



Washington State

ACT

Association of College Trustees

Trustee Recruitment & Selection Handbook

Washington State ACT Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee

Revision 5.0 (As released) Sept 15, 2021

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Introduction

Appointed by the Governor, District Boards of Trustees play an important role in support of the mission of their colleges and the communities they serve. A pipeline of qualified Trustee applicants, prepared to serve, is essential to the appointment process. While not prescriptive, this Handbook provides an overview of best practices for Boards of Trustees to support that process through intentional needs assessment, and equitable outreach and recruitment. This, combined with thoughtful selection by the Governor's office, helps to ensure that new Trustees, and the Boards they join, are set up for success from the very beginning.

The handbook is divided into three sections:

- An **overview of the statutory obligations, necessary skills, and attributes** expected of Trustees. This, along with any local practices, is important information to share with any prospective applicant.
- An **annual calendar** describing roles, ownership, timing, and supporting resources for needs assessment, recruitment, application support, selection by the Governor's office, announcement of new Trustees, and the transition into onboarding. While this is a typical calendar based on October 1 start dates, mid-term departures of sitting Trustees may occur due to changes in personal or other situations. Also, interested applicants may apply to the Governor's office at any time throughout the year. Boards are advised to adapt this tool accordingly.
- An example **template for boards to intentionally consider their current and possible future composition** across various attributes important in reflecting the students and community they serve. This is an example only, intended to be adapted to best serve local needs.

Important Context Leading to The Creation of This Handbook

We acknowledge that Racial Disparities in Student Achievement Jeopardize the Mission of the State's College System

Washington's Community and Technical Colleges mission, individually and as a System, is to enable "*Better Jobs, Brighter Futures, a Stronger Washington*". Significant and persistent racial disparities in student achievement and employee retention, often with systemic roots, jeopardizes this mission for everyone.

We believe that Leadership Is Essential to Accelerating Progress

"Leading with racial equity, our colleges maximize student potential and transform lives within a culture of belonging that advances racial, social, and economic justice in services to our diverse communities." Progress can only happen if there is a deep appreciation across trustees, presidents, faculty, and staff for changes taking place in each of our communities, and an urgency around creating an intentional culture of antiracism* as demonstrated through policies and practices.

We recognize that Trustees Play a Significant Role However Are Not Consistently Equipped for Success

Trustees play a vital role in leading with racial equity, however today they operate within a legacy framework of System-wide and local culture, policies, and practices that have not been consistently designed with an equity lens**. Efforts to address this are taking place at different rates, often independently, at each of our colleges.

We Resolve to Strengthen Trustee Leadership by Re-envisioning the “Lifecycle” of Trustees Through an Equity Lens

Clarify the role, support individual trustees and boards, and create accountability for their part in accelerating local and System wide progress in eliminating racial disparities in student achievement and employee retention.

Using an Antiracist Lens, We Envision a Trustee Recruitment and Selection Process That Role Models Best Practices in Equitable and Transparent Hiring, including:

- Consistent position description reflecting expectations and qualifications
- Equitable recruitment practices
- Equitable application practices
- Equitable selection practices

* *Antiracism, Antiracist lens:* The intentional practice of taking action to interrupt systemic bias contributing to disparities in equitable outcomes across race.

** *Equity, Equity lens:* The intentional data-based process of examining institutional assumptions, culture, values, policy, practices, programs, and systems (physical, informational, social) to understand how they may create barriers and/or contribute to disparities in outcomes between groups.

More On Becoming a Community College Trustee

Trustee applicants, the boards and colleges they join, and the students and communities they serve are best situated for success with an early and clear understanding of the role and expectations of the position. Appointment to a governance board of a state institution is a great honor, brings with it great responsibility, and may be unlike any board the applicant has ever been a part of.

While each community and technical college will have its own unique goals, strategies, policies, practices, and community context there are some common expectations across the system that all Trustees share. In addition to the following, Boards are advised to share their local district board policies and practices handbook, and other supporting documents, for specific duties and expectations with board prospects considering application. (See April/May/June resources in the recruitment timeline section that follows.)

Boards of Trustees and the Trustees that comprise them, are described in the Revised Code of Washington, RCW 28B.50.100:

"Boards of trustees – Generally.

