

**Minutes of the
Gaston College
Board of Trustees Meeting
Robinson Classroom Bldg., Room 126
May 18, 2026**

Members Present: Judge Jesse Caldwell, Chair
Ms. Janie Peak, Vice Chair
Mr. Bill Carstarphen
Mr. John Dancoff
Mr. Jonathan Fletcher
Mr. Steve Hall
Ms. Iris Hopper
Ms. Resa Hoyle
Mr. Steve Huffstetler
Mr. David Lee
Ms. Julie Stroupe

Dr. John Hauser, President

Others Present: Ms. Mikhaela Abarientos, Mr. Todd Baney, Ms. Sophia Barone, Mr. Chuck Brimer, Mr. Luke Brimer, Mr. Larry Brimer, Mr. Jacob Brindle, Ms. Tonia Broome, Mr. Brett Buchanan, Ms. Kate Carmody, Ms. Jasmine Cox-Wade, Dr. Dewey Dellinger, Ms. Arissa Duff, Ms. Victoria Elswick, Ms. Allison Fraley, Dr. Sam Grubbs, Mr. Matt Hart, Ms. Mary Hinson, Ms. Guyann Howe, Ms. Elizabeth Johnson, Ms. McKenna Jones, Dr. Zachary Kendra-Dill, Mr. Ronald Key, Mr. Brett LaFemina, Mr. Colby Love, Ms. Andrea Lovelace, Mr. Rico McIlwain, Ms. Savonne McNeill, Mr. Mack Millen, Ms. Jennifer Nichols, Ms. Julie Ostrowski, Ms. Jennifer Pickett, Ms. Melanie Pullen, Mr. Stephen Sharp, Mr. Luke Upchurch, Mr. Richard Walker, Mr. Mike Whiteman, and Ms. Sarah Hutchins, College Attorney.

Chair Caldwell called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m. and welcomed everyone to the meeting. A quorum was present for the meeting.

Chair Caldwell opened the meeting by welcoming and congratulating Michael Steuerwald, Rhino Softball Coach. Coach Steuerwald introduced four sophomore players who have each earned a GPA of 3.5 or higher.

The Lady Rhinos will travel to Choccolocco Park in Oxford, Alabama, to compete in the National Junior College Athletic Association Softball World Series. The team concluded its season with an outstanding 60-4 record, capturing both the Region 10 and Mid-Atlantic District titles while also achieving a 23-game winning streak. This marks the team's third World Series appearance in the past four years.

- **Invocation – Mr. Fletcher**

- **Ethics Awareness and Conflict of Interest Reminder**

Chair Caldwell reminded Trustees of the ethics requirements of public servants and requested they identify any conflicts of interest or appearance of conflicts of interest present. No conflicts were identified.

A. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Chair Caldwell asked if there were any changes, additions, or corrections to the agenda. None were identified.

Ms. Stroupe moved to approve the agenda; Ms. Hoyle seconded the motion. The motion carried.

B. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

1. March 23, 2026, Board of Trustees Meeting

Chair Caldwell asked if there were any changes, additions, or corrections to the March 23, 2026, Board of Trustees Minutes.

Mr. Hall moved to approve the March 23, 2026, Board of Trustees Minutes; Mr. Lee seconded the motion. The motion carried.

C. WELCOME

Dr. Hauser opened the meeting by welcoming all attendees and extending a special welcome to Ms. Elizabeth Johnson, President of the Staff Senate, and Dr. Sam Grubbs, President of the Faculty Senate.

Dr. Grubbs introduced Mr. Brett LeFemina, who will assume the role of Faculty Senate President beginning in June 2026. Ms. Johnson announced that Mr. Kendrick McDowell will serve as the incoming Staff Senate President for FY2026–27.

1. Three Generations – GC Graduates

Dr. Hauser welcomed and recognized the Brimer family as they celebrated a unique milestone at Gaston College: three generations of graduates. Luke Brimer earned his Associate in Science degree with the Class of 2026, following in the footsteps of his grandfather Larry, who graduated in 1967, and his father Chuck, who graduated in 1990 and has taught at Gaston College since 1997.

