



Richard Bland College

BOARD OF VISITORS

JANUARY 27-28, 2026 MEETING SCHEDULE

All meetings will be held in the AIC Boardroom unless otherwise noted.

Tuesday, January 27

~~5:30 p.m.~~ ~~Rector's Reception – Board members, Foundation Board, President, Counsel, and invited guests~~

~~LOCATION: Burgundie's Wine Café, 412 N. Sycamore St., Petersburg~~

~~7:00 p.m.~~ ~~Board Dinner (voting members and president only)~~

~~LOCATION: Hotel Petersburg, 20 W. Tabb St., Petersburg~~

Wednesday, January 28

8:00 a.m. Breakfast

8:30 - 10:00 Finance, Audit and Compliance Committee

10:30 - 2:00 Full Board Meeting

PLEASE NOTE THE FAC COMMITTEE AND BOARD MEETINGS ON JANUARY 28 WILL NOW TAKE PLACE ELECTRONICALLY DUE TO THE GOVERNOR'S DECLARED STATE OF EMERGENCY PURSUANT TO VA CODE § 2.2 - 3708.2. PLEASE SEE THE LINK ON THE COMMONWEALTH CALENDAR OR RBC WEBSITE TO JOIN THE MEETING. ALL JANUARY 27 EVENTS HAVE BEEN CANCELED.



Richard Bland College

BOARD OF VISITORS

Finance, Audit, and Compliance Committee Agenda

January 28, 2026 | AIC Boardroom | 8:30 - 10:00 a.m.

- 8:30 a.m. Call to Order and Opening Remarks – Chairman Chuck Patton**
- I.** Approval of September 24, 2025 Minutes (action required)
 - II.** Policy Delineating the Relationship, Roles, and Responsibilities of the Richard Bland College Board of Visitors and the Richard Bland College Foundation Board of Directors (action required)
- 8:40 Reports**
- I. Audit Report**
 - Internal Auditor - Mike Cullen, Principal, Baker Tilly
 - FY26 Audit Plan (Resolution 2)
 - FY25 APA Audit Update – Stacey Sokol, Chief Business Office
- 9:00 II. Financial Report**
- Year-end Budget Projections - Melissa Mahoney, College Controller
 - 2026-27 Budget Development - Melissa Mahoney, College Controller
 - FY27 Funding Request to Administration/General Assembly
- 9:45 III. Risk Management Report – President Sydow; Stacey Sokol, CBO**
- 9:55 Discussion**
- 10:00 Adjournment**



Richard Bland College BOARD OF VISITOR

BOARD OF VISITORS FINANCE, AUDIT, AND COMPLIANCE COMMITTEE MINUTES

24 September 2025

The Finance, Audit, and Compliance Committee of the Board of Visitors of Richard Bland College (RBC or College) met in open session on Wednesday, September 24, at 9:00 a.m. at the Academic Innovation Center Boardroom, located at 11301 Johnson Road, South Prince George, VA 23805.

FINANCE, AUDIT, AND COMPLIANCE COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

- Charles Patton, Chair (Mr. Patton participated remotely from Asheville, North Carolina. Va. Code . § 2.2-3708.3.B.4 allows for remote participation for personal matters. Mr. Patton had a prior business trip scheduled for this day and could not participate in-person).
- Bouwien Smits
- Hon. James Dyke Jr.

OTHER BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

John Rathbone, Rector
Albert Poole, Vice Rector
Vickie Schray, Secretary
Hon. Sam Parham
Jason Pode, Faculty Representative

STAFF PRESENT:

Dr. Debbie Sydow, President
Dr. Kimberly Boyd, Vice President and Chief Research & Innovation Officer
Dr. Tiffany Birdsong, Chief of Staff
Gerrit Smith, Senior Executive Administrator and Clerk to the Board of Visitors
Stacey Sokol, Chief Business Officer
Eric Kondzielawa, Chief Operations Officer
Justin May, Chief Enrollment Management Officer
Jesse Vaughan, Chief Marketing and Communications Officer

Charita Johnson, Chief Information Officer
Vicki Humphreys, Chief Development Officer
Dr. Adam Zucconi, Interim Chief Academic Officer
Melissa Mahoney, Controller
Dianna Banks, Director of Human Resources
Dr. Susan Clair, Information Security Officer
Ashley Fuller, Data and Compliance Officer
Ernest Bashikako, I.T. Manager, User Services
Lisa Pond, Associate Director of Administrative Services

GUESTS PRESENT:

David Rasnic, Higher Education Audit Director, Auditor of Public Accounts
Mike Cullen, Principal, Baker Tilly
Colleen Lewis, Director, Finance and Operations, Baker Tilly
Nathan Moberley, College Counsel
Dr. Eileen Stremmel, Strategic Planning and Governance Consultant

CALL TO ORDER AND QUORUM CONFIRMATION

At 9:03 the meeting was called to order and the presence of a quorum was recognized.

PRESENTATIONS

David Rasnic, Higher Education Audit Director, Auditor of Public Accounts (APA), provided an overview of APA's role and responsibilities in the Commonwealth. He then discussed the FY25 audit objectives and scope for RBC; the audit review is taking place between September 2025 and February 2026. Given that RBC was governed by William & Mary throughout FY25, RBC will be part of the W&M Group audit, with attention to internal control evaluations. Mr. Rasnic then highlighted prior RBC audit findings in financial reporting, IT security, and student aid compliance, and he emphasized ongoing College efforts to improve oversight and address deficiencies. He then emphasized how the APA values transparency and timely communication with the Board of Visitors.

Mike Cullen and Colleen Lewis, Baker Tilly / RBC Internal Auditor, provided an overview of the company and their internal audit plan for Richard Bland College. They informed the Committee that Baker Tilly has already connected with RBC staff members and begun their assessment. Baker Tilly will review RBC processes and controls and conduct an enterprise risk assessment later this fiscal year.

Melissa Mahoney, Controller, reviewed the financial report included in pre-read materials and updated the Committee on the College Foundation's endowment performance. She then provided a forecast for tuition and fee revenue, auxiliary enterprise revenue, capital

spending, and cash flow for FY26. Ms. Mahoney also summarized the College's financial controls and reporting for the year.

Stacey Sokol, Chief Business Officer, provided an update on the College's mitigation strategies, compliance, and insurance and liability coverage. Ms. Sokol noted several financial risks that RBC and other colleges are facing, including the upcoming "enrollment cliff," affordability and ROI concerns, and policy and funding uncertainty, among others. She then discussed cost mitigation strategies related to salaries and wage inflation, including hiring part-time employees in auxiliary services and operational areas. In total, mitigation strategies save the College a total of over \$2 million annually. Ms. Sokol concluded her remarks by providing an overview of the College's insurance and liability coverage, including the Commonwealth's liability coverage for board members acting within the scope of their volunteer roles as Visitors.

ADJOURNMENT

During the Committee meeting, the virtual connection to Mr. Patton was lost and Committee member Bouwien Smits presided as Chair. There being no further business, Ms. Smits adjourned the meeting at 10:25.



