

**EASTERN WYOMING COLLEGE
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
WORK SESSION**

Tuesday, March 10, 2026
EWC Dolores Kaufman Board Room

Attendance

Present:

Members: Kurt Sittner, Rick Vonburg, Jim Willox, Bob Baumgartner, Katherine Patrick, Randy Adams, Jackie VanMark, and Doug Mercer

Absent:

Members:

1. Call Meeting to Order

Chairman Van Mark called the meeting to order at 4:01 pm.

2. Approval of the Work Session Minutes

Board of Trustees Work Session February 10, 2026 Minutes.pdf

Chairman VanMark called for approval of the minutes as presented.

Moved by: Bob Baumgartner; seconded by: Rick Vonburg

Motion Carried

3. Reports

3.1 Eastern Wyoming College Financial Audit Evaluation, including Overview and Responsibilities:

Cheryl Heath

Financial consultant Cheryl Heath, CPA, presented a 10-year retrospective of Eastern Wyoming College's (EWC) audit performance. While the college has consistently maintained unmodified audit opinions (the highest rating for financial statement accuracy), the report highlighted specific areas where internal controls and reporting must be strengthened.

Key Findings

- **Financial Reporting:** Over the last decade, "material weaknesses"—the most serious category of audit findings—occurred 40% of the time. Ms. Heath characterized this rate as "below a passing grade," noting that these issues primarily involve inaccurate reporting rather than missing funds.
- **Federal Compliance:** The college saw a 60% rate of "significant deficiencies" regarding federal programs. However, these were largely tied to the high complexity of Financial Aid regulations and resulted in no questioned costs (no

- money was found to be misspent).
- Recurring Issues: Repeat findings were identified in the Schedule of Federal Expenditures (SEFA) and specific financial aid controls.
- The evaluation concluded that while the college's overall financial standing is accurately reported, the Board must focus on improving the accuracy of financial reporting to reduce material weaknesses.

Update on SHRM Training:

Vice President of Administrative Services Patrick Korell and Human Resources Director Catherine Conard

Vice President Patrick Korell announced a significant professional milestone for the college's Human Resources department. Director of Human Resources Catherine Conard has successfully earned her certification from the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM), the gold standard for HR professionals worldwide. Ms. Conard's training covered several critical pillars:

- Talent & Recruitment: Best practices for talent acquisition and managing the entire employee life cycle.
- Legal Compliance: In-depth knowledge of employment and labor laws.
- Conflict Resolution: Proven frameworks for navigating difficult conversations and managing workplace misinformation without bias.
- Global Standards: Insights into broader employment trends and human management strategies.

This certification is more than a personal achievement; it provides EWC with a more robust framework for supporting its employees.

- Ms. Conard announced the formation of a new Wellness Committee specifically aimed at improving employee morale and engagement.

The Board of Trustees expressed strong support for this investment. Trustee Jim Willocks highlighted that SHRM provides "excellent ongoing resources."

Update on ACUE training:

Executive Dean of Academics Debbie Oschner and Dr. LeAnn Smith

Dr. LeAnn Smith and Executive Dean of Academics Debbie Ochsner announced the launch of a premier professional development initiative at Eastern Wyoming College. The college has partnered with the Association of College and University Educators (ACUE) to provide faculty with rigorous, evidence-based certification in effective teaching practices.

Program Overview

The ACUE program is designed to elevate the classroom experience for both students and instructors through a "hyflex" learning model:

- Asynchronous Learning: Faculty complete online modules at their own pace.
- Synchronous Collaboration: Faculty meet in "Professional Learning Communities" to discuss strategies and share insights.
- Comprehensive Reach: While starting with full-time faculty, the program will eventually extend to adjunct, dual credit, and concurrent enrollment instructors.

The program has seen an enthusiastic reception since its kickoff on March 2nd:

- High Participation: Over 60% of faculty attended the initial session, with a long-term goal of 100% certification.
- Strong Momentum: Despite the spring break timing, faculty have already completed 93 lessons and 18 full courses as of early March.
- Leadership: Dr. Stephanie Spiker is serving as the academic director and ACUE liaison to ensure the program's smooth integration.


Investment and Impact

By investing in faculty expertise, EWC aims to directly improve the student experience. Key goals include:

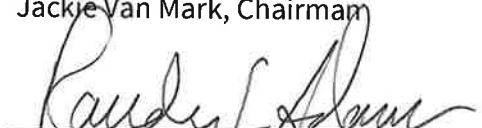
- Higher Student GPAs: Proven teaching methods lead to better academic performance.
- Increased Retention: Engaged students are more likely to stay in school and graduate.
- Institutional Alignment: The training reinforces EWC's core goals of developing critical thinkers and effective communicators.

4. **Adjournment**

Chairman VanMark called to adjourn the meeting at 5:02 pm.



Jackie Van Mark, Chairman



Randy Adams, Secretary



Lynda Dean, Executive Assistant