Larry attended when the school was still called Gaston Technical Institute before it moved to Dallas and merged with Gaston College. After earning his electronics degree, he built a successful career in the electronics industry. Chuck continued his education after earning his degree at Gaston at UNC Charlotte and Pfeiffer University, and eventually joined the college as an instructor.

Luke completed Gaston College courses through an early college dual-enrollment program while attending Piedmont Community Charter. He plans to continue his education at UNC Charlotte this fall. The family says they are proud to continue a tradition that highlights the value of Gaston College and educational opportunities in Gaston County.

2. SkillsUSA

Dr. Dellinger welcomed and congratulated the students who participated in the SkillUSA-NC competition held in April 2026.

Students recognized at the Board meeting included Ms. Jennifer Pickett, Textile Technology Program; Mr. Jacob Brindle, second place in Video Production; Ms. Mikhaela Abarientos, first place in Video Production; Mr. Colby Love, first place in Audio Production; Ms. Melanie Pullen, first place in Medical Assisting; and Ms. Victoria Elswick, third place in Medical Assisting.

The students were accompanied by their instructors, Ms. Kate Carmody, Mr. Ron Key, and Ms. Melody Gibson.

D. FINANCE AND FACILITIES COMMITTEE

Mr. Huffstetler reported that the following action and informational items had been previously reviewed and vetted during the Finance and Facilities Committee meeting held on May 11, 2026. Due to the length of the agenda, he stated that he would proceed directly to the action items and revisit informational items 1, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8 at the end of his report.

2. Health Science Education and Simulation Center Update:

Mr. Matt Hart, President of Morris Berg Architects, presented updated information and renderings for the new Health and Wellness Building. He noted that a narrative overview had previously been provided during the Finance and Facilities Committee meeting; however, this presentation included the most current data and renderings available.

Following the presentation, the Trustees discussed several key factors, including:

- Whether the College was pursuing green building certification. Mr. Hart stated that the building will be constructed to meet North Carolina Energy Code requirements.
- An explanation of the contingencies included in the project budget. He explained that the 3% construction manager contingency and the 3% design detail contingency would be reduced to zero upon project completion.
- Whether inflation costs had been factored into the project budget. Mr. Hart stated that inflation costs had not been included because no related increases had been identified at this time.
- Whether the corridors and end-line lobbies would be large enough to accommodate events and presentations. He confirmed that those spaces were intentionally designed to support such functions.
- Input from outside industry partners, including CaroMont, was also considered during the planning process. Representatives toured the new CaroMont Belmont hospital to gather ideas and suggestions.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES UPDATE



Morris·Berg BSA
ARCHITECTS

Gaston College
Health Science Education and Simulation Center
May 18, 2026



VISION: Gaston College



The Gaston College Health Science Education & Simulation Center will create a **collaborative** environment for fostering health science education. This facility is more than a building; it is the cornerstone for student, faculty and **community identity** that will be a **recruitment and retention** tool for the next generation of health professionals in the region and beyond.



