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CSU Board of Trustees Meeting March 23-26, 2025

Faculty Trustee Report Darlene Yee-Melichar

The CSU Board of Trustees meets six times a year. Meetings allow for communication among the Trustees, Chancellor, campus presidents, Academic Senate, California State Student Association and Alumni Council.

The spring meeting of the Board occurred on March 23-26, 2025. It started on Sunday, March 23 in an all-day Closed Session for discussion about Executive Personnel Matters [Government Code §11126(a)(1)]. The Board also met on Monday, March 24 in an all-day Closed Session for discussion about Executive Personnel Matters [Government Code §11126(a)(1)]; Pending Litigation [Government Code §11126(e)(1)]; and Anticipated Litigation. The Board then met on Tuesday and Wednesday, March 25-26 in Open Session for public comments, information items and action items.

The Board's full agenda and background materials (280 pages) for the March 2025 meeting are available at <https://www.calstate.edu/csu-system/board-of-trustees/past-meetings/2025/Documents/Mar-23-26-2025-full-binder.pdf>. The Board meetings are broadcast live to the public; you may access the live stream videos on YouTube associated with Open Session at <https://www.calstate.edu/csu-system/board-of-trustees/past-meetings/2025/Pages/March-23-26-2025.aspx>.

For the full Board and committee meetings held in Open Session, I provide links to the specific meeting materials and videos; brief summaries using ChatGPT with technical assistance provided by [SF State Academic Technology](#) and in concurrence with my personal meeting notes; and share my brief queries or requests for feedback below for your consideration. If you have any comments, corrections, and/or questions regarding my Faculty Trustee Report, please let me know (dyee@calstate.edu). I look forward to hearing from you; **thank you**.

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March 23-26, 2025 (Full Agenda)

On Sunday, March 23, at 9:00 a.m., the Board convened in Closed Session to discuss Executive Personnel Matters [Government Code §11126(a)(1)].

On Monday, March 24, at 1:00 p.m., the Board met in Closed Session to discuss Executive Personnel Matters [Government Code §11126(a)(1)]; Pending Litigation [Government Code §11126(e)(1)] including Wilson v. CSU, Weber/Rogers v. CSU, Lencioni, et al. v. Cutrer, et al.; and Anticipated Litigation.

On Tuesday, March 25, at 8:40 a.m., the Board met in Closed Session for the Committee on Collective Bargaining [Government Code §3596(d)] then met the rest of the meeting in Open Session for public comments, information items and action items. Note: According to California Education Code § 66602 (c2), the Faculty Trustee "shall not participate on any subcommittee of the board responsible for collective bargaining negotiations." In my role as Faculty Trustee, I am not party to this latter discussion.

Tuesday, March 25, 2025

9:00 a.m. – Plenary Session (Day 1)

Read Materials: [Agenda](#) | [Stakeholder Engagement Handout](#) | [Stakeholder Engagement Data Summary](#) | [SOVA Presentation](#)

Watch Video: [Public Comments](#)

CSU Board of Trustees Chair Jack B. Clarke, Jr. called the March 25, 2025, Plenary Session to order. The public comment period began with a reminder of participation guidelines: speakers were given one minute, time could not be yielded, and the Board would not respond, but would listen attentively. Trustees and campus presidents were seated to better hear public remarks.

More than 100 speakers participated in the public comment session, representing students, faculty, staff, union members, parents, alumni, and community advocates from across the CSU. Major themes included opposition to layoffs, elimination of intercollegiate athletics at Sonoma State University (SSU), preservation of sacred Indigenous land at Cal State Long Beach, concern about mental health support and tuition increases, and criticism of system leadership and governance processes.

A large contingent from Teamsters Local 2010 spoke out against recent layoffs of skilled trades workers, especially at CSU Dominguez Hills. Union members including Ali Tweeni, Scott Moreno, Spencer Owen, Jorge Martinez, Ernesto Torres, and Richard Foot described the toll of understaffing on safety, morale, and essential services. They noted that layoffs have disproportionately affected long-serving employees, strained remaining staff, and risked costly emergency repairs. Several speakers called on administrators to take pay cuts before reducing front-line labor and asked the Board to halt further layoffs.

Speakers also addressed CSU-wide workforce reductions, pointing to the loss of 11%–16% of positions, hiring freezes, and increased workloads. A recurring concern was that deteriorating campus conditions—classrooms, restrooms, general maintenance—would make it harder to attract students and could accelerate enrollment decline.

A major focus of the session was the elimination of all 12 intercollegiate athletic programs at Sonoma State University. Coaches, student-athletes, alumni, faculty, and parents—including Amiria Salsman, Valentine Verance, Jess Dmac, Taylor Hodges, Emily Miranda, Maya Zamurio, Jackson Gillion, and Rich Shayewitz—emphasized that athletics foster community, retention, mental health, and pride. Many described personal sacrifices made to attend and support SSU through athletics, and called the cuts abrupt, non-transparent, and harmful. They cited financial analyses showing athletics as a net benefit and urged the Board and Chancellor to pause, reconsider, and collaborate with local stakeholders, donors, and legislators to restore the programs.

Several speakers also criticized the suspension of SSU's presidential search, tying it to a perceived lack of long-term vision and accountability. Speakers like David Adler, Marcus Zeamer, and Josh Sterling questioned why drastic cuts were being made during a leadership vacuum and described the impact on regional identity and campus spirit.