There is hereby created a board of trustees for each college district as set forth in this chapter. Each board of trustees shall be composed of five trustees, except as provided in RCW 28B.50.102, who shall be appointed by the governor for terms commencing October 1st of the year in which appointed. In making such appointments, the governor shall give consideration to geographical diversity, and representing labor, business, women, and racial and ethnic minorities, in the membership of the boards of trustees. The boards of trustees for districts containing technical colleges shall include at least one member from business and one member from labor.

The successors of the trustees initially appointed shall be appointed by the governor to serve for a term of five years except that any person appointed to fill a vacancy occurring prior to the expiration of any term shall be appointed only for the remainder of the term. Each member shall serve until a successor is appointed and qualified.

Every trustee shall be a resident and qualified elector of the college district. No trustee may be an employee of the community and technical college system, a member of the board of directors of any school district, or a member of the governing board of any public or private educational institution.

Each board of trustees shall organize itself by electing a chair from its members. The board shall adopt a seal and may adopt such bylaws, rules, and regulations as it deems necessary for its own government. Three members of the board shall constitute a quorum, but a lesser number may adjourn from time to time and may compel the attendance of absent members in such manner as prescribed in its bylaws, rules, or regulations. The district president, or if there be none, the president of the college, shall serve as, or may designate another person to serve as, the secretary of the board, who shall not be deemed to be a member of the board.

Each board of trustees shall follow procedures for open public meetings in chapter 42.30 RCW. Each board shall provide time for public comment at each meeting.

Members of the boards of trustees may be removed for misconduct or malfeasance in office in the manner provided by RCW 28B.10.500."

Trustees are individually accountable for compliance with requirements of Ethics in Public Service RCW 42.52.

Trustees are individually required for annual compliance with requirements of RCW 42.17A.710 F1 Statement of Financial Affairs.

In order to effectively contribute to both local and system wide goals in service to students and the community, Board members are expected to demonstrate the following skills and attributes. More information can be found at <https://www.sbctc.edu/about/college-trustees/trustee-resources.aspx>.

Lead with Racial Equity

In doing so our colleges maximize student potential and transform lives within a culture of belonging that advances racial, social, and economic justice in services to our diverse communities. Progress can only happen if there is a deep appreciation across trustees, presidents, faculty, and staff for changes taking place in each of our communities, and an urgency around creating an intentional culture of antiracism as demonstrated through policies and practices.

Know the community needs and trends

Good trustees are connected to the community. They should be aware of the business and economic dynamics within the college district and bring a perspective to the board that reflects the needs of the college's service area.

Commit time and effort

The responsibilities of being a trustee extend far beyond one meeting a month. Trustees need to have the flexibility – and the commitment – to dedicate the time it takes to attend college functions, to study board materials, to participate in committees, and to attend training sessions so they can be informed about the local, state and national trends impacting higher education. Over the course of their appointments, trustees should be willing to commit to continuing professional development locally, through the Washington State Association of College Trustees (ACT), and nationally through the Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT).

Be proactive, visionary and future-oriented

Trustees need to be able to concentrate on policy issues and to set a vision for the future for the college – where it needs to be in 10 or 15-years. Trustees need to set goals to help the college achieve that vision. Trustees should not get into the “how” of achieving the goals – that is the domain of the president and staff.

Be willing to advocate for the college and its students

Most trustees accept their appointment to a board with a general understanding of their policy governance role, but another responsibility is to serve as a strong advocate at the local, state and national levels for their college and the system.

Demonstrate the ability to be a team player

A good trustee is one who has a history working well as part of a team. The power of a board rests with the appointed members acting together, not as individuals. A trustee needs to be willing to work cooperatively to help the board reach consensus and then support the decisions of the board.

Be committed to the college and serving the public good

A valuable trustee is committed to the role the college plays in the community and is committed to working for the good of the college and the students. A trustee should not join a board with a personal agenda or for personal gain.

Be an ethical, respected leader

Trustees set the standard for ethical and professional conduct. A trustee's reputation will reflect on a college. A trustee should be someone who has earned the respect and trust of those who know and work with that individual and someone who will enhance the standing of the college within the community.