VISION: Design Drivers



Flexible &
Adaptable



Hands On



State of the Art



Recruitment &
Retention



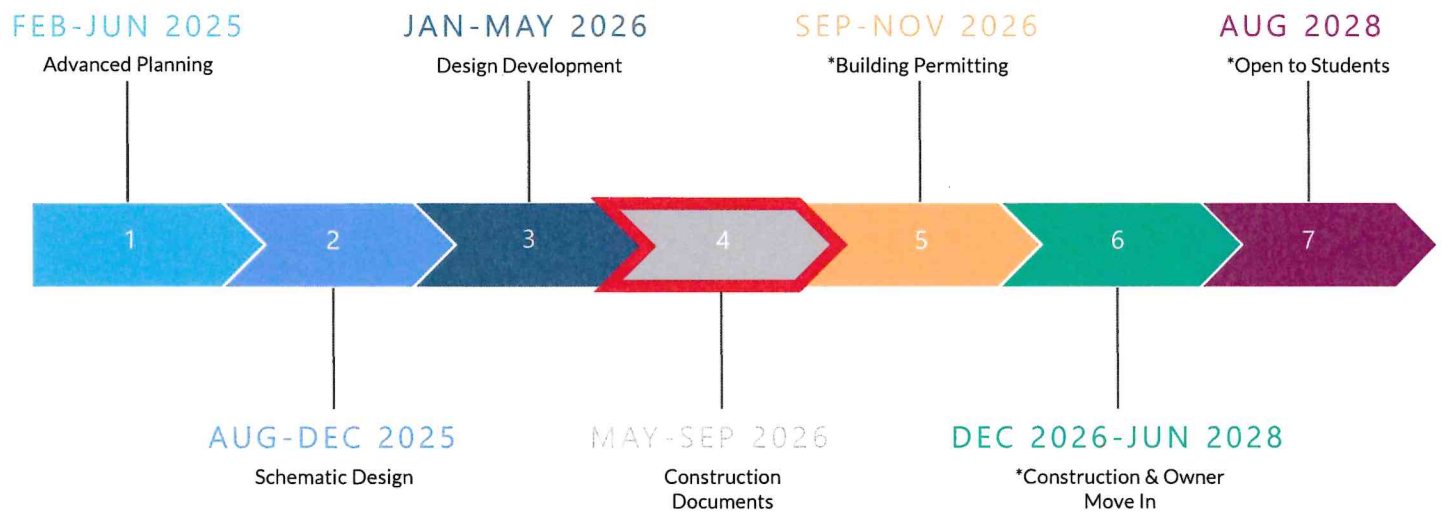
Community



Student Focused

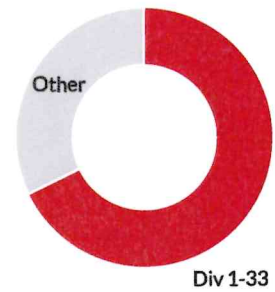
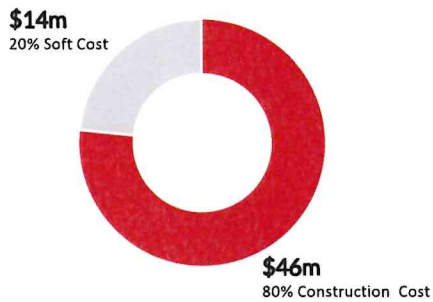


SCHEDULE: OVERALL





PROJECT: Overall Cost



PROJECT COST	\$60,000,000
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INCLUDES

- Construction Cost
- Design Fees
- Permit Fees
- FF&E
- Survey
- Geotechnical

CONSTRUCTION COST	\$46,000,000
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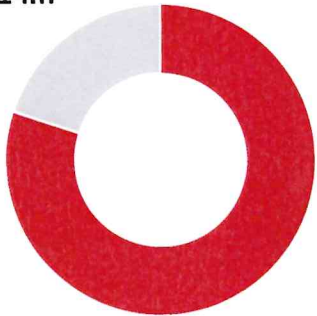
INCLUDES

- CMAR Scope of work
- General Conditions
- Bond & Insurance
- Sub Bond & Insurance
- Preconstruction Contingency
- CMAR Fee
- CMAR Contingency
- Design / Estimating Contingency
- Escalation