Richard Bland College

FY26 Budget Summary

Unadjusted Through 12/31/2025

REVENUES	2023-24 Audited			2024-25 Unaudited			2025-26 Current		
	Budget	Actual	% of Budget	Budget	Actual	% of Budget	Budget	Actual	% of Budget
State Appropriations	\$ 14,895,787	\$ 15,722,235	105.5%	\$ 15,944,525	\$ 15,901,204	99.7%	\$ 16,986,075	\$ 8,431,371	49.6%
Tuition and E&G Fees	\$ 5,986,834	\$ 6,543,933	109.3%	\$ 6,632,909	\$ 5,690,675	85.8%	\$ 7,050,679	\$ 7,222,630	102.4%
Other Revenues	\$ 577,717	\$ 554,652	96.0%	\$ 629,397	\$ 582,411	92.5%	\$ 578,150	\$ 99,241	17.2%
Student Housing	\$ 2,439,095	\$ 2,675,349	109.7%	\$ 2,954,278	\$ 3,620,159	122.5%	\$ 3,831,300	\$ 3,802,289	99.2%
Food Services	\$ 1,058,763	\$ 1,150,290	108.6%	\$ 1,296,600	\$ 1,482,719	114.4%	\$ 1,277,100	\$ 1,880,141	147.2%
Comprehensive Fees	\$ 912,353	\$ 1,423,433	156.0%	\$ 1,035,644	\$ 1,058,712	102.2%	\$ 1,147,255	\$ 1,406,240	122.6%
Other Auxiliary Services	\$ 1,778,800	\$ 1,317,535	74.1%	\$ 493,800	\$ 1,265,609	256.3%	\$ 300,000	\$ 35,799	11.9%
Grant Revenue	\$ 970,439	\$ 190,111	19.6%	\$ 1,070,439	\$ 459,294	42.9%	\$ 629,900	\$ 55,151	8.8%
Total Revenues	\$ 28,619,788	\$ 29,577,538	103.3%	\$ 30,057,592	\$ 30,060,783	100.0%	\$ 31,800,459	\$ 22,932,862	72.1%

EXPENDITURES	2023-24 Audited			2024-25 Unaudited			2025-26 Current		
	Budget	Actual	% of Budget	Budget	Actual	% of Budget	Budget	Actual	% of Budget
Personnel:									
Instruction	\$ 3,852,484	\$ 3,812,214	99.0%	\$ 3,926,896	\$ 4,495,792	114.5%	\$ 3,439,489	\$ 2,376,779	69.1%
Research	\$ -	\$ 216,097	-	\$ 431,172	\$ 265,183	61.5%	\$ 636,411	\$ 61,820	9.7%
Academic Support	\$ 988,348	\$ 1,083,198	109.6%	\$ 669,121	\$ 1,002,430	149.8%	\$ 987,394	\$ 495,392	50.2%
Student Services	\$ 1,667,116	\$ 1,711,529	102.7%	\$ 1,642,270	\$ 1,994,883	121.5%	\$ 1,998,203	\$ 973,921	48.7%
Institutional Support ¹	\$ 5,181,447	\$ 4,506,246	87.0%	\$ 5,561,679	\$ 5,317,398	95.6%	\$ 5,403,259	\$ 2,515,535	46.6%
Operation & Maintenance	\$ 1,469,644	\$ 1,623,220	110.4%	\$ 1,549,821	\$ 1,814,135	117.1%	\$ 1,371,036	\$ 872,120	63.6%
Auxiliary Services	\$ 847,139	\$ 732,862	86.5%	\$ 953,994	\$ 854,865	89.6%	\$ 979,662	\$ 422,720	43.1%
Athletics	\$ 1,004,962	\$ 848,600	84.4%	\$ 945,398	\$ 1,068,115	113.0%	\$ 1,059,955	\$ 511,953	48.3%
Total Personnel	\$ 15,011,140	\$ 14,533,966	96.8%	\$ 15,680,351	\$ 16,812,801	107.2%	\$ 15,875,409	\$ 8,230,240	51.8%
Operating:									
Education & General	\$ 8,154,943	\$ 5,977,482	73.3%	\$ 7,697,840	\$ 5,316,635	69.1%	\$ 8,845,158	\$ 3,746,000	42.4%
Sponsored Programs	\$ 217,000	\$ 239,396	110.3%	\$ 221,200	\$ 1,010,998	457.1%	\$ 239,200	\$ 125,385	52.4%
Auxiliary Services	\$ 1,801,925	\$ 2,878,085	159.7%	\$ 2,228,821	\$ 2,944,017	132.1%	\$ 2,190,062	\$ 807,503	36.9%
Athletics	\$ 1,367,700	\$ 1,341,891	98.1%	\$ 1,883,300	\$ 1,480,464	78.6%	\$ 2,236,000	\$ 458,629	20.5%
Financial Aid	\$ 2,067,080	\$ 1,179,933	57.1%	\$ 2,346,080	\$ 2,440,265	104.0%	\$ 2,414,630	\$ 2,035,562	84.3%
Total Operating	\$ 13,608,648	\$ 11,616,787	85.4%	\$ 14,377,241	\$ 13,192,379	91.8%	\$ 15,925,050	\$ 7,173,079	45.0%
Total Expenditures	\$ 28,619,788	\$ 26,150,753	91.4%	\$ 30,057,592	\$ 30,005,180	99.8%	\$ 31,800,459	\$ 15,403,319	48.4%

Surplus/(Deficit)

\$ 3,426,786

\$ 55,603

\$ 7,529,543

¹ Prior to year-end cost allocations for financial statement purposes; audited financials show Instruction as largest program expense.



Richard Bland College

BOARD OF VISITORS BOARD MEETING AGENDA

January 28, 2026 | AIC Boardroom | 10:30 - 2:00 p.m.

- 10:30 a.m.** **I. Call to Order and Opening Remarks** - John Rathbone, Rector
- Approval of September 24, 2025 Meeting Minutes (action required)
 - Approval of October 1, 2025 Meeting Minutes (action required)
- 10:40** **II. President's Remarks** - Debbie Sydow, President
- 10:45** **III. Commonwealth Priorities for Higher Education**
- Part I. Virginia State Council of Higher Education (SCHEV)** - Scott Fleming, Executive Director
- Part II. Strategic Alliances - Nascent Opportunities** - Dr. Eileen Strempel, Board Governance and Strategic Planning Consultant
- Part III. RBC Mission, Vision and Strategic Goals: 2026-28** - Dr. Tiffany Birdsong, Chief of Staff; Dr. Eileen Strempel
- Resolution 1** - 2028 Mission, Vision and Strategic Priorities
- 12:30 p.m.** **Working Lunch** - Updated Campus Master Plan - Bill Boyce, RRMM; Steve Hostetler, Timmons Engineering
- 1:00** **IV. Committee Reports**
- I. Finance, Audit, and Compliance Committee** - Chairman Chuck Patton
Resolution 2 – Acceptance of Fiscal Year 2026 Internal Audit Plan
 - II. Ad Hoc Presidential Search Committee** - Chairman Bert Poole
Resolution 3 - Authorize the Appointment of Interim President
- 1:15** **V. Action Items**
- Resolution 4** - 2026 Campus Facilities Master Plan
- Resolution 5** - Naming the AIC Boardroom in Honor of Senator Mamie E. Locke, Ph.D.
- Resolution 6** – Conferral of Honorary Degree
- Resolution 7** - Tier II Authorization
- Resolution 8** – Policy to Delineate the Relationship, Roles, and Responsibilities of the Board of Visitors and the Foundation Board of Directors
- Resolution 9** – Faculty Leave of Absence
- Resolution 10** – Conferral of President Emerita Status and Professorship
- VI. Closed Session (TBD)**
- 2:00 p.m.** **VII. Adjournment**