The conversation on athletics extended to San Francisco State and broader CSU practices. Multiple speakers objected to the framing of athletics as expendable and urged CSU leadership to recognize the value of NCAA programs in student success and university sustainability.

Students and faculty also raised concerns about mental health services and the erosion of trust in system leadership. Alyssa, a student from Cal State Long Beach, spoke about underfunded cultural centers, insufficient ADA accessibility, and the impact of new campus protest policies. Carla Castillo, a therapist and faculty counselor from San Francisco State, called for meeting the recommended 1:1,500 counselor-to-student ratio, especially in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Advocates for Native land protection—including Joyce Perry, Anna Christensen, Caroline Kolsworthy, and Scarlet Alomero—urged the CSU to honor its 2021 legal agreement with tribal nations to protect Puvungna, a sacred site on the Cal State Long Beach campus. Speakers criticized the university for failing to implement a conservation easement and for rejecting the Tongva Conservancy's stewardship proposal. They framed the issue as both a moral and legal obligation.

Student and faculty voices also addressed program eliminations beyond athletics. Several lamented the proposed closure of the philosophy department at SSU, describing it as essential to public education, ethics, and fields like artificial intelligence. Professor John Sullins and others urged investment in critical thinking disciplines instead of cuts. Suggestions included repositioning SSU as a liberal and performing arts hub like Humboldt's transformation with state investment.

Other issues raised during public comment included the CSU's response to a sexual assault case at Cal Poly, the need for international students to access housing during academic breaks, and a proposed dormitory complex at SDSU in a fire-prone zone. Speakers also voiced concern about the Chancellor's visibility and accessibility, with one faculty member noting the absence of town halls or meetings with faculty union leadership.

Student-athletes, including Cypress Navaro Su, Vincent Lanchone, and Brian Chang, shared deeply personal stories of how CSU athletics programs gave them purpose, community, and opportunities otherwise unavailable. Parents like Janet Zamurio and Sean Hanshaw spoke of their children's transformations through college sports and

expressed frustration with the lack of transparency. Speakers warned that eliminating athletics would create long-term damage, both financially and culturally, for the CSU.

Several alumni and former coaches—including Brandon Gilbert, Alexis Hayes, and Ugoi Nidoka—testified to the life-changing impact of CSU athletics and called for leadership that values legacy, inclusion, and long-term planning. The public comment concluded with a call to “save Seawolf Athletics,” preserve the CSU mission, and recognize that “students are not numbers on a spreadsheet.”

Chair Clarke thanked all speakers for their participation and announced a short recess before the next agenda item.

Tuesday, March 25, 2025

11:00 a.m. – Plenary Session (Day 1)

Read Materials: [Agenda](#) | [Stakeholder Engagement Handout](#) | [Stakeholder Engagement Data Summary](#) | [SOVA Presentation](#)

Watch Video: [Plenary Session Reports](#)

Chair Clarke opened the continued Plenary Session with a reflection on recent developments in system governance. He highlighted the Board’s retreat earlier in the year, which focused on four major themes: artificial intelligence, strategic planning, philanthropy, and federal relations. The retreat featured expert analysis and campus president input and led to plans for streamlining Board operations and incorporating concurrent committee structures.

The Board also received an update on the 2025 National Social Mobility Symposium held at Cal State San Marcos. Chancellor Mildred García delivered a keynote address, and over 425 attendees participated in panel discussions focused on equity and student success. The event was noted not only for elevating social mobility but for allowing student protest to occur peacefully, which the Chair framed as part of the CSU’s commitment to constitutional expression. Chancellor García reaffirmed that social mobility remains the CSU’s core mission, with all 23 campuses represented in the new California Mobility Index.

Chancellor García announced a new direct admissions pilot in Riverside County, enabling students from all public high schools to be automatically admitted to 10 CSU campuses without applying. This effort, in partnership with the Riverside County Office of Education and California’s Cradle to Career Data Exchange, has already seen nearly 1,700 students commit to CSU enrollment. Discover CSU fairs reached over 13,000 students.

In terms of state support, the CSU secured a redirection of unused Cal Grant funds to close an \$80 million shortfall in the Middle-Class Scholarship program, enabling over 238,000 CSU students to receive full awards. The system also attracted over \$800 million

in research grants and was recognized by the Carnegie Classification framework, with SDSU earning R1 status.

Chancellor García was recognized as the 2025 recipient of the TIAA Institute's Theodore M. Hesburgh Award for leadership in higher education. She reiterated CSU's advocacy priorities, noting upcoming visits to Sacramento and Washington, D.C. to safeguard funding and expand strategic partnerships. In Washington, D.C., Chancellor García met with bipartisan federal lawmakers and addressed the reestablished California Public Higher Education Caucus.

Student success was underscored in the spotlight presentation of Carrington Hendris, a Cal State East Bay student awarded a Marshall Scholarship to study mental health policy at Oxford. She shared personal experiences that shaped her advocacy work and was praised by the trustees for her leadership.

