconded by Sara Toliver

Final Approval: Motion carried unanimously.

4. APPROVAL OF FY27 STUDENT FEES

President Taggart proposed the elimination of the \$45 enrollment fee for adult students and the \$70 high school fee.

- This change will reduce upfront costs for students by removing the financial barrier they face before their Pell Grant and scholarship funds can be applied.
- This proposal was reviewed with the Student Fee and Tuition Committee as well as the Student Advisory Council, both of which expressed their support for the change.

Trustee Bishop asked how the funds will be replaced?

President Taggart explained that this change will reduce our budget by \$140,000 to \$150,000 a year and that the college will cover this through internal efficiencies.

The fees are currently funding the Student of the Year, National Technical Honor Society, and some functions that take place in our student success center. These functions are value added and the college will continue to support these needs.

Approval of the FY27 Student Fees

Motion to approve: Sara Toliver and seconded by Will Shafer

Final approval: Motion carried unanimously.

5. APPROVAL OF FY27 STUDENT TUITION

President Taggart reviewed the presentation that was shared with the student advisory council, student services subcommittee and during the truth in tuition hearing.

- There is a need for an increase in tuition to cover inflationary costs and increased enrollment. Tuition has not been increased for eight years and at that time it was increased by a nickel.
- Raising tuition is governed by state statute and the board of higher education policy. OTECH sent public announcements, messages to our students, and held a truth in tuition hearing with the public and our students.
- A recommendation of an increase of 5.3% will change the current tuition rate from \$95 per credit hour to \$100 per credit hour.
- OTECH's tuition compared to other technical colleges is much lower and is affordable for our students.

- The college has a high percentage of economically disadvantaged students, and we want to ensure that they do not have a cut in their experience and that they are trained with the best software and equipment that will be used in the real world.
- Associate Commissioner Ziebarth shared that the technical college's tuition ranges from \$95 per credit to \$120 per credit. There is no other technical college that does not charge program and course fees, Ogden-Weber is the lowest and most accessible in the state.
- If our Board of Trustees approves this will give us authorization to submit the increase to the office of the Commissioner of Higher Education for their review. It will then be submitted to the Board of Higher Education to approve. They have the authority to say no, if they say we are funded adequately, or they can say yes that this is reasonable.

President Taggart asked if any of the board members had any questions.

- Trustee Bishop asked if the Board of Higher Education could authorize a higher tuition rate? *President Taggart has not seen this happen in the past.*
- Mr. Bishop also asked if it would be reasonable to raise tuition by smaller increments of 1.5% every year? *President Taggart shared that this is something that the commissioner's office is considering an annual increase rate of 1.5%.*
- Trustee Anderson asked what feedback we received from the students. *President Taggart said that students understood and were grateful that tuition did not increase in eight years. They did like that the fees were going away and with the increase in tuition the removal of the fees helps keep cost low.*
- Chair Edwards shared that this was a very thoughtful process and decision from leadership and board members agreed.

Approval of the FY27 Student Tuition

Motion to approve: Cori Anderson and seconded by Brent Bishop

Final approval: Motion carried unanimously.

6. LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

President Taggart provided an update on the legislative session.

- OTECH's presentation that was given to Higher Education Appropriations Committee was shared with board members.
- Lance Allred, our Student Advisory Council Chair, spent time with the legislature and shared that when a bill is passed it not only impacts the universities it also impacts the technical colleges.
- President Taggart discussed the importance of vertical and horizontal integration and the role of technical colleges in this process.
- AI is impacting technical education. There is an AI Taskforce under the Board of Higher Education that has been established to provide strategic direction for an AI-driven future.

7. INFORMATION ITEMS

Chair Edwards encouraged trustees to review the monthly college reports and information

highlighting student outcomes, budget, and metrics towards meeting strategic plan objectives.

- 8. EXECUTIVE SESSION:** *The board may elect to go into closed session which will not be open to the public, pursuant to Utah Code Title 52, Chapter 4, sections 204, 205, and 206.*

9. OPEN DISCUSSION

- Trustee Toliver shared that we are hosting the LGT World Men's Curling Championship at the Ice Sheet. We hope that this event will go well and we are chosen to have curling here in Ogden for the Olympics rather than SLC. The event is on March 27 through April 4, 2026. Tickets can be purchased at worldcurlingogden.com.

10. NEXT MEETING

April 23, 2026, 4:00 p.m.

11. ADJOURN

With no further discussion items, the meeting adjourned at 5:30 p.m.