Richard Bland College BOARD OF VISITOR

DRAFT SEPTEMBER BOARD MEETING MINUTES

September 23-24, 2025 | 10:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. | AIC Boardroom

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 23 - Rector's Dinner

On Tuesday evening, September 23, 2025, voting members of the Richard Bland College Board of Visitors (Board) and Richard Bland College President Debbie Sydow convened at 6:00 p.m. at the Hotel Petersburg, located at 20 W. Tabb St., Petersburg, VA 23803, for a dinner hosted by Mayor Sam Parham. Conversation centered on college, community, and commonwealth interests and priorities. The remainder of the evening was purely social, and no business was conducted.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT FOR THE RECTOR'S DINNER:

- Mr. John Rathbone, Rector
- Mr. Albert Poole, Vice Rector
- Ms. Vickie Schray, Secretary
- Hon. James Dyke Jr.
- Hon. Sam Parham
- Ms. Bouwien Smits

ABSENT FROM THE RECTOR'S DINNER:

- Mr. Charles Patton

President Debbie L. Sydow was also present at the dinner.

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 24 - Board of Visitors Meeting

The Board convened on campus in the Academic Innovation Center Boardroom at 10:30 a.m. following the Finance, Audit, and Compliance Committee meeting.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT FOR THE BOARD MEETING:

- Mr. John Rathbone, Rector
- Mr. Albert Poole, Vice Rector
- Ms. Vickie Schray, Secretary
- Hon. James Dyke Jr.
- Hon. Sam Parham

- Ms. Bouwien Smits
- Mr. Jason Pode, Faculty Representative

ABSENT FROM THE BOARD MEETING:

- Mr. Charles Patton
- Ms. Lilli Brown, Student Representative

OTHERS PRESENT FOR THE FULL BOARD MEETING:

- Dr. Debbie Sydow, President
- Dr. Kimberly Boyd, Vice President and Chief Research & Innovation Officer
- Dr. Tiffany Birdsong, Chief of Staff
- Stacey Sokol, Chief Business Officer
- Eric Kondzielawa, Chief Operations Officer
- Justin May, Chief Enrollment Management Officer
- Jesse Vaughan, Chief Marketing and Communications Officer
- Charita Johnson, Chief Information Officer
- Vicki Humphreys, Chief Development Officer
- Dr. Adam Zucconi, Interim Chief Academic Officer
- Melissa Mahoney, Controller
- Dr. Evanda Watts-Martinez, Director of Counseling Services
- Christie Clarke, Director, Dual Enrollment and High School Programs
- Dianna Banks, Director of Human Resources
- Dr. Susan Clair, Information Security Officer
- Dr. Ann Ifekwunigwe, Director, The University Center
- Ben Thoreson, Director of Student Success
- Ashley Fuller, Data and Compliance Officer
- Terelle Robinson, Associate Director of Government Relations
- Lisa Pond, Associate Director of Administrative Services
- Jeff Palmore, Principal, Capital Strategies
- Nathan Moberley, College Counsel
- Dr. Eileen Stempel, Strategic Planning and Governance Consultant
- Gerrit Smith, Senior Executive Administrator and Clerk to the Board of Visitors
- Other RBC Faculty & Staff

Welcome and Introductory Remarks

Rector John Rathbone called the Board meeting to order at 10:35 a.m. Recognizing that a quorum was present, Rector Rathbone asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the August 27, 2025, meeting. The motion was made by Mr. Parham, seconded by Ms. Smits and approved by voice vote.

At the request of Rector Rathbone, Ms. Smits provided a summary of the Finance, Audit, and Compliance Committee meeting that took place earlier in the day. With a focus on risk analysis/management, liability mitigation, and finances, the Committee received presentations from David Rasnic, Director for Higher Education at the Auditor of Public Accounts (APA); Mike Cullen, Principal with Baker Tilly, the College's internal auditor; Melissa Mahoney, RBC Controller; and Stacy Sokol, Chief Business Officer.

President's Report

President Debbie Sydow provided an overview of the September Board meeting's thematic focus on college assets, noting that oversight and stewardship of all college assets—fiscal, financial, technology, human, and physical—is a primary responsibility of the Board. She also introduced Professor Jason Pode, the new Faculty Representative to the Board. Dr. Sydow reminded Board members of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) Substantive Change Committee's on-site visit to campus on October 28, 2025, stating that this is one more step in the the accrediting body's process for reviewing the College's governance change. Dr. Sydow noted that the SACSCOC Board of Trustees is expected to take final action to approve RBC's governance change at their June 2026 meeting. President Sydow then introduced Dr. Kim Boyd, Vice President and Chief Research and Innovation Officer.

Dr. Boyd introduced herself and provided a summary of grants assets, highlighting grant assets obtained since 2022 (~\$10 million) and highlighting initiatives such as the RBC "Health Zone," the new RBC Workforce and Career Readiness Center on Crater Road in Petersburg, and the RBC Table Dealers Institute. She emphasized community partnerships and the alignment between grants and RBC's strategic priorities.

Charita Johnson, Chief Information Officer, introduced herself to the Board and discussed the College's technology assets, highlighting the Technology Strategic Plan. Ms. Johnson highlighted strategic focus areas of the plan, including enhancing data driven decision making, protecting institutional and personal data, and harnessing artificial intelligence for teaching and learning.

Eric Kondzielawa, Chief Operating Officer, provided an overview of the College's physical assets, noting features of the 800-acre campus on the Facilities Master Plan, including the RBC Business Innovation Park. Mr. Kondzielawa informed the Board about the development of auxiliary revenue through campus housing, dining, Grove Market, and other enterprises, as well as partnerships with entities like the Department of Forestry that manage timber sales. Mr. Kondzielawa reviewed capital projects proposed in the 2026-32 Capital Outlay Plan.

Working Lunch - Higher Education Consolidation: An Overview

Following a break at 11:45, the meeting resumed at noon with a working lunch. Dr. Eileen Strempe, Consultant to the Board of Visitors, introduced John MacIntosh, Managing Partner of

SeaChange Capital, who joined via Teams to discuss the growing trend of mergers and acquisitions in higher education. SeaChange Capital supports colleges and universities to explore strategic alliances and collaborative partnerships that have the potential to improve student success. The process for applying for funding through SeaChange Capital was explained. Dr. Strempel presented the Board with a framework for investigating Primary Models and Options for Consolidation in Higher Education.