Dr. Betsy Boyd, Chair of the Academic Senate CSU (ASCSU), presented the senate report. She acknowledged the land of Indigenous nations and emphasized the ASCSU's work in advocacy, shared governance, and legislative priorities. Nine resolutions were passed and 12 first-read items reviewed. Key themes included budget transparency, ASSIST data updates for transfer students, support for faculty engagement, and safeguarding academic freedom. Chair Boyd highlighted the value of faculty voice in systemwide efforts to address fiscal challenges.

Iese Esera, President of the California State Student Association (CSSA), delivered the student report, sharing recent student-led advocacy around budget protection, housing affordability, and undocumented student support. The CSSA voted to support and co-sponsor multiple state bills and is preparing a white paper on housing solutions. A resolution called for creation of an undocumented student advisory council. The CSSA also celebrated its 30th annual Higher Education Student Summit, which concluded with advocacy meetings at the Capitol involving over 250 students.

John Poli, President of the CSU Alumni Council, also reported on its outreach and advocacy. Recent meetings focused on budget priorities and strategic planning. A campaign at Cal State East Bay used motivational alumni video messages to increase re-enrollment among at-risk students, achieving a 27% success rate. The CSU Alumni Council plans to expand the project for guaranteed admission students.

Vice Chancellor Greg Saks provided a federal relations update, noting meetings with members of Congress and a forthcoming CSU panel during Hill Week. CSU leadership continues to monitor federal executive actions that affect funding, research, and compliance. The Chancellor's Office legal and academic affairs teams are working to safeguard over \$150 million in research funding and assist campuses with regulatory demands.

The CSU budget proposal dominated discussion. The Governor's proposed \$375 million cut and deferred compact funding drew unified concern. The CSU delegation—over 100 strong—held more than 80 meetings with legislators, gaining support from 61 lawmakers. Trustees were asked to participate in upcoming advocacy visits. Despite fiscal uncertainty, Chancellor García expressed cautious optimism.

A separate update addressed Sonoma State University's cost-reduction plans. A turnaround strategy is in development, and the presidential search will resume in the next academic year. Sonoma State, San Francisco State, and Cal State East Bay will pilot a shared administrative model called the San Francisco Bay Area University Network. The initiative aims to preserve access and efficiency without merging academic operations.

Finally, Dr. Alison Kadlec and the systemwide planning team reported on the CSU strategic plan. Thousands of stakeholders participated in consultations to shape a vision for long-term viability and student-centered transformation. The plan focuses on five areas: identity and value, student success, teaching and learning, operational excellence, and financial stability. Special attention was given to adaptive and responsive teaching, presented by Dr. Saul Jiménez-Sandoval and Dr. Boyd, who emphasized that faculty engagement is critical to improving equity and learning outcomes. The steering committee will return in September with a proposed final plan.

Trustee McGrory inquired about disruptions to federal Pell Grant processing due to Department of Education staffing changes. Staff confirmed that campuses are receiving some data and assisting students, but gaps remain. The session concluded with a lunch break and announcement of the Board's closed session.

Tuesday, March 25, 2025

11:45 a.m. – Committee on Collective Bargaining

Read Materials: [Agenda](#)

Watch Video: [Committee on Collective Bargaining](#)

The Committee on Collective Bargaining was convened by Trustee Adamson, who presided over the brief session. Trustee Adamson called for the approval of the consent agenda and inquired if any committee member wished to remove an item for separate discussion. Hearing no objections, a motion was made and seconded. The consent agenda was then unanimously approved without further comment.

There were no presentations or discussion items on the agenda, and no questions or remarks from trustees. Trustee Adamson confirmed the approval of the agenda item and concluded the session. Chair Clarke thanked Trustee Adamson and noted the conclusion of the Committee on Collective Bargaining's business.

Tuesday, March 25, 2025

1:35 p.m. – Committee on Audit

Read Materials: [Agenda](#)

Watch Video: [Committee on Audit](#)

The Committee on Audit was convened by Trustee Steinhauser, following introductory remarks by Chair Clarke. Chair Clarke acknowledged the conclusion of service by Trustees Lillian Kimbell and Anna Ortiz-Morfit, who previously served as Chair and Vice Chair of the Audit Committee. He announced that Trustee Steinhauser would serve as Chair and Trustee Yammilette Rodriguez as Vice Chair of the committee for the March and May 2025 meetings.

Trustee Steinhauser called the meeting to order and moved immediately to the consent agenda. Hearing no requests for separate discussion, the committee approved the agenda without objection. There were no additional items for presentation or deliberation, and the committee adjourned promptly. Chair Clarke thanked Trustee Steinhauser and confirmed the conclusion of the Committee on Audit's business.

Tuesday, March 25, 2025

1:45 p.m. - Committee on Governmental Relations

Read Materials: [Agenda](#)

Watch Video: [Committee on Governmental Relations](#)

The Committee on Governmental Relations was convened by Trustee Rodriguez, who opened the session by recognizing the successful execution of CSU Advocacy Day in Sacramento. She thanked Vice Chancellor Greg Saks and his team, including Associate Vice Chancellor Patty Navalta, for their leadership in organizing the event and preparing advocacy toolkits for campuses. Trustee Rodriguez also acknowledged the joint letter led by Assemblymember Mike Fong and signed by 61 legislators opposing the proposed \$375 million cut to CSU funding.