PROJECT: Overall Cost

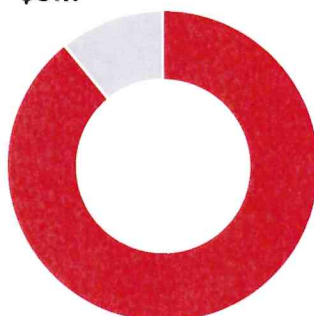
20% Soft Cost
\$14m



\$46m

80% Construction Cost

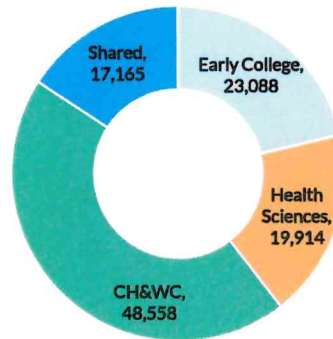
Renovation Target
\$5m



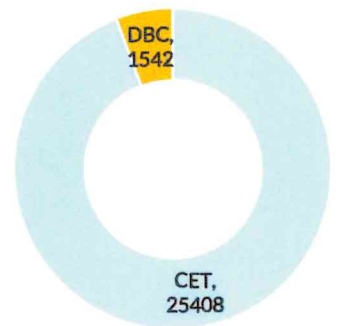
\$41m

New Building Target

Total Program GSF
109,000 GSF



New Construction
Program



Renovation
Program

PROJECT COST \$60,000,000

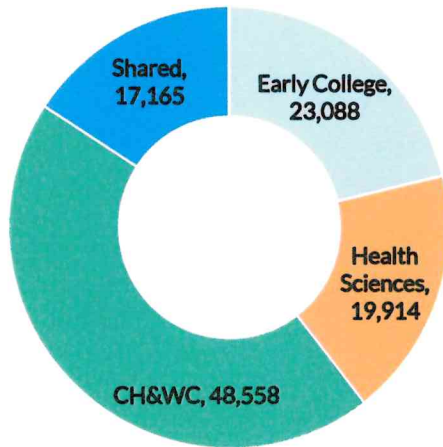
CONSTRUCTION COST \$46,000,000
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NEW BUILDING 82,050 GSF

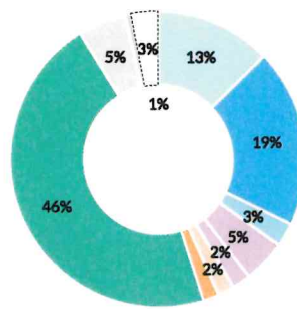
RENOVATION 26,950 GSF



PROJECT: Overall Program Summary



GSF by Program



NASF % by Space Type

Total Program

FICM #	FICM Classification	NASF	%	Efficiency Multiplier	Gross
100	Classroom	8,740	13%	1.81	15,819
115	Classroom Service	0	0%	1.81	0
210	Classroom Laboratory	13,372	19%	1.81	24,203
215	Classroom Laboratory Support	1,790	3%	1.81	3,240
250	Research/Nonclass Laboratory	0	0%	1.74	0
255	Research/Nonclass Laboratory Service	0	0%	1.74	0
310	Office	3,225	5%	1.90	6,128
315	Office Service	1,420	2%	1.90	2,698
350	Conference Room	1,250	2%	1.90	2,375
400	Study Facilities	1,200	2%	1.90	2,280
500	Special Use Facilities	31,590	46%	1.44	45,490
600	General Use	3,640	5%	1.66	6,042
700	Support Facilities	450	1%	1.66	747
800	Health Care Facilities	0	0%	1.81	0
900	Residential Facilities	0	0%	1.81	0
000	Unclassified Facilities	2,000	3%	1.66	3,320
Total Assignable		68,677	100%	1.64	112,342
Efficiency			61.1%		

Total Program

Program	NASF	%	Efficiency Multiplier	Gross
100 Early College	14,430	21%	1.60	23,088
115 Health Sciences	10,970	16%	1.82	19,914
210 CH&WC	33,505	49%	1.45	48,558
Shared	9,772	14%	1.76	17,165
Total Assignable		68,677	100%	108,726
Efficiency			63.2%	

TOTAL PROGRAM



PROJECT: Key Metrics

ATHLETICS

- 1,250 seat Gymnasium (with an additional 500 seated on the Gym Floor)
- 3 Locker Rooms
- Athletic Training and Weight Room
- Community Fitness Center
- Boardroom with Catering Kitchen