After the working lunch, Dr. Adam Zucconi, Acting Chief Academic Officer, provided an overview of academic assets, including instructional faculty and degree programs and credentials offered. He highlighted future program development and innovation, especially planned certificate programs in data science, cyber security and healthcare. Dr. Zucconi shared that 86% of tenured and continuing track faculty hold terminal degrees and full-time faculty teach approximately 70% of classes. He also reported on faculty-led experiences for students during the last year and library and Academic Innovation Center resources available to students.

Ben Thoreson, Director of Student Success, introduced himself and highlighted student success assets, including the College's Guided Pathways to Success (GPS) program designed to help students stay on course to reach their academic and career goals. Mr. Thoreson explained the role of learner mentors who are full-time professional advisors assigned to every student. The key priorities for student success at RBC are retention, graduation, and helping students persist toward the next step in their educational journey. Mr. Thoreson described how he and his team use data interventions to assist students who encounter academic challenges. He shared success stories of three recent RBC graduates and how they are thriving at their four-year universities, including Princeton, Amherst, and UNC.

Committee Reports

[See Welcome and Introductory Remarks.]

Action Items

After Mr. Thoreson's presentation and conclusion of the President's report, the Board took a 15-minute break. At 1:45 p.m. the meeting continued with Dr. Sydow summarizing each of the eight resolutions presented for Board approval.

Resolutions 1, Appointment to Fill Vacancies in the Instructional Faculty; **Resolution 2**, Award of Academic Promotion; and **Resolution 3**, Approval to Fill Vacancies in the Professional Faculty, were voted on as a block. Rector Rathbone requested a motion to approve Resolutions 1 through 3. The motion was made by Mr. Albert Poole, seconded by Ms. Smits and approved by voice vote.

Rector Rathbone then requested a motion to approve **Resolution 4**, Approval of the College Workforce Planning and Development Report. The motion was made by Ms. Vickie Schray, seconded by Mr. Poole and approved by voice vote.

Resolution 5, Approval of 2026-2032 Capital Outlay Plan and **Resolution 6**, 2026-2032 Six-Year Plan, were voted on as a block. Rector Rathbone requested a motion to approve Resolutions 5 and 6. The motion was made by Mr. Poole, seconded by Ms. Schray and approved by voice vote.

Rector Rathbone requested a motion to approve **Resolution 7**, Approval of BOV Status Update Report. The motion was made by Ms. Schray, seconded by Mr. Poole and approved by voice vote.

Closed Session

After passage of Resolution 7, Rector Rathbone requested a motion to move the Board meeting into closed session for the purpose of discussing the selection of a presidential search firm pursuant to Virginia Code §2.2-3711.A.29 Discussion of the award of a public contract involving the expenditure of public funds, including interviews of bidders or offerors, and discussion of the terms of scope of such contract, where discussion in an open session would adversely affect the bargaining position or negotiating strategy of the public body. The motion was made by Mr. Poole, seconded by Ms. Schray and approved by voice vote. The Board went into closed session at 2:02 p.m.

Open Session Resumed

The Board reconvened in open session at 2:16 p.m.

Rector Rathbone requested a motion that the Board certify by roll call vote that, to the best of each member's knowledge, only matters lawfully exempted from the open meeting requirements and the Virginia Freedom of Information Act were discussed and only matters identified in the motion to have a closed session were discussed. The motion was made by Mr. Poole, seconded by Ms. Schray. Gerrit Smith, Senior Executive Administrator and Clerk to the Board, called the roll, and all six Board members present "certified yes."

Rector Rathbone requested a motion to pass **hand-delivered Resolution 8**, Authorizing the Selection of the Presidential Search Firm and Appointing an Ad Hoc Presidential Search Committee. The motion was made by Ms. Schray, seconded by Mr. Parham and passed by voice vote as amended.

There being no further business, Rector Rathbone adjourned the meeting at 2:21 p.m.



Richard Bland College BOARD OF VISITOR

MEETING MINUTES

October 1, 2025 | 5:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m. | Microsoft Teams

The Richard Bland College Board of Visitors met virtually for a special board meeting in an open session on October 1, 2025. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the search process for hiring an Interim President.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT FOR THE BOARD MEETING:

- John Rathbone, Rector
- Albert Poole, Vice Rector
- Vickie Schray, Secretary
- Hon. James Dyke Jr.
- Hon. Sam Parham
- Chuck Patton
- Bouwien Smits

ABSENT FROM THE BOARD MEETING:

- Prof. Jason Pode, Faculty Representative
- Lilli Brown, Student Representative

OTHERS PRESENT FOR THE BOARD MEETING:

- Dr. Debbie Sydow, President
- Jennifer Muller, Founder and Managing Partner, Academic Career & Executive Search
- Ann Costantino, Managing Director, Academic Career & Executive Search
- Christa Vines, Project and Recruitment Manager, Academic Career & Executive Search
- Nathan Moberley, College Counsel
- Gerrit Smith, Senior Executive Administrator and Clerk to the Board of Visitors

Welcome and Introductory Remarks

Rector John Rathbone called the Board meeting to order at 5:01 p.m. He introduced Ms. Jennifer Muller, Founder and Managing Partner of the Academic Career & Executive Search (ACES) firm, and invited her to review the presidential search process and timeline.

Interim President Search Process Presentation and Discussion

Ms. Muller provided an overview of the interim presidential search process and timeline. She noted that ACES will advertise the position and vet prospective candidates. The deadline to

submit applications for the position is November 12, 2025. The Interim Presidential Search Committee (Committee) will then review submissions and select candidates for virtual interviews, which will take place in December 2025.

After the virtual interviews, the Committee will identify finalists for in-person interviews to be conducted on campus in January 2026. Once these interviews are completed, the Committee will make a recommendation to the Board regarding the selected candidate for Interim President. Finally, the full Board will approve the recommended candidate at its regularly scheduled meeting on January 28, 2026. The Interim President will start on or before July 1, 2026, and the minimum tenure will be twelve months.

Board members then engaged in a discussion about key qualities desired in an Interim President. Members emphasized the importance of political acumen and experience working with the Virginia legislature. They also noted that the ideal candidate should be a strong collaborator and work effectively with faculty and staff, along with having other essential leadership attributes.

Adjournment

There being no further business, Rector Rathbone adjourned the meeting at 5:59 p.m.



Richard Bland College

BOARD OF VISITORS

Resolution: No. 1 – 2028 MISSION, VISION and STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Date: January 28, 2026

WHEREAS, in April 2013, President Sydow recommended and the W&M Board of Visitors approved *RBC-2019*, the 2014-2019 strategic plan for Richard Bland College; and

WHEREAS, in February, 2020, the Board of Visitors approved the 2020-2025 strategic plan entitled *Seize Your Potential*; and

WHEREAS, the goals and objectives set forth in *RBC-2019* and *Seize Your Potential (2020-2025)* drove significant gains for Richard Bland College, most notably increased enrollment, improved student outcomes, expanded educational and career pathways, and enhanced operational efficiency and performance; and

WHEREAS, during a pivotal period of leadership transition (board and president), unprecedented demographic and technological shifts, and legislative mandates for contemplating the future of Richard Bland College, clear focus and direction are required to continue to strengthen and advantageously position the institution for success in fulfilling its educational mission; and

WHEREAS, this plan sets strategic direction and priorities over the next 18-24 months, thereby assuring that during this period of transition the institution continues its forward trajectory and momentum with a central focus on student success and regional development; and

WHEREAS, the 2026-2028 strategic plan aligns with the Six-Year Plan, SCHEV priorities, VBHEC initiatives and state mandates to drive 1) high demand and high quality programs and services, 2) improved student outcomes, and 3) resource optimization

WHEREAS, Richard Bland College stakeholders have reviewed and provided input to the updated 2026-2028 mission, vision, and strategic priorities; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that upon recommendation of the President, the Richard Bland College Board of Visitors hereby approves the 2026-2028 strategic plan for Richard Bland College.