A written update on CSU compliance with NAGPRA and CalNAGPRA was included in the agenda packet. The consent agenda was approved without discussion. The committee then received a comprehensive legislative and budget advocacy update presented by VC Saks, alongside Assistant Vice Chancellors Nathan Dietrich and Ryan Storm and Associate Vice Chancellor Navalta.

VC Saks reported that over 2,600 bills had been introduced in the current session, with more than 500 flagged for review and 37 marked as priorities. He discussed challenges related to affordability, financial aid, fee waivers, and proposed expansions to community college bachelor's degree authority—initiatives that could disrupt the Master Plan for Higher Education. VC Saks emphasized the importance of proactive legislative engagement.

Assistant Vice Chancellor Ryan Storm detailed the projected impact of the Governor's proposed cut, warning that individual campuses could face reductions between \$6 million and \$29 million. He described a campaign-style advocacy strategy that unites CSU divisions with partners such as CSSA, the Academic Senate, and the Alumni Council. More than 80 legislative meetings were held during Advocacy Day, resulting in \$40 million being removed from the proposed budget reduction.

Associate Vice Chancellor Pati Navalta introduced CSU's strategic communications campaign, designed to personalize, and humanize the consequences of budget cuts. Local narratives, media kits, op-eds, and social media under the hashtag #StopCSUCuts are being leveraged across all 23 campuses. She noted increased press coverage, growing public engagement, and strong involvement from campus presidents and alumni leaders.

Trustee Yee-Melichar thanked the presenters and asked whether any bills had been identified as high risk to CSU operations and what steps were being taken in response. VC Saks confirmed concerns over multiple bills—particularly those involving overlapping bachelor's degrees with community colleges—and outlined the CSU's response through stakeholder briefings, expanded partnerships, and targeted grant applications.

Additional trustees echoed the urgency of the issue. Trustee Vargas emphasized the importance of localized, community-based advocacy, while Trustee Gilbert-Lurie encouraged trustees to participate in district-level engagement efforts. Chair Clarke and others voiced concerns about the lack of a formal compact and urged a more assertive approach, highlighting the disparity between proposed cuts to CSU and other state agencies such as Corrections.

Trustees discussed expanding outreach to prospective students and families and suggested creative strategies for calls to action. Several trustees recommended campus-specific plans for local advocacy and urged coordination with the Chancellor's Office to align efforts. Trustee Rodriguez concluded the session by affirming the Board's commitment to advocacy in the weeks ahead. She previewed upcoming events including the CSU Trustees Advocacy Day on April 29 and a rally on May 5.

Tuesday, March 25, 2025

2:30 p.m. – Committee on Educational Policy

Read Materials: [Agenda](#) | [Full Presentation Packet](#) | [Academic Planning Handout](#) | [Intercollegiate Athletics Handout](#)

Watch Video: [Committee on Educational Policy](#)

The Committee on Educational Policy was convened by Trustee Arambula. The session included three primary agenda items: a proposed amendment to the Constitution of the Academic Senate CSU (ASCSU), the 2025 Academic Planning report, and a presentation on the state of intercollegiate athletics within the CSU system.

The first item was a proposed amendment to the ASCSU Constitution to include designated seats for lecturer faculty. DVC Nathan Evans introduced the item, supported by ASCSU Chair Boyd and ASCSU Vice Chair Swenson. The proposal aims to recognize the vital contributions of lecturer faculty across the system by ensuring diverse representation in the Academic Senate CSU's structure.

Trustee Yee-Melichar spoke in support of the amendment and requested additional demographic data on faculty diversity across the CSU. She emphasized the need for empirical evidence to monitor diversity in both tenure-line and lecturer representation. She proposed an amendment to the board resolution, asking that the ASCSU provide a biennial analysis of faculty and Senate demographics disaggregated by race, ethnicity, gender, and employment status, along with stated goals for improving diversity, equity, and inclusion. The committee unanimously accepted the proposed language. Trustees Lopez and Rodriguez expressed support for the added transparency and accountability measures.

DVC Evans then presented the 2025 Academic Planning Report, highlighting current and projected degree program activity across the 23 CSU campuses. He noted the ongoing alignment of program proposals with regional and statewide workforce demands—particularly in health, business, engineering, and computing. Trustees inquired about program sunseting and program-to-employment alignment.

Dr. Brent Foster, Assistant Vice Chancellor of Academic Programs and Faculty Development, and Dr. Caron Inouye, Interim State University Dean of Academic Programs, addressed concerns and questions raised by the trustees. Trustee Steinhauer asked whether campuses were actively discontinuing underperforming programs, to which DVC Evans confirmed that program deactivation is reviewed regularly. Trustees Arambula and Clarke requested further detail on labor market alignment to inform planning decisions.

The final item was a special presentation on Intercollegiate Athletics led by DVC Dilcie Perez. The presentation contextualized the recent decisions by CSU campuses—particularly Sonoma State and San Francisco State—to eliminate or reduce intercollegiate athletic programs. Dr. Perez provided data on the structure, scope, and cost of athletics across the system, including enrollment figures, student-athlete demographics, and compliance obligations under Title IX and NCAA/NAIA regulations.

Assistant Vice Chancellor Ray Murillo described significant cost pressures facing campuses, including facility upgrades, staffing, and operational expenses. Trustees discussed the tradeoffs involved in maintaining athletics alongside other institutional priorities. Trustees raised concerns about gender equity, and Trustee Lopez emphasized the need for transparent, consultative processes before making decisions that impact

athletics. Trustee Steinhauser asked about the potential for systemwide standards or guidance in evaluating program viability.

