

Board of Trustees

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Agency: City Colleges of Chicago

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City Colleges of Chicago Community College District No. 508 currently operates seven accredited colleges located throughout Chicago: Harold Washington, Harry S. Truman, Kennedy-King, Malcolm X, Olive-Harvey, Richard J Daley, Wilbur Wright.

The SCENE

The [Board of Trustees](#), the governing body of the City Colleges, met at the 11th floor conference room at Harold Washington College, 30 E. Lake St. Oct. 3, 2019. The room was arranged in an “L” with trustees on one leg and several rows of staff on the other, with the public facing the staff. About 20 were seated in the public and media section. Dapperly dressed [Chancellor Juan Salgado](#) shook hands and greeted those in the public section before the meeting. The atmosphere was informal, with people bringing their own coffee and late lunch from places in the Loop.

Walter E. Massey Ph.D., chair, called the meeting to order at 2 p.m. as scheduled. All other trustees were present as well: Elizabeth Swanson vice chair; Peggy A. Davis, Clarisol Duque, Karen Kent, Deborah H. Telman, Darrell A. Williams and student trustee Armani Alexander. Also present were Chancellor Salgado, provost Mark Potter and General Counsel Karla M. Gowen.

The meeting was live-streamed and is [available for view](#).

GOALS AND AGENDAS

A committee meeting at 12:30 approved a consent agenda containing a list of contracts and reports on personnel and resource development; an intergovernmental agreement with CHA to provide educational services; a resolution of renewal and non-renewal of non-tenured faculty appointments for the academic year. The meeting recorder (a court reporter) explained that the 12:30 p.m. committee meeting, either Administration and Finance Committee or Academic Affairs and Student Services precedes each bimonthly Trustee meeting. The main board meeting receives reports

and approves the committee's consent agenda.

Massey, president emeritus of the School of the Art Institute in Chicago (SAIC), reported on his meetings with other trustees. He said the schedule for 2020 meetings will be posted online shortly. Since the central City Colleges office has closed, meetings will be rotated between Harold Washington, Malcolm X and Wilbur Wright colleges.

Student trustee Armani Alexander, dental hygiene student at Malcolm X, reported on student government and activities at all seven colleges including Halloween and Day of the Dead, concerts, a Latinx fest, activity clubs from environment and cosmetology to chess; sessions for students to manage time and stress. Students are involved in food pantries at the colleges.

Salgado, in his update, announced that the City Colleges have received \$5.5 million in [workforce grants](#) from the Illinois Community College Board to support certification programs leading directly to students being employed. He said the [CHA collaboration with City Colleges](#) will help more students attend. Of the CHA students, 64% are heads of their households and 81% are women.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Massey stated that each speaker would have four minutes. They spoke fast. The issues were weighty: food and basic education for disadvantaged students.

Food Pantry

Marnee Ostoa, student government association president at Harold Washington, asked the Community College district to contribute to the food pantry programs at the colleges. The service is greatly needed, she said, quoting [Hope Center data](#) that found that at least 45% percent of community college students in the US are food and/or housing-insecure.

Lack of food and housing discourages students from their studies, and Harold Washington's enrollment has been low. [Greater Chicago Food Depository](#), individual colleges and student governments have supported the pantries. Ostoa said they need to become sustainable with guaranteed college funding.

English Developmental Education

Keith Sprewer, Truman College English instructor and representative of Cook County College [Teachers Local 1600](#) said English faculty from all seven colleges have formed a group called "English Discipline" to address issues with Developmental Education. To

finish community college and go on to jobs or baccalaureate education, students emerging from immigration and substandard education backgrounds need remedial English —called “developmental education” or DevEd.

The English Discipline group is asking for more full time English faculty, writing centers, bookstores, accessible laptop computers, ESL (English as Second Language), and services such as tutoring; and research on the effectiveness of DevEd programs with faculty access to data. He presented a letter to administrators ([PDF attached](#)).