Typical Trustee Recruitment Timeline (*)

When	Best Practice	Why	By Whom			How (Resources/Methods/Actions)
			Governor's Office	College District	Trustee Prospect	
January February	<p>Consistent with Open Public Meeting rules the board delegates 2 Trustees to work with the President as a Recruitment Committee. Members are selected along with other committee appointments per local timing and practice, typically in Aug/Sept.</p> <p>With President, recruiting Committee identifies priority needs of the college for future BOT members.</p>	<p>To update board matrix and review priority needs of the board considering district strategies and current board composition.</p> <p>To inform community outreach and courtesy conversations with prospective applicants.</p>		X		<p>District Mission/Strategies/Values</p> <p>District and College demographics</p> <p>District Board Policies, Procedures and/or Handbook</p> <p>Board Matrix</p> <p>Recruitment Committee to have completed Unconscious Bias Training and Equity in Hiring Training within the previous two years. Boards are advised to work through their District President to access training material from their College's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion team. If material is not locally available boards are advised to contact Ha T. Nguyen, Director Equity, Diversity, & Inclusion, WA State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (hnguyen@sbctc.edu, 360-704-1001) to identify additional options. Recruitment Committee should also be familiar with RCW 49.60.400 (I-200) and the federal Equal Protection Clause - contact your assigned District Assistant Attorney General for more information.</p>
March	Recruitment committee communicates expected opening and district priority needs to Governor's office.	Ensure that position opening is equitably and broadly communicated		X		

	<p>This is not a list of names, rather, attributes.</p> <p>Advertise on state systems and publications</p> <p>Opening promoted locally</p>	to all communities that the district serves.	X	X	<p>https://www.governor.wa.gov/boards-commissions/boards-commissions/upcoming-appointment-opportunities</p> <p>District jobs page, social media, word of mouth, to local legislators.</p>	
<p>April</p> <p>May</p> <p>June</p>	<p><u>Courtesy conversations</u> take place between Recruitment Committee and candidate prospects. Note that while best practices for interviews should be utilized, these are NOT actual interviews.</p> <p>Additional Note: The Gov's office has sole authority and discretion in final selection.</p>	To ensure that prospects understand expectations of the role, time commitment, needs of the district, and application process steps.		X	X	<p>Boards are advised to provide candidate prospects with access to the following resources:</p> <p>District Mission/Strategies/Values</p> <p>District Board Policies, Procedures and/or Handbook</p> <p>https://www.sbctc.edu/about/college-trustees/</p> <p>https://www.sbctc.edu/about/college-trustees/trustee-resources.aspx</p> <p>RCW 42.52 Ethics in Public Service</p> <p>RCW 42.17A.710 F1 Statement of Financial Affairs</p> <p>LEGAL OBLIGATIONS OF COLLEGE & UNIVERSITY TRUSTEES: A Reference Guide for New Trustees. H. Bruce Marvin, AAG Ed Division, August 2019 or current revision available from your assigned District Assistant Attorney General.</p>

July	Prospects Complete Application with navigation support from recruitment committee and Governor's office. Application can take place at any time, however typically after local courtesy conversations in April-June timeframe.	To ensure prospects are successful in submitting a complete application.	X	X	X	https://www.governor.wa.gov/boards-commissions/boards-commissions/apply-serve-board-or-commission https://govforms.dynamics365portals.us/recommendation-form/
August	Recruitment committee confers with Governor's office Governor's office completes due diligence and interviews with 3+ applicants	To provide any additional information to support Governor's office application due diligence. To identify and select new district BOT member.	X X	X		Individuals conducting due diligence, interviews, and selection of applicants to have completed Unconscious Bias Training and Equity in Hiring Training within the previous two years. Such individuals should also be familiar with RCW 49.60.400 (I-200) and the federal Equal Protection Clause - contact the state Attorney General's office for more information.
September	Announce selected applicant	So that there is statewide visibility So that there is district level visibility	X		X	https://www.governor.wa.gov/boards-commissions/board-and-commissions/board-commission-profiles District web page, social media, media, Board meeting, etc.
October	Term Begins Board peer mentor assigned and begins onboarding			X	X	https://www.sbctc.edu/resources/documents/about/trustees/nto-checklist-30.pdf
November	30 Day onboarding review	To ensure a smooth transition to an effective		X	X	https://www.sbctc.edu/resources/documents/about/trustees/nto-checklist-90.pdf

		and satisfying term as Trustee				
December	90 Day and ongoing onboarding reviews	To ensure a smooth transition to an effective and satisfying term as Trustee		X	X	https://www.sbctc.edu/resources/documents/about/trustees/nto-roadmap.pdf

(*) Note: This is a typical timeline for normal board terms beginning October 1. However, prospects may apply at any time throughout the year. Also, from time-to-time mid-term openings may occur due to the early departure of a sitting Trustee.