Richard Bland College

2026-28 Strategic Plan

This plan sets strategic direction and priorities over the next 18-24 months, assuring that during this period of transition (new board, new president) the institution continues its forward trajectory and momentum with a central focus on student success and regional development. In alignment with the Six-Year Plan, SCHEV priorities, and state mandates, key goals are to establish strategic partnerships to 1) expand online, industry-recognized credentials; 2) improve key student outcomes; and 3) optimize resources.

I. Background and Context

Following an extensive planning process led by President Sydow during her first year at Richard Bland College, in April 2013, the W&M Board of Visitors approved the 2014-19 strategic plan. Incorporating market data and broad stakeholder input, that plan—**RBC-19**—included revised mission and vision statements, strategic goals, and key performance indicators focused on elevating the quality, relevance and reputation of Richard Bland College in direct support of community and Commonwealth goals. Goals prioritized:

1. **Students** – Increased enrollment and an enhanced the student experience
2. **Programs and Delivery** – Modified portfolio of academic programs and services to be optimally responsive to documented market demand
3. **Operations and Resources** – Financial and environmental sustainability, student affordability and high-performance operations

Over the five-year planning cycle, significant gains were achieved. Established goals were incrementally tracked, and Bland stakeholders, including the W&M Board, received regular progress reports. Most significantly, by developing and implementing a carefully constructed Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM) plan that prioritized the resurrection of intercollegiate athletics, dual enrollment expansion, and an exceptional student experience (ESE@RBC), student enrollment goals were achieved (2,000 students). Focused investment in high quality and strategic marketing elevated brand awareness and reputation. Strategic partnerships with both public and private universities created new student pathways, and student satisfaction measurably increased. Operating expenses were pared, and auxiliary revenue grew with a focus on financial stability and student accessibility.

In February 2020, the President recommended and the W&M Board of Visitors approved the 2020-25 strategic plan for Richard Bland College entitled ***Seize Your Potential***. Subsequently, in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic, goals and objectives derived from 2021 and 2022 General Assembly budget bills were integrated, and the Board approved an updated strategic plan in February 2022. With a new baseline from which to begin, the plan sought to provide students:

1. **An educational product of high value with streamlined pathways** – Each program would be vetted for transferability, academic rigor and relevance to the market.
2. **An unmatched student experience** – Building on ESE@RBC, support and guidance would be present at every stage of the student lifecycle, and barriers to success would be identified and removed.
3. **Sustainability in operation** – Building on RBC-19, auxiliary revenue would continue to grow through operational efficiency, outsourcing/insourcing, and strategic partnerships. There would also be a renewed focus on growing the endowment to maintain student accessibility.

During this period, Richard Bland College gained momentum, significantly growing the endowment, auxiliary, and grant revenue; establishing a Student Success department and Guided Pathways to Success (GPS) program; and driving consecutive enrollment increases.

Now when the higher education industry confronts unprecedented challenges at the onset of a decade-long “enrollment cliff” (decreased numbers of high school graduates and increased competition), Richard Bland finds itself doubly challenged by leadership transitions, both with a new governing board as of July 1, 2025, and an impending presidential transition (effective 7/01/2026). In addition, the legislative Code establishing the Richard Bland College Board of Visitors requires the Board to explore options for Bland’s future that include consolidation with other institutions of higher education (IHEs) and to report their findings and recommendations back to the Administration and General Assembly by June 30 of 2026, 2027, and 2028.

Retaining Bland’s nimble, entrepreneurial culture and its student-centric values is the clarion call at this pivotal time. Continuing to advance student success, career-readiness and operational sustainability are paramount to the College’s future. At the same time, changing technologies (e.g., GEN AI), changing demographics, and changing leadership provide an exciting opportunity to adjust course and set new goals to ensure that Richard Bland’s educational mission remains relevant, robust and attainable.

It is with this intention—during an interval of transition over the coming 18-24 months—to strengthen and advantageously position Richard Bland College for extraordinary success in fulfilling its educational mission, that the President, Cabinet and Council recommend approval of the updated ***Innovate 2028*** strategic plan.

II. Mission

Current Mission Statement: To prepare our students for a lifetime of endless potential. We accomplish this by:

- Preparing students for university transfer through academically rigorous programs grounded in the liberal arts tradition of William & Mary.
- Expanding access to college credentials through strategic partnerships, specialized programming, and scalable innovation.

Proposed Mission Statement: To educate students and communities to flourish.

III. Vision

Current Vision Statement: Richard Bland College is in the vanguard of learning-outcomes based liberal arts education for university transfer and a model for testing and applying outcomes-driven solutions in higher education.

Proposed Vision Statement: To deliver personalized educational experiences, credentials, and pathways and that empower students to dream bigger, achieve more, and contribute to communities that thrive.

IV. Values

Current Values:

- A friendly, family atmosphere – expansive atmosphere of support for every individual
- Enthusiastic, student-focused service – serve in a way that nurtures student potential and supports their journey to success
- The power of difference – an inclusive and welcoming community of individuals with diverse talents and skills who are committed to civility, mutual respect, and the free and open exchange of ideas
- Building confidence – engaging and supporting students to cultivate their own individual potential, fortitude and agency
- Quality outcomes – continuously assess, adjust and improve

Proposed Values (ABCs):

- **AGILITY** – Agile, resourceful, data-informed problem solving – continuously assess, adjust and improve outcomes across all academic and administrative programs and operations
- **BELONGING** – A community and culture of belonging where every member of the campus community is supported, encouraged and empowered to flourish
- **Student-CENTRIC** – Friendly, enthusiastic, student-centric service that nurtures resilience, builds confidence and agency, and supports each student’s journey to success

V. Updated Strategic Priorities

1. Build Portfolio of High-value Credentials Aligned with Market Demand

- a. Execute Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM) plan, including the launch of a robust portfolio of online credentials—both credit and non-credit—that are accessible to diverse student populations.
 - 1) In consultation with business and industry partners, offer just-in-time industry recognized credentials in high-demand fields, including health care, business, business analytics, UAS, data science, AI and advanced manufacturing technology.
- b. Expand STEAM-H competencies for regional students by expanding dual enrollment opportunities leading to two-year degrees, pathways to employment, and transfer to undergraduate and graduate-level STEAM-H degree programs.
 - 1) With lab school or grant funding, expand summer and weekend STEAM-H learning opportunities for diverse student populations.
 - 2) Expand internships in STEAM-H fields.
- c. Identify and execute strategic partnerships that expand high-value academic and career pathways available to students.
 - 1) Annually assess opportunities to increase strategic partnerships with universities that expand credentials and degree pathways available to students.
 - 2) Annually assess opportunities for strategic partnerships with business and industry to expand work-based learning opportunities, internships and employment pathways available to students.
- d. Analyze and pursue resolution of all barriers that impede delivery of a full range of high-demand programs and credentials

2. Improve Student Completion Outcomes

- a. Improve graduation rate.
 - 1) Raise IPEDS graduation rate to at least 35% for the fall 2027 cohort, and continue to increase by 0.5% year over year.
- b. Enhance student persistence and retention.
 - 1) Achieve at least a 92% fall to spring persistence rate for first-year students.
 - 2) Achieve at least a 60% fall to fall retention rate, and continue to increase by 0.5% year over year.
- c. Equip faculty, staff and students with AI literacy and competencies that align with quality learning outcomes and strategic goals.