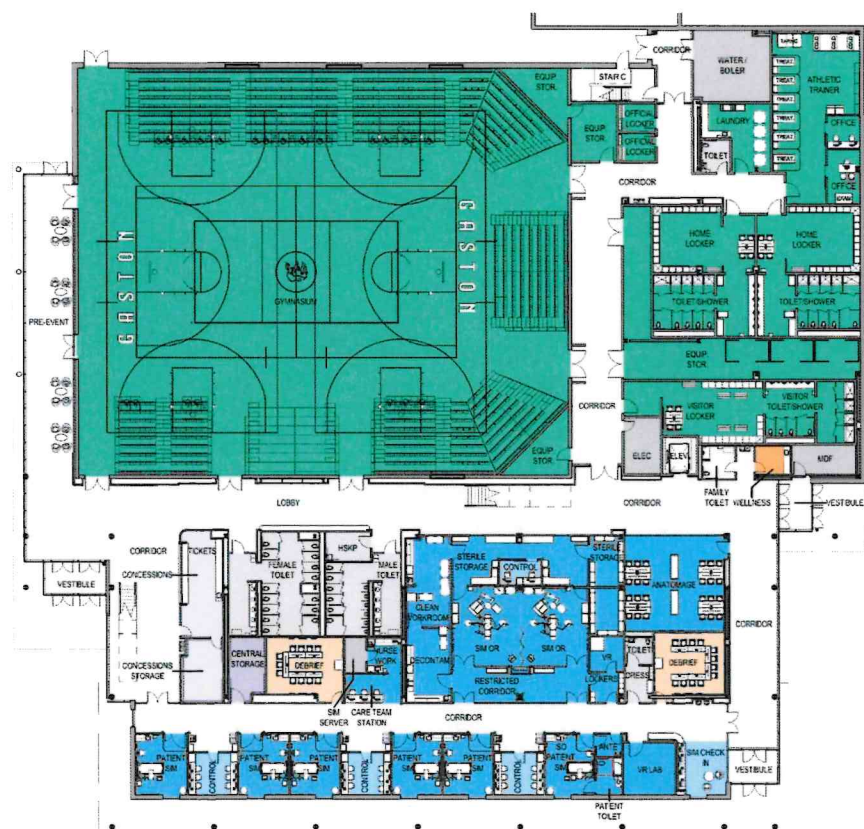
HEALTH SCIENCES

- 6 Simulation Patient Rooms
- 3 Immersive Technology Rooms
- Anatomage Classroom
- Surgical Technology Suite with 2 Simulated Operating Rooms
- General Classroom
- 2 Science Labs