Susan Grace, who serves on the Wright College faculty and the joint advisory committee for the community college system, asked for more time for DevEd instructors to work on previously-agreed revisions to their programs. Administrators want to quickly evaluate, and, teachers fear, cut Developmental Ed. Grace said blaming remedial programs for low graduation rates is like “blaming an asthmatic runner’s medicine for not finishing first in a race.” Helping struggling students, she said, is a primary function of community colleges. “We provide public service for all, unconditionally, especially those underserved.” Education for all is a vital function in democracy, she added.

Outside the meeting, another Truman College English instructor, explained that a bill in the state legislature had proposed to put all students into the same level English classes, offering no DevEd or ESL. Also, faculty and union representatives said they had an agreement with administrators to have writing centers and more faculty—but this fell apart after budget cuts.

Layoffs vs Corruption

Michael Held, English teacher at Daley College and member of Local 1600 faculty council, protested the layoffs of four community college teachers and four professional staff members to save the college system \$120,000, while at the same time a new administrative vice president position was created and Dr. Eduardo Garza appointed to it. A board resolution commended Garza, even after he was investigated for ethics issues by the Inspector General’s office as interim president of Daley College. The matter was [reported by WBEZ](#) Aug. 20 2019.

REPORTS

State Grant to Help Black Students

In his District update, Assistant Chancellor Eric B. Lugo gave the District update, said CCC’s \$5.5 million workforce grant will assist African American students with tuition, books, equipment transportation, and certification programs.

Faculty Report: Financial Aid Glitches with Third Party Providers

Adriana Tapanes-Inojosa, PhD, the CCC Faculty council president and grievance chair for HWC Local 1600, gave the faculty group report. She said the faculty council looks forward to hosting board president Massey at a session Dec. 4 at Malcolm X. She decried financial cutbacks to services to students. At a meeting with faculty council Sept. 13, Chancellor Salgado reported that college enrollment declined, but student delinquency rates did also. However, she said there will be problems retaining students due to a lack of coordination with the business and financial aid offices of the college system.

“I witnessed student confusion and frustration,” she said. Third-party contractors were handling student financial aid ([Pro-Education Solutions](#) and payment plans ([Nelnet](#)) leaving staff with no authority to help students through the maze. The contractors were apparently hired and staff positions cut to save money, she said in an interview after the meeting.

Inojosa also criticized administration interference with faculty implementing programs, and endorsed the letter from the English Discipline group.

Vice chair Swanson acknowledged that 2000 students tried to register for class this year and were unable to; administrators are investigating. She gave a brief report on committee actions from the 12:30 meeting.

Naming Facilities

Chair Massey and Swanson and Alexander briefly reported on a committee of students, staff, faculty and trustee who discussed procedures for naming and renaming college facilities and spaces, to reflect needs of the community and also revenue-raising possibilities.

CONSENT AGENDA

After adjourning to executive session at 3:15, the board reconvened at 3:53 p.m. to approve the committee’s consent agenda and finally adjourned at 4 p.m.

FURTHER RESEARCH:

DevEd:

CCC Board Vice chair Beth Swanson was former Mayor Rahm Emanuel’s Deputy for Education as well as working with CCC to match education with needs of local businesses. The goals of CCC’s five-year [“Reinvention”](#) plan implemented during Emanuel’s administration were:

- More students earning college credentials of economic value;
- More CCC grads transferring to bachelor's degree programs;
- Better outcomes for remedial students
- More ABE/GED/ESL students taking and succeeding in college-level courses

Goal-oriented (rather than service-oriented) education models including charter schools have sometimes improved their ratings by discouraging and dropping students who are having trouble in school because of poverty, health and family issues, inadequate previous education, language barriers, transportation or other disadvantage. Is this a reason “increasing enrollment” was not a Reinvention goal and that remedial English is being discouraged?

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