- 1) Provide AI training and advanced technologies that support AI to all employees and students.
- 2) Design and deliver training that leads to 70% AI literacy certification for employees.

3. Foster Innovation to Remain Accessible

- a. Build an endowment that provides gap scholarship funding to supplement state and federal student financial aid to ensure that every student to attend RBC tuition-free.
 - 1) Build the fundraising infrastructure to secure major gifts for scholarships, with minimal restrictions applied.
 - 2) Grow endowment and sponsored program funding year-over-year to increase scholarships and emergency grants, thereby reducing educational costs.
 - 3) Increase grant funding by a minimum of 2% annually, and increase paid internships by 5% annually.
- b. Attract tenants and utilize the Business Innovation Park to generate revenue and provide internship, applied research and career exploration and entrepreneurial opportunities.
 - 1) Finalize a lease with 1 or more corporate partners that includes paid student internships.
- c. Secure administrative and/or legislative approval for Tier Two procurement and IT authorization to reduce costs and improve operational and academic outcomes.



Richard Bland College

BOARD OF VISITORS

Resolution: No. 2 – FISCAL YEAR 2026 INTERNAL AUDIT PLAN

Date: January 28, 2026

WHEREAS, the Board of Visitors of Richard Bland College recognizes the importance of maintaining strong internal controls and effective risk management practices to ensure the integrity, efficiency, and accountability of College operations; and

WHEREAS, Baker Tilly has developed the 2025-2026 Internal Audit Plan to support Richard Bland College by strengthening risk mitigation, enhancing operational effectiveness, and promoting compliance, and which includes the following components:

- **An Enterprise Risk Assessment** that identifies, analyzes, and scores the College's financial, operational, compliance, and strategic risks; and
- **Ongoing compliance support** for Auditor of Public Accounts (APA) requirements related to information systems security and financial operations; and

WHEREAS, the Internal Audit Plan has been developed in accordance with applicable professional standards and is consistent with the requirements of the Commonwealth of Virginia's Audit and Management Services guidelines and the standards set forth by the Institute of Internal Auditors;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Visitors hereby accepts and approves the Fiscal Year 2026 Internal Audit Plan prepared by Baker Tilly as presented; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the President and College administration are authorized and directed to implement the Internal Audit Plan and to report progress, findings, and recommendations to the Finance, Audit and Compliance Committee of the Board of Visitors to ensure continued compliance with Virginia audit standards and best practices.



Richard Bland College

BOARD OF VISITORS

Resolution: No. 3 - AUTHORIZING APPOINTMENT OF INTERIM PRESIDENT

Date: January 28, 2026

WHEREAS, the Board of Visitors of Richard Bland College is vested with the power and duty to appoint the chief executive officer of the College and to set the terms and conditions of employment for such appointment, consistent with the Board's governing authority under Title 23.1 of the Code of Virginia, including § 23.1-1301, and the Board's bylaws and policies; and

WHEREAS, the College requires the timely appointment of an Interim President to ensure continuity of leadership, institutional effectiveness, and fulfillment of its mission and strategic goals when President Debbie L. Sydow steps down as president on June 30, 2025, and while any permanent presidential search and selection process is conducted; and

WHEREAS, the Board engaged Academic Career and Executive Search (ACES) and appointed an Interim President Search Committee chaired by Vice Rector Albert Poole to facilitate a rigorous, expeditious, and inclusive process to identify, evaluate, and recommend to the Board a qualified candidate for the position of Interim President; and

WHEREAS, having completed its due diligence, the Interim President Search Committee recommends the appointment of _____ as Interim President and presents a summary of qualifications and proposed terms and conditions of employment (attached); and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT, the Board authorizes the Interim President Search Committee Chair, Vice Rector Albert Poole, in consultation with the Rector, appropriate College officials, and College Counsel, to negotiate the material terms and conditions of employment with the Committee's recommended candidate for Interim President, _____, in accordance with the Code of Virginia, applicable state and College policies, and budgetary parameters; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT, the Committee Chair is authorized to finalize a written contract consistent with the Board's approval and to transmit the final contract to the Rector for execution on behalf of the Board; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT, the Rector is authorized to execute the approved Employment Agreement with Interim President _____ to include any related instruments necessary to effectuate the appointment, subject to legal sufficiency review by College Counsel; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED THAT, this resolution is effective immediately and shall remain in effect until the Interim President has been duly appointed, the related employment agreement executed by the Rector, and a transition plan is in place—or until earlier dissolved by the Board.



Richard Bland College

BOARD OF VISITORS

Resolution: No. 4 - 2026 CAMPUS FACILITIES MASTER PLAN

Date: January 28, 2026

WHEREAS, Richard Bland College adopted a Campus Master Plan in 2014 that envisioned transforming the College from a commuter campus to a residential, pedestrian-friendly campus, concentrating academic, athletic, and residential activity in the southwest and northwest quadrants; and

WHEREAS, the 2014 plan emphasized community-building, environmental sustainability, and strategic growth aligned with the College's mission and strategic goals; and

WHEREAS, the College now seeks to update and refine that vision through a 2026 Campus Facilities Master Plan that promotes synergies with the adjacent Business Innovation Park and further advances its strategic priorities of operational efficiency, student affordability, institutional sustainability, and community engagement; and