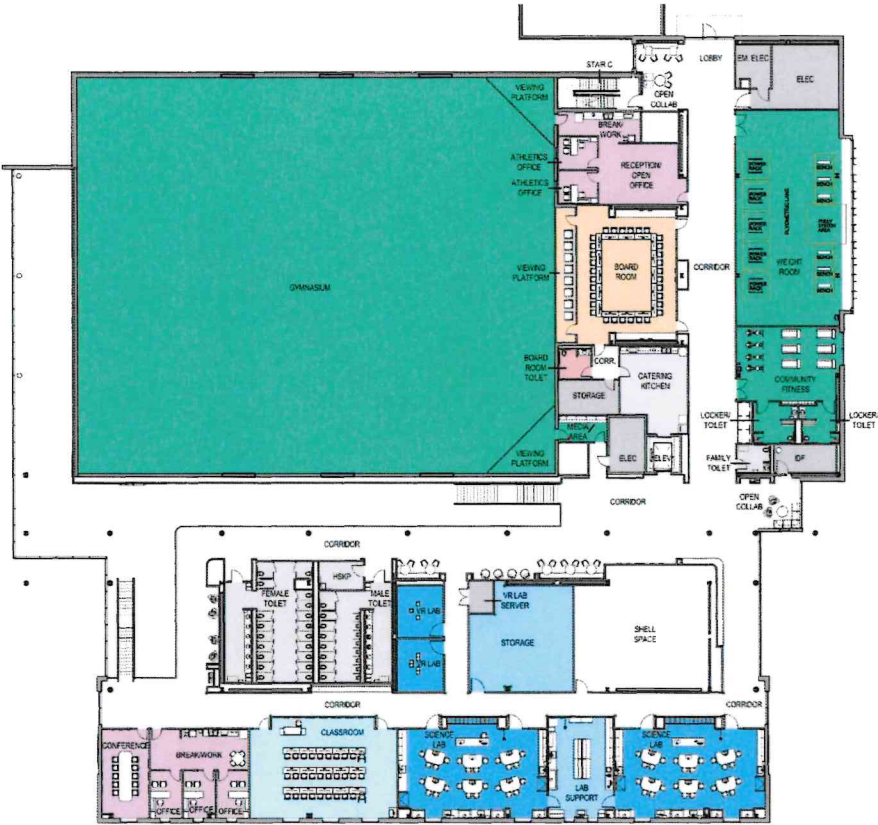
SITE PLAN



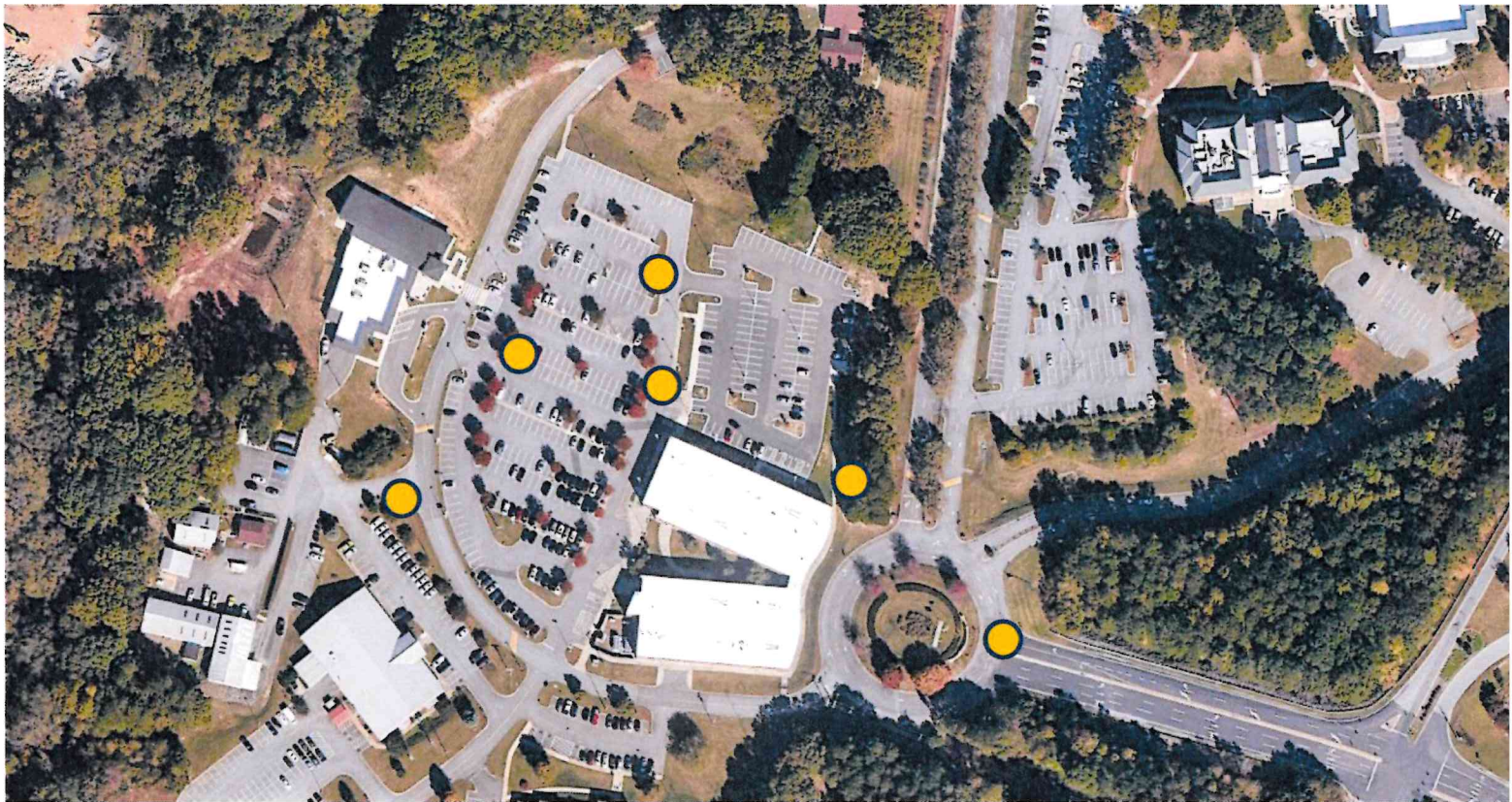
FLOOR PLAN: First Floor



FLOOR PLAN: Second Floor



SITE PLAN



RENDERING: Grier Beam Boulevard



RENDERING: Tower Boulevard



RENDERING: Parking Lot U



RENDERING: Main Entrance (Day)



RENDERING: End Line Lobby



RENDERING: Rhino Statue



RENDERING: Main Entrance (Night)



QUESTIONS?



3. FY 2026-2027 CDL Student Fee

Gaston College has partnered with Trans Tech to provide truck driver training. Trans Tech instructors bring industry experience, helping the student to gain the skills, confidence and qualification that employers are searching for. Through strong employer partnerships and job placement assistance, we help our graduates connect with top trucking companies and secure high-paying CDL jobs.

The training will require the following fees to assist with costs associated with the program.

	Hours	Cost
CDL Theory Instruction (Online)	50	\$1,070.00
CDL Practical (Behind the wheel instruction)	110	\$3,430.00
NCCCS state fee		\$180.00
DOT Physical, Drug Screen, CDL Skills Exam		Included
Total hours	160	\$4,680.00

Additional Fees

Permit Fee	\$77.00	Pd to DMV
License Fee	\$127.50	Pd to DMV
Additional Fees	\$204.50	
TOTAL	\$4,884.50	

IMPLICATION FOR BUDGET

The Fees associated with the program are meant to offset costs associated with the program. The program will generate budget FTE, which will increase Gaston College's state budget allocation.

The Finance and Facilities Committee recommended that the Board of Trustees approve the FY 2026-2027 CDL Student Fee.

The question was asked what the cost would be if a student enrolled directly through Trans Tech. Mr. Buchanan stated that the cost for walk-in students would be \$5,500. He also shared that students enrolled through GC may qualify for Workforce Pell Grants.

Mr. Buchanan further clarified that Trans Tech is located at 3051 Aberdeen Boulevard and is not affiliated with the group located at Eastridge Mall in Gastonia.

Chair Caldwell asked if there was any other discussion before voting. As the motion came from Committee, a second was not required. Chair Dancoff asked if there were any discussions. There being none, **the motion passed.**

Mr. Huffstetler asked whether there were any questions or concerns regarding the six items that had been reviewed as informational items during the Finance and Facilities Committee meeting held on May 11 that required further discussion or clarification.

There were no questions or concerns. Mr. Huffstetler then advised Chair Caldwell that the Finance and Facilities Committee report was concluded.

E. SGA

Mr. Scott was not able to attend the meeting. His report was provided in the meeting material.

F. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT / ANNOUNCEMENTS

- The FY 2026–2027 Nominating Committee consists of Ms. Resa Hoyle, Chair, Mr. Bill Carstarphen, and Mr. Steve Hall. Trustees are encouraged to contact the Committee with recommendations for the FY 2026–2027 slate of officers or Committee Chairs. The Nominating Committee will present its recommended slate during the June 22, 2026, meeting. The Board Officers will be announced during the June meeting.
- We had a great turnout for the 2026 Gaston College Graduation on the 14th. Thank you to all who were able to attend. This year, **1,320 graduates** earned diplomas or associate degrees across **65 curriculum programs**. Among them, **323 students graduated with Honors**, and **257 students with High Honors**. That is **168** more graduates than in the previous year.
- The 2026 Momentum Makers event will be held in the Myers Center on Friday, June 5. We currently have one table reserved for Trustees and would like to encourage all Trustees to participate. Ms. Howe will send out a reminder with the link where you can purchase your tickets if you haven't already done so. The evening will feature live music from The Embers featuring Craig Woolard, along with food, drinks, dancing, a silent auction, and a fund-the-need campaign.
- Rhino Baseball and Softball updates:
Gaston College baseball entered Region 10 championship with high hopes and finished their 2026 season as Region 10 tournament runner-up with a record of 54-5. Coach Doty was named Region 10 Coach of the Year.
Gaston College Softball update:
After winning the region and district tournaments, the Lady Rhinos are 60-4 overall and winners of 23 straight games as they enter the school's third World Series in four years. Congratulations Rhinos!
- Congratulations to Dr. Hauser for receiving the Spirit of the Carolinas award through the Gaston Business Association. He will be presented with the award on May 21.

Committee Meetings	June 15, 2026	TBD	MCMA, Section B
Board of Trustees Meeting	June 22, 2026	TBD	Myers Center, Section C

G. PRESIDENT'S REPORT/REMARKS

Dr. Hauser encouraged the Trustees to review the twelve pages of his report, along with the divisional reports, to remain informed about the tremendous work being done by the College's faculty and staff. He noted that, although he tries to forward emails highlighting GC events and achievements, there are many outstanding accomplishments and activities of which the Trustees may still be unaware.

H. EXECUTIVE SESSION

In accordance with provisions of NC General Statute 143-318.11(a)(6), Chair Caldwell entertained a motion to enter the Board into Executive Session. Ms. Hutchins was requested to remain.

Mr. Jonathan Fletcher made a motion to enter the Board into Executive Session, seconded by Ms. Resa Hoyle.

The motion passed.

Chair Caldwell entertained a motion to close the Executive Session and return the Board to open session. **Mr. Dancoff moved to close the Executive Session and return to open session; Ms. Stroupe seconded the motion. The motion carried.**

Chair Caldwell entertained a motion as a result of the Board's discussion of the President's evaluation survey.

Ms. Peak moved that the Board of Trustees give the President a superior rating for his performance evaluation for FY 2025-2026, accompanied by an annual salary increase of 8% and a performance incentive bonus of \$50,000, paid in two increments (July 2026 and January 2027). Ms. Hopper seconded the motion. With no further discussion, the motion carried unanimously.

Dr. Hauser's evaluation will be communicated to the NC Community College President pursuant to NC State Board of Community Colleges Code 1C SBCCC 300.2.

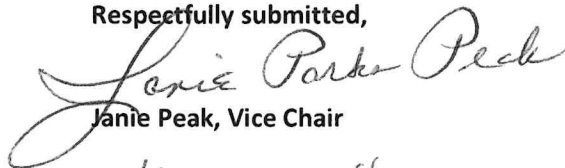
I. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Caldwell asked if there was any further business to come before the Board. There being none,

Mr. Fletcher moved to adjourn the meeting; Mr. Lee seconded the motion. The motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 5:25 p.m.

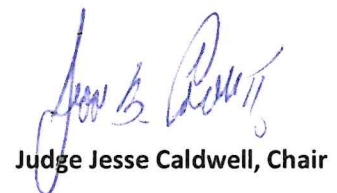
Respectfully submitted,



Janie Peak, Vice Chair



Guyann Howe, Recording Secretary



Judge Jesse Caldwell, Chair

(College Seal)