Trustee Yee-Melichar inquired about the role of shared governance and whether faculty and students had been consulted prior to Sonoma State's decision. DVC Perez acknowledged limited consultation in that case and stated that the Chancellor's Office had since encouraged more robust outreach by the interim president. Chair Clarke added that a lack of transparency in such decisions damages institutional trust and student morale.

Trustee Arambula concluded the session by urging campuses to ensure that athletic decisions are consistent with CSU values, transparent in execution, and aligned with systemwide equity and student success goals. He noted that the topic would return to future meetings for continued discussion.

Wednesday, March 26, 2025

9:00 a.m. – Announcements

Watch Video: [Announcements](#)

Chair Clarke opened the final day of the March 2025 Board of Trustees meeting with two formal announcements. First, he reported that the Board has extended the search timeline for the next president of California State Polytechnic University, Humboldt. Chair Clarke emphasized that the decision was made by the Chancellor, the search advisory committee, and the trustees in alignment with their commitment to inclusive excellence. He expressed gratitude to Interim President Michael Spagna for his continued leadership during the transition and affirmed that additional updates regarding the search would be provided in the coming weeks.

Chair Clarke also acknowledged and thanked California Lieutenant Governor Eleni Kounalakis for her presence at the meeting, offering appreciation on behalf of the Board for her support and service. Following his remarks, Chair Clarke invited Chancellor Mildred García to deliver two personnel-related announcements.

Chancellor García began by announcing the appointment of [Frank Hurtarte](#) as the new Vice Chancellor of Human Resources and Chief Human Resources Officer. Hurtarte, previously a Senior Vice President at Kaiser Permanente, will begin his role with the CSU on April 14, 2025. Chancellor García highlighted his extensive background in managing large-scale HR operations.

Chancellor García then announced that Patrick Lenz has been appointed as Interim Executive Vice Chancellor of Business and Finance and Chief Financial Officer, effective July 1, 2025. Lenz previously served as a special consultant to the CSU and brings extensive experience in California public higher education finance.

Chancellor García expressed deep appreciation to Al Liddicoat, who has been serving as Interim Vice Chancellor for Human Resources, for his distinguished service. She noted that he would return to work with President Armstrong at Cal Poly San Luis Obispo. Chancellor García also paid tribute to outgoing Executive Vice Chancellor and CFO Steve Relyea, commending his 12 years of dedicated service, and stating that a formal celebration would be planned later.

Chair Clarke closed the announcements segment by congratulating the new appointees and thanking the outgoing leaders for their extraordinary contributions. He noted that executive compensation items related to the appointments would be addressed in the upcoming Committee on University and Faculty Personnel session, with amended material already posted to the agenda website.

Wednesday, March 26, 2025

8:00 a.m. – Committee on University and Faculty Personnel

Read Materials: [Agenda](#)

Watch Video: [Committee on University and Faculty Personnel](#)

The Committee on University and Faculty Personnel was convened by Trustee Fong. The committee began with approval of the consent agenda, which passed without objection. Chancellor García presented two executive compensation items for committee action. The first involved Frank Hurtarte, newly appointed Vice Chancellor of Human Resources and Chief Human Resources Officer. Hurtarte, who previously served as Senior Vice President of Human Resources at Kaiser Permanente, brings over two decades of HR leadership across operations, compliance, labor relations, and culture-building. Chancellor García recommended an annual salary of \$360,000, with a \$1,000 monthly auto allowance, standard executive benefits, and a temporary monthly housing allowance of \$3,500 effective April 14, 2025. The committee approved the recommendation unanimously.

The second compensation item was for Patrick Lenz, appointed as Interim Executive Vice Chancellor of Business and Finance and Chief Financial Officer. Lenz is a seasoned public higher education finance expert with more than 40 years of experience in budget and capital outlay matters. A San José State graduate, Lenz has held leadership roles in the California Community Colleges, University of California, and CSU. His most recent contributions include advising on the CSU sustainable financial model and tuition policy. Chancellor García recommended an annual salary of \$386,529, consistent with his predecessor, along with the standard benefits, a \$1,000 monthly auto allowance, and a \$3,500 monthly housing allowance. The committee approved the item without comment.

The committee then received a detailed update on Civil Rights Programs and Services. Dr. Al Liddicoat, Interim Vice Chancellor for Human Resources; Dr. Peter Lim, Executive Advisor for Civil Rights; and Dr. Steve Perez, Chico State President provided the report.

Dr. Liddicoat highlighted leadership continuity and the restructuring of the Chancellor's Office civil rights team, including the appointment of Dr. Peter Lim, who brings over 20 years of experience in civil rights law and Title IX compliance. The team has filled several senior director positions, and a national search is underway for the next Associate Vice Chancellor for Civil Rights.

The CSU has completed 15 of the 16 recommendations from the California State Auditor, with only the CSU-wide case management system remaining. Implementation is underway using Case IQ, with initial deployment at five campuses. The CSU has also responded to legal shifts following the January 2025 suspension of the 2024 federal Title IX regulations. The system has reverted to the 2020 Title IX framework and has revised its policies to ensure continued compliance with state and federal law.