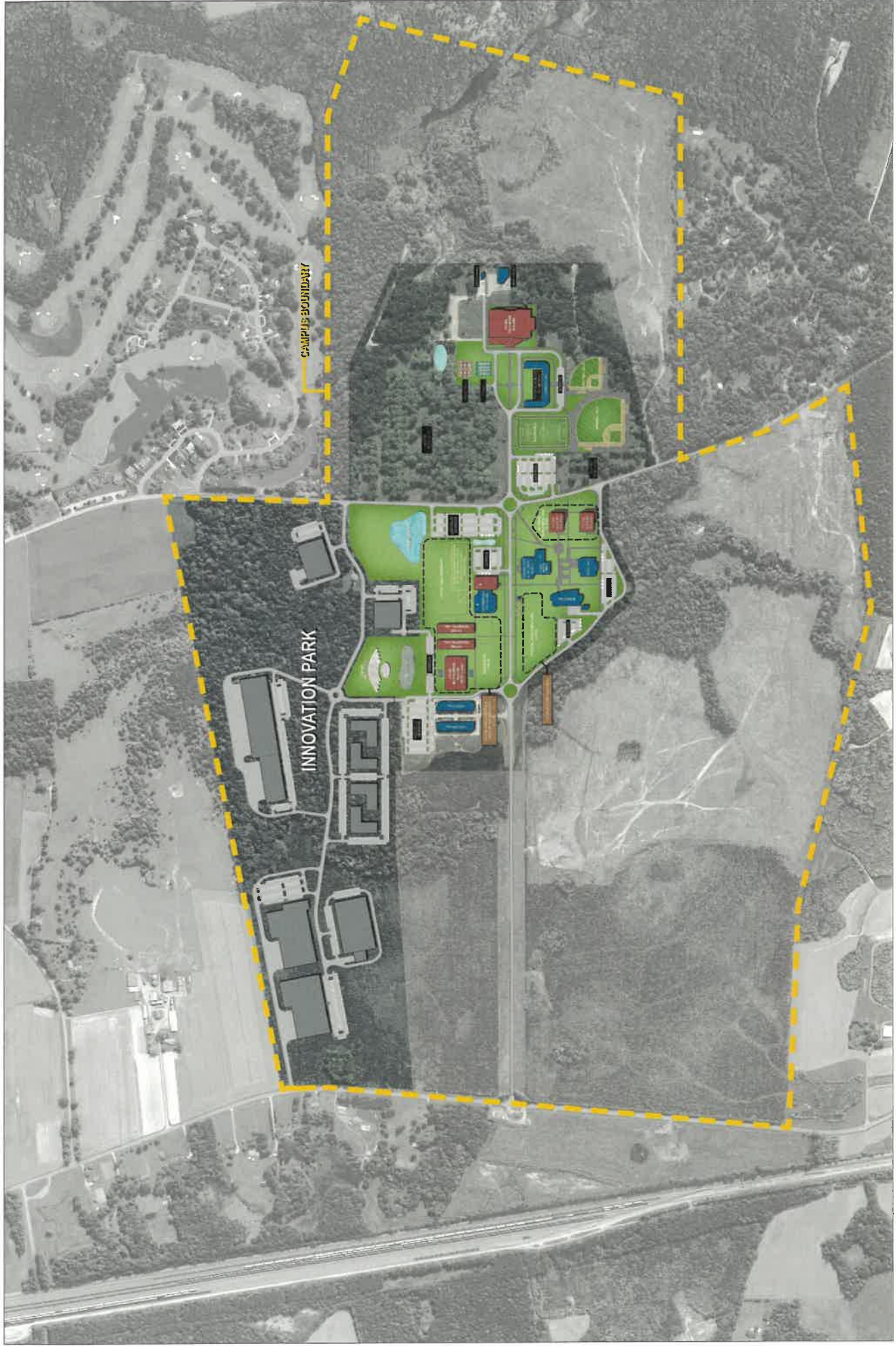
WHEREAS, the 2026 Campus Facilities Master Plan proposes:

- Reducing the overall campus footprint to foster a more vibrant, connected campus community and to lower short-term and long-term maintenance costs;
- Renovating and repurposing Statesman Hall as a consolidated administration, technology hub, and campus safety building, thereby improving operational efficiency and service delivery;
- Systematically abandoning and ultimately razing obsolete East Campus structures originally built to support agricultural and hospital operations, which have reached the end of their useful life, while restoring these areas for green space and future programmatic opportunities; and
- Focusing on the student experience that encompasses academics, athletics, resident life and campus culture, and entrepreneurship through engagement with business innovation park, by planning and prioritizing the appropriate adjacencies and zoning of campus.

WHEREAS, the updated plan continues to prioritize pedestrian corridors, peripheral parking, and natural resource stewardship, consistent with the College's commitment to sustainability and student engagement;

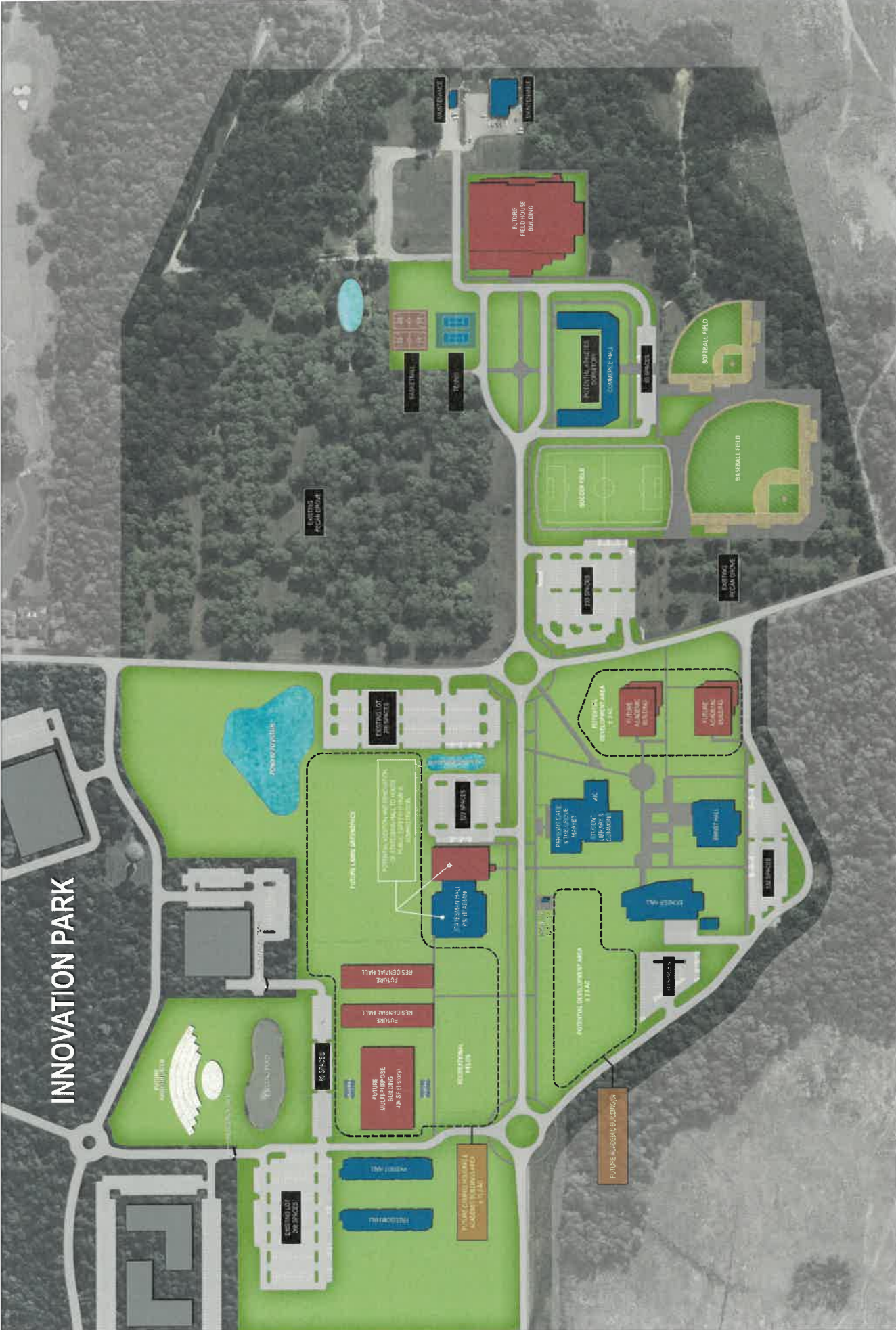
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Visitors of Richard Bland College hereby approves and adopts the 2026 Campus Facilities Master Plan, dated January 2026, as the guiding framework for campus development and directs the College administration to oversee its implementation in alignment with institutional priorities; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that any substantive changes to the 2026 Campus Facilities Master Plan shall require approval by a majority vote of the Board of Visitors.

