

New Trustee Orientation Guide

Becoming a member of the Garden City Community College Board of Trustees is an important and challenging responsibility. Thorough and ongoing orientation and education about trustee and board roles is essential to success. New trustees, the President, the Cabinet, board chair and other trustees play important roles in this orientation process. The following is a list of activities by categories that new trustees should consider in order to gain a full understanding of their role and responsibility.

- I. Learn About Trustee Roles and Responsibilities
 - A. Attend trustee orientation workshops sponsored by state associations and ACCT.
 - B. Peruse trusteeship materials; including those published by our state association Kansas Association Community College Trustees, KACCT, <https://www.kacct.org/>. Read ACCT's *Trusteeship in Community Colleges: A Guide to Effective Governance*. Review resources available on the ACCT website <https://www.acct.org/>
 - C. Study the board's policies on the governing board, particularly the code of ethics or standards of practice for the board. <https://www.gcccks.edu/about/board-of-trustees.html#policy-governance>
 - D. Meet with the President, board chair and other members of the board to discuss trustee roles and responsibilities.
 - E. Seek out someone from the board to use as a resource or mentor.
 - F. Discuss with the President and other trustees the difference between policy making and administration.
 - G. Be aware of the legal and ethical constraints on trustees, including open meeting provisions, <https://www.augustaks.org/Boards%20and%20Committees/Citizen%20Guide%20to%20KORA%20KOMA.pdf> confidentiality, conflicts of interest, *Top Twenty Truths for Effective Trusteeship*, and role in collective bargaining or setting staff salaries. The board designates representatives to conduct negotiations of faculty contracts.
 - H. Successful governance depends on a good relationship between the board and the President. The President is the single most influential person in creating an outstanding institution. To be effective, trustees and boards must:
 - i. Select and retain the best CEO or President possible
 - ii. Define clear expectations of the President's performance through policy governance
 - iii. Participate in the annual evaluation of the President's performance; provide honest and constructive feedback
 - iv. Negotiate the President's salary and contract

- v. Support the President; create an environment for success
- I. Participate in the annual board self-assessment. This is accomplished with the guidance of an ACCT representative. The results are reviewed at an annual board retreat. The purpose of self-assessment:
 - i. Identify strengths and areas of improvement.
 - ii. Generate discussion about board roles and responsibilities that can strengthen communication and understanding among board members. The discussions can lead to stronger, more cohesive working groups.
 - iii. A board's willingness to engage in self-assessment is a model for the rest of the institution. It indicates that board members take their responsibilities very seriously.
- J. Arrange your schedule to be able to attend state and national conferences for trustees.

II. Learn About the College's Programs, History and Culture

- A. Work through the President to arrange to talk with key people about major programs and accomplishments of the district.
- B. Arrange to tour the College(s).
- C. Peruse Faculty Senate and review recent meeting minutes in board packets.
<https://www.gcccks.edu/about/faculty-senate.html> Faculty Senate reports monthly at Board of Trustees meeting.
- D. Peruse the college catalog to be familiar with course programs offered, <https://catalog.gcccks.edu/index.php> GCCC Strategic Plan <https://www.gcccks.edu/about/strategic-plan.html>, key planning documents, and annual report <https://www.gcccks.edu/about/presidents-office.html#annual-reports>
- E. Know the College mission, vision, and policy goal statements, and the board's policies related to educational programs and services <https://www.gcccks.edu/about/board-of-trustees.html#policy-governance>
- F. Read about the history of the College <https://www.gcccks.edu/about/index.html>.
- G. Plan to attend GCCC athletic events, music concerts, art performances, awards banquets and graduations. Represent GCCC at community events, i.e. Chamber of Commerce, forums and parades.

II. Learn About External Trends and Issues

Trustees are essential links with their communities. They govern on behalf of the public and ensure that the College meets the needs of external constituents. They are also advocates and protectors of the College. They promote the College in the community, and seek support for the College from local, state, and national policymakers.

- A. Read local newspapers and listen to the news for trends that might affect the College.
- B. Strengthen links with key people and groups in the communities served by the College. Attend community events. Listen for issues that are pertinent to the College.
- C. Read about local demographic and economic trends that affect the College.
- D. Read about state legislative, fiscal, and other policy issues that affect the colleges.

IV. Learn About College Planning Process and Budgets

- A. Working through the President, meet with appropriate people to explore the policy goals in the strategic and master plans.
- B. Meet with the appropriate personnel to review the policy aspects of the budget, its parameters and restrictions, the process for developing the budget, its relationship to strategic and master plans, and how the board monitors the fiscal health of the district.

V. Learn About Board Meetings and Board Operations

- A. Review past agendas and minutes.
<https://www.gcccks.edu/about/board-of-trustees.html>
- B. Thoroughly read the agenda and board packet prior to each meeting.
- C. During the first few months, don't hesitate to call or meet with the President, mentors or other trustees, and/or the board chair before each meeting to seek clarification on agenda items.
- D. Become knowledgeable about basic parliamentary procedures and other practices related to participating in effective meetings.
- E. Be willing to observe and learn for the first few months to understand how things have been operating. Call the board chair or President when there are questions.
- F. Understand the key conditions of open meeting laws and laws and regulations related to conflicts of interest.

VI. Practice Good Human Relations Skills

- A. Get to know other members of the board as individuals.
- B. Learn and respect communication protocols with other trustees, the President, and staff members.
- C. Work to be a member of the board team. Wisely contribute ideas and opinions.

VII. Rely on the Following Resources

- A. The President.
- B. The Board Chair and other experienced trustees.
- C. Your state trustee association.
- D. Association of Community College Trustees.