A three-track case resolution system was established to support a trauma-informed and inclusive approach. President Perez described Chico State's implementation of its civil rights plan as a model for the CSU. Their strategy included the creation of a "climate and culture" unit, relocation of the Title IX office to a more accessible student-facing building and expanded employee and student training programs. President Perez reported 56 in-person sessions reaching over 2,000 attendees in 2024 alone. Chico State received high marks in 22 of 30 categories during its civil rights program review. Key initiatives included community agreements, restorative justice training, enhanced communication strategies, and the development of multimedia content and incentive programs to increase student engagement.

Trustees responded with praise and concern. Trustee Faigin emphasized that the Board must engage deeply in oversight, even amid complex regulatory terrain. Chair Clarke and Lieutenant Governor Kounalakis highlighted the importance of urgency and transparency, especially in cases involving sexual misconduct. Trustee Lopez stressed a culture-over-compliance approach and inquired about the impact of shifting federal Title IX regulations.

Trustee Gilbert-Lurie asked about structured opportunities for sharing best practices among campus presidents and emphasized the importance of creating safe, respectful campus environments. Trustee Arambula commended the launch of a new certificate program at CSU Long Beach to train Title IX investigators, a direct response to hiring challenges. The session concluded with gratitude extended to Dr. Liddicoat for his interim leadership and to President Armstrong for sharing his service. Chair Clarke adjourned the meeting.

Wednesday, March 26, 2025
10:00 a.m. - Committee on Organization and Rules
Read Materials: [Agenda](#)

Watch Video: [Committee on Organization and Rules](#)

The Committee on Organization and Rules was convened by Trustee Firstenberg. The committee first approved the consent agenda, which included the minutes from the January 2025 meeting. There was no discussion or objection, and the item passed unanimously.

The committee then turned to its sole information item, a proposed Board of Trustees policy for the conferral of emeritus and emerita titles to trustees and system executives. Michelle Kiss, Associate Vice Chancellor and Chief of Staff to the Board, presented the proposal. She explained that while the CSU has historically conferred such honorary titles to individuals for distinguished service, the absence of a formal, codified policy has resulted in inconsistent practices and lack of transparency.

This proposed policy was developed at the request of Board Chair Clarke and Chancellor García as part of a broader effort to strengthen CSU governance and institutional integrity. It was created in consultation with the Office of General Counsel, Systemwide Human Resources, senior governance experts, and Trustees Firstenberg and Gilbert-Lurie, who serve as chair and vice chair of the committee.

The policy establishes consistent eligibility criteria for emeritus/emerita designation. Trustees— including student, faculty, and alumni trustees— would be eligible upon completion of their appointed term in good standing, with discretion reserved for the Chair and Chancellor in exceptional cases. CSU presidents and system executives would be eligible upon retirement or resignation in good standing with at least five years of service, unless an exception is granted in recognition of extraordinary contributions.

AVC Kiss emphasized that the policy also provides a pathway for conferring commendations to individuals who may not meet the formal criteria but have demonstrated exceptional service to the CSU. The proposed framework is aligned with policies at comparable institutions, including the University of California Board of Regents, Minnesota State Colleges and Universities, and the State University of New York. The intent is to formalize a longstanding CSU tradition while ensuring clarity, integrity, and accountability.

Trustee Firstenberg expressed full support for the proposed policy, describing it as a welcome clarification of process and structure. No other trustees offered additional comments or questions. The policy was presented for information only and is expected to return for action at the May 2025 Board of Trustees meeting. Trustee Firstenberg closed the meeting, after which the board recessed briefly before moving into the next session.

Wednesday, March 26, 2025

10:30 a.m. - Joint Committee on Finance and Campus Planning, Buildings and Grounds

Read Materials: [Agenda](#) | [Handout: Funding the CSU's Capital Program](#)

Watch Video: [Committee Video Link](#)

The Joint Committee on Finance and Campus Planning, Buildings and Grounds was convened by Trustee McGrory. The consent agenda, including approval of the January 2025 minutes and the schematic design and financing plan for the CSU Northridge Matador Success and Inclusion Center, was approved without separate discussion.

The committee then turned to its central information item: Funding the CSU's Capital Program. Executive Vice Chancellor Steve Relyea introduced the presentation alongside Assistant Vice Chancellors Robert Eaton and Paul Gannoe. The discussion focused on the urgent and growing capital infrastructure needs across the CSU and the exploration of new long-term funding mechanisms.

AVC Eaton provided a detailed history of CSU capital funding. He explained that, prior to 2014, most capital outlay projects were funded through voter-approved general obligation bonds or state-approved lease revenue bonds. Since then, the state has shifted responsibility for capital funding to CSU, forcing the system to rely on one-time appropriations, operating revenue, philanthropy, and investment returns. However, these sources have been unpredictable and insufficient. The CSU has received approximately \$5.6 billion in capital funds over the past 11 years, of which \$3.5 billion was from one-time state-associated resources.

The CSU's current five-year capital plan identifies a \$31 billion funding need, with \$5 billion required in 2025–26 alone. Of this, \$1.4 billion is for deferred maintenance. Notably, over 30% of CSU academic facilities are over 60 years old, including 20% of science buildings, and more than half the entire building stock is over 50 years old. Deferred maintenance continues to rise.