Example Board Matrix (1/3)

Note: This is an example for boards to intentionally consider their current and possible future composition across various attributes important in reflecting the students and community they serve. Board matrices are intended to be adapted to best serve local needs, self-disclosed, and not a requirement. **Board matrices are for district internal use only, not to be shared with the Governor's office responsible for final selection, and subject to legally allowed public disclosure.**

		Board Members Profile							
		District Demographics (www.census.gov)	College Student Profile (SBCTC Field Guide)	Trustee 1	Trustee 2	Trustee 3	Trustee 4	Trustee 5	Student Trustee
Board Officer and Committee Experience									
Board Terms									
	Began Term 1 (dd/mm/yyyy)								
	End Term 1 (dd/mm/yyyy)								
	Began Term 2 (dd/mm/yyyy)								
	End Term 2 (dd/mm/yyyy)								
Example Committee Service (past or current)									
	Chair								
	Vice Chair								
	Strategy Commi								
	Legislative Action Committee								
	Foundation (Rep #1)								
	Foundation (Rep #2)								
	Board Budget Committee								
	Facilities Master Plan								
	WA ACT DEI Committee								
	Guided Pathways								
	BOT Recruiting Committee								
	Strategy Committee								
	Presidential Search								
	Presidential Onboarding								
	Other Committees per local practice								

Example Board Matrix (2/3)

		District Demographics (www.census.gov)	College Student Profile (SBCTC Field Guide)	Trustee 1	Trustee 2	Trustee 3	Trustee 4	Trustee 5	Student Trustee
Board Demographics (Utilized to help ensure a well represented board reflecting the students and community the district serves)									
How do you identify? (Check all that apply)									
	Female	__%	__%						
	Male	__%	__%						
	Nonbinary								
	Transgender								
	Gender Diverse								
	Gay								
	Lesbian								
	Bisexual								
	Other								
	Prefer Not to Answer								
Race/Ethnicity (Check all that apply)									
	American Indian or Alaska Native	__%	__%						
	Asian	__%	__%						
	Black or African American	__%	__%						
	Hispanic/Latino	__%	__%						
	Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander	__%	__%						
	White	__%	__%						
	Mixed race								
	Identifies Systemically Non-dominant (Race, gender identity, disability, or sexual orientation)	__%	__%						
Age Cohort									
	Generation Alpha: Born 2013 -								
	Generation Z: Born 1997-2012		__ (median)						
	Millennial: Born 1981-1996	__ (median)							
	Generation X: Born 1965-1980								
	Boomer: Born 1946-1964								
	Silent Generation: Born 1928-1945								
Home Geography									
	District Subgeography 1								
	District Subgeography 2								
	District Subgeography 3								
	District Subgeography 4								
	District Subgeography 5								
	Lived or Worked Abroad? (Y/N)								
	Multilingual ? (specific)								

Example Board Matrix (3/3)

		District Demographics (www.census.gov)	College Student Profile (SBCTC Field Guide)	Trustee 1	Trustee 2	Trustee 3	Trustee 4	Trustee 5	Student Trustee
Academic Background									
Past District K-12 Student? (Y/N)									
Past District College Student? (Y/N)									
Past Community College Student? (Y/N)									
Academic Degree(s)									
First Gen? (Y/N)			__%						
Professional Experience									
Work Status									
	Working FT								
	Working PT								
	Retired								
	Volunteer								
(Prof)esional Fields and/or Community (Network)s in College Areas of Study									
	Advanced Manufacturing and Mechanical								
	Business and Entrepreneurship								
	Creative and Communication Arts								
	Health Care and Biosciences								
	Public Service, Society, and Education								
	Science, Technology, and Engineering								
	Other (ex: Judicial/criminal justice, DEI, Government, Public Relations, Marketing, etc)								
Job Sector Work Experience									
	For Profit (Business)								
	Labor								
	Non-Profit								
	Education								
	Government								
	Military (Veteran)								
	Foundation Experience								
	Faculty Experience								
	Guest Lecturer Experience								
	Elected Experience								
Non-College Board Experience									