To stabilize investment, the Chancellor's Office proposed a 10-year plan with \$550 million in annual funding, which would allow CSU to keep pace with its needs. This would require an annual debt service allocation growing from \$45 million to \$450 million by year ten. Eaton presented three options for generating this capital:

1. General obligation bond for higher education in 2026, currently being explored with legislative leaders.
2. Dedicated annual state appropriation to support debt issuance.
3. A capital facilities student fee, which would require Board approval and broad consultation.

Trustees responded with deep concern regarding the affordability impacts of the proposed student fee. Many spoke against adding any further financial burden to

students, especially following the 2023 multi-year tuition increase. Trustees also questioned the fairness of requiring students to fund what has historically been a public obligation.

Several trustees emphasized the importance of reframing the conversation with state leaders around infrastructure as a core public responsibility, not an auxiliary need. They urged strong legislative advocacy to support the general obligation bond and highlighted Assemblymember David Alvarez's ([AB 48](#)) proposal for a 2026 bond initiative. Trustees called for a strategic messaging plan and emphasized the need to secure a reliable, multiyear agreement—or compact—with the state.

In addition to funding concerns, trustees discussed the rising cost of construction, labor shortages, and the impact of federal policies affecting the workforce. Trustees urged a systemwide inventory of building conditions and a cost-benefit analysis to prioritize seismic retrofitting and critical infrastructure projects on campuses with high student enrollment.

Trustees further explored the idea of per-square-foot cost caps for new construction. They suggested a standardized process to guide architects and contractors in delivering cost-efficient projects without compromising quality. Some trustees supported building deferred maintenance costs into new project budgets to avoid future backlogs.

Suggestions also included exploring philanthropic fundraising for capital campaigns, reviewing the use of lottery funds (though legally restricted), and adjusting building scope and design expectations to preserve affordability. Trustees discussed the limits of current revenue streams and expressed interest in analyzing high-priority facility needs and matching them to available funding through more transparent systemwide prioritization.

Trustees concluded by reiterating that CSU's deteriorating infrastructure threatens its ability to serve over 460,000 students effectively. They underscored that maintaining safe, modern learning environments is a matter of educational equity, recruitment, and long-term investment in California's economic future. No action was taken on the item, but further discussion and development of a capital funding plan are expected in future meetings.

Wednesday, March 26, 2025

11:15 a.m. - Committee on Campus Planning, Buildings and Grounds

Read Materials: [Agenda](#)

Watch Video: [Committee on Campus Planning, Buildings and Grounds](#)

The Committee on Campus Planning, Buildings and Grounds was called to order by Trustee McGrory. The meeting was brief and focused on approval of the consent agenda, which included three items: the minutes from the January 2025 meeting, the San José

State University Track and Field Facility project, and the schematic design approval for the Energy Innovation Building at California State University, Bakersfield.

No items were pulled for separate discussion. A motion was made and seconded to approve the entire consent agenda. There were no questions or comments from the board. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote. With no further business, the committee adjourned, concluding its agenda.

Wednesday, March 26, 2025

11:20 a.m. - Committee on Finance

Read Materials: [Agenda](#)

Watch Video: [Committee on Finance](#)

The Committee on Finance was convened by Trustee Lopez. Before proceeding with the scheduled agenda items, she announced that, by prerogative of the chair, the item regarding the CSU Lottery Budget would be deferred to the May 2025 meeting. She explained that, following discussions with staff and board members, it was determined that the item merited a full hearing rather than a brief Q&A, and that deferral would allow for more robust and transparent consideration of the issues involved.

With that adjustment, the committee proceeded to approve the revised consent agenda, which included three items: approval of the minutes from the January 2025 meeting, the annual debt program report (information), and the quarterly investment report (information). A motion was made, seconded, and passed without objection.

Trustee McGrory offered brief comments on the investment report, praising the performance of the Investment Advisory Council and acknowledging the work of Executive Vice Chancellor Steve Relyea and Chief Investment Officer Scott August. Trustee McGrory highlighted the one-year return of 22.76% in the Total Return Portfolio, remarking that the performance exceeded expectations and surpassed typical private investment benchmarks.

Trustee Lopez concluded the session by acknowledging that commendations, which had been scheduled for the next quarter, were moved to this session, though no further discussion on that topic occurred during the committee meeting. With no additional items or comments, the Committee on Finance adjourned.

Wednesday, March 26, 2025

11:30 a.m. - Plenary Session (Day 2)

Read Materials: [Agenda](#)

Watch Video: [Plenary Session](#)

The second plenary session of the March 2025 Board of Trustees meeting opened with remarks by Chair Clarke who invited trustees and attendees to view a short film from San Diego State University. The video highlighted a student-led Arctic research expedition, emphasizing the global impact of CSU student research and the value of experiential learning. Chair Clarke praised the segment as a reflection of the CSU's growing reach, spirit of innovation, and commitment to empowering student exploration and climate-focused scholarship.

The Board then moved to approve the consent agenda. With no items removed or discussed, the agenda was adopted without objection. Following this, the Board conferred emeritus and emerita titles on three trustees: Anna Ortiz-Morfit, Lillian Kimbell, and Douglas Faigin. Each was recognized for their years of service, contributions to the CSU system, and commitment to student success.

Trustee Emerita Anna Ortiz-Morfit, though not in attendance, provided pre-recorded remarks expressing her gratitude to the Board, the Governor, Chancellor García, and the students, faculty, and staff of the CSU. She reflected on her experience as a first-generation college student and her passion for supporting public higher education. Chair Clarke and Chancellor García both spoke to her financial insight, empathy, and meaningful contributions on committees such as Finance, Audit, and Campus Planning, as well as during presidential searches.

Trustee Emerita Lillian Kimbell was honored for her 11 years of service, including her leadership as Chair of the Board from 2020 to 2022. Chair Clarke described her as a “super shero” whose guidance was pivotal during the most challenging years of the COVID-19 pandemic. Chancellor García echoed these sentiments, citing Kimbell’s grace, resolve, and deep respect for students and stakeholders alike. In her remarks, Kimbell shared her gratitude to the Governors who appointed her, her admiration for public higher education, and her pride in the CSU’s mission as a transformative institution of access. She highlighted her own experience as the daughter of a factory worker and a construction laborer, her journey as a first-generation college and law school graduate, and her joy in seeing over 1.25 million students earn CSU degrees during her tenure.

Trustee Emeritus Douglas Faigin was also recognized, marking the conclusion of his 12-year term. Chair Clarke described Faigin as a clear, direct thinker whose insights helped shape board discussions with clarity and integrity. Chancellor García praised his investigative rigor, deep institutional knowledge, and unwavering advocacy for students and system transparency. In his remarks, Faigin reflected on his long service and his personal connection to the Board through his late wife, former Trustee Dr. Mary Jean Pew. Appointed by Governor Jerry Brown in 2012, Faigin emphasized that student success remained at the heart of every board action. He warned of serious challenges ahead—including state budget cuts and new federal compliance obligations—and called on the CSU to continue advocating forcefully at the state and national level. Faigin concluded by

urging the Board not to retreat but to fight “for the future of almost a half million students,” quoting the famous line: “Do not go gentle into that good night.”


The session closed with final thanks from Chair Clarke, who acknowledged the sustained efforts of his fellow trustees, the Chancellor, and the extended CSU community. He confirmed that the next Board of Trustees meeting will take place May 19–21, 2025 and formally adjourned the March meeting.

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Faculty Trustee Request for Consultation and Feedback

Based on what I have shared with you in my earlier *Faculty Trustee Reports* and above in this report (links to the specific meeting materials and videos; brief summaries using ChatGPT with technical assistance provided by [SF State Academic Technology](#) and in concurrence with my personal meeting notes), I seek and value your continued feedback on items which the BoT has considered or will be considering:

- 1) I have been appointed to four [Board of Trustees Standing Committees](#); these include Audit; Educational Policy; Finance; and Governmental Relations.
Do you, your ASCSU standing committee and/or your campus senate have any concerns/items that you would like to bring to my attention at this time? I would especially like to hear about your campus feedback on the Board of Trustees meeting items related to these four standing committee assignments.
- 2) Last year, trustees heard that campuses are implementing several cost reduction strategies (see below slide). On your campus, which of these cost reduction strategies are you already implementing? Which of these cost reduction strategies are you considering/discussing for implementation? Are there other cost reduction strategies (not on the below slide) that your campus might explore? And can you think of any inter-departmental and/or cross-campus cost reduction strategies that we might explore together as a system?

 The California State University

Budget Planning & Actions

Universities are implementing several cost reduction strategies:

Consolidate programs
Defer capital/maintenance projects
Reduce hiring and elimination of positions
Increase class size
Reduce courses to reflect student demand
Reduce part-time faculty/lecturers
Reduce service levels provided by staff
Reduce travel
Restructure departments
Restrict non-essential purchases

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- 3) Can you think of some experiences that may help us to enhance “communication, consultation and collaboration” at our campuses and within the system? Do you have any suggestions on how to plan these experiences so that the CSU Board of Trustees might better interface with the Academic Senate CSU, CSU Chancellor’s Office, California State Student Association, CSU Alumni Council, CSU Council of Campus Senate Chairs, Campus Presidents/Provosts/Vice Presidents, etc.?
- 4) The next regular meeting of the CSU Board of Trustees will be on 5/19-21/2025. The ASCSU is not meeting the week immediately before this Board meeting, and the Board agenda and materials are not yet available. Consequently, I would like to take this opportunity to seek your thoughts on some topics that have come my way during numerous trustee campus visits:
 - California Master Plan on Higher Education
 - California Master Plan on Career Education
 - California Cradle-to-Career Data System
 - Career Passport
 - Credit for Prior Learning (CPL)
 - Dual Enrollment
 - Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM)
 - Differential Tuition Rates
 - Year of engagement – reimaging student success
 - Three-Year Degrees
 - Graduate Programs
 - Blended Programs (4+1)
 - Year-Round Operation (YRO)
 - Faculty As a Resource
 - Work-based learning

I look forward to hearing (and learning) from you and your campus constituents. Please email me (dyee@calstate.edu) or let me know if you wish to meet through a phone call or Zoom session.

Thank you for your leadership and commitment to higher education and the CSU. I hope you enjoy a rewarding finale to the spring semester, celebrating commencement with graduating students, and a fun and well-deserved summer break!