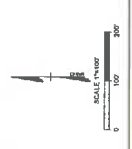


RICHARD BLAND COLLEGE
 MASTER PLAN - OVERALL CAMPUS BOUNDARY 01/09/2026

INNOVATION PARK



RICHARD BLAND COLLEGE
 MASTER PLAN - ENLARGED CAMPUS VIEW 01/09/2026







Richard Bland College

BOARD OF VISITORS

Resolution: No. 5 – NAMING THE AIC BOARDROOM IN HONOR OF SENATOR MAMIE E. LOCKE, PH.D.

Date: January 28, 2025

WHEREAS, Senator Mamie E. Locke has served the Commonwealth of Virginia with distinction since 2004 as a member of the Senate of Virginia, representing the 23rd District, which includes the City of Hampton and parts of the City of Newport News; and

WHEREAS, Senator Locke is a nationally respected educator, civic leader, and policymaker whose decades of service have profoundly impacted public education, governance, equity, and economic opportunity in Virginia and beyond; and

WHEREAS, Senator Locke holds a B.A. from Tougaloo College and both M.A. and Ph.D. degrees in Political Science from Atlanta University (now Clark Atlanta University), along with certifications from Harvard University and Emory University, and is Professor Emerita of Political Science at Hampton University; and

WHEREAS, Senator Locke has been a steadfast advocate for public higher education, including serving as Chair of the Senate Rules Committee, Chair of the Senate Democratic Caucus, and holding appointments on the Senate Finance and Appropriations, Commerce and Labor, General Laws and Technology, and Education and Health Committees; and

WHEREAS, Senator Locke served as the Chief Patron of Senate Bill 742 (SB742) during the 2025 Regular Session of the Virginia General Assembly—a transformative and historic piece of legislation that established the independent Board of Visitors for Richard Bland College, separating the institution from the College of William & Mary and granting it full operational autonomy, effective July 1, 2025; and

WHEREAS, Senator Locke’s legislative leadership and strategic vision were instrumental in the passage of SB742 with unanimous bipartisan support (40-0 in the Senate; 96-0 in the House), culminating in its enactment as Chapter 607 of the Acts of Assembly of 2025, thus shaping the future of Richard Bland College for generations to come; and

WHEREAS, Senator Locke’s lifelong commitment to public service, student access, shared governance, and leadership development exemplifies the values and aspirations of Richard Bland College as it enters this new era of independence;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Visitors of Richard Bland College does hereby name the official Boardroom of Richard Bland College located in the Academic Innovation Center the:

Honorable Mamie E. Locke Boardroom

for a period of ten (10) years from the date of this resolution, in honor of her enduring legacy, transformative leadership, and pivotal role in securing independent board governance for Richard Bland College through the patronage and passage of Senate Bill 742.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a commemorative plaque shall be prominently installed to reflect this honor and the significance of Senator Locke's contributions to the College and the Commonwealth of Virginia.



Richard Bland College

BOARD OF VISITORS

Resolution: No. 6 – CONFERRAL OF HONORARY DEGREE

Date: January 28, 2026

Richard Bland College seeks to honor meritorious and outstanding service to the College and the community at large, and to recognize persons whose lives serve as examples of the College's aspirations for its students by awarding the honorary Associate degree.

WHEREAS, Senator Mamie E. Locke has served with distinction in the Virginia Senate since 2004, representing the 23rd District, and has been a tireless advocate for education, equity, and public service throughout her career;

WHEREAS, Senator Locke received her Bachelor's degree in history and political science from Tougaloo College, and both Master's and Ph.D. degrees in Political Science from Atlanta University (now Clark Atlanta University), and has served as Professor and Dean at Hampton University, earning the title of Professor Emerita of Political Science;

WHEREAS, Senator Locke was the first African American woman elected Mayor of the City of Hampton, serving from 2000 to 2004, and previously as Vice Mayor and City Council member, demonstrating a lifelong commitment to civic leadership and community development;

WHEREAS, Senator Locke has received numerous accolades, including the RBC Stateswoman Award, the Diane Blair Award for Outstanding Achievement in Politics and Government, the Virginia Education Association's Legislative Champion Award, and Lifetime Achievement honors from Virginia Union University and Virginia State University;

WHEREAS, Senator Locke currently chairs the Senate Rules Committee and the Senate Democratic Caucus, and she serves on key committees, including Finance and Appropriations, Education and Health, and General Laws and Technology, with a special focus on higher education policy;

WHEREAS, Senator Locke served as the Chief Patron of Senate Bill 742 (SB742) during the 2025 Regular Session of the Virginia General Assembly, a transformative and historic piece of legislation that established the independent Board of Visitors for Richard Bland College, separating the institution from the College of William & Mary and granting it full operational autonomy, effective July 1, 2025;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that in recognition of Senator Mamie Locke's public service, professional achievements, distinguished career, commitment to educational excellence in the Commonwealth of Virginia, and the historic advancement of Richard Bland College's independence she receive the highest form of recognition offered by Richard Bland College to persons of exceptional distinction.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that upon recommendation of the President, the Board of Visitors of Richard Bland College, hereby approves the awarding of the honorary Associate of Science degree to Senator Mamie Locke at the Richard Bland College Commencement Ceremony on May 16, 2026.



Richard Bland College

BOARD OF VISITORS

Resolution: No. 7 – TIER II AUTHORIZATION

Date: January 28, 2026

WHEREAS, the 2005 Session of the General Assembly enacted Chapters 933 and 945, Acts of Assembly, known as the Restructured Higher Education Financial and Administrative Operations Act (the “Act”), originally codified at Chapter 4.10 of Title 23, Sections 23-38.88 et seq., and now codified at Chapter 10 of Title 23.1, Sections 23.1-1001 et seq., of the Code of Virginia (1950), as amended; and

WHEREAS, the 2008 Session for the General Assembly enacted Chapters 824 and 829, Acts of the Assembly to amend and reenact §23-38.90 of the Code of Virginia relating to operational authority for public institutions of higher education in procurement, information technology, and capital projects excluding leases of real property, and which allows colleges and universities to enter into memoranda of understanding for additional operating authority in two, but no more than two, of these three areas; and

WHEREAS, Richard Bland College has established appropriate policies, procedures and controls and now stands ready to enter into an agreement with the Commonwealth of Virginia by memoranda of understanding with the appropriate Cabinet Secretaries, as stipulated by the Governor, granting appropriate operational authority, for the functional areas of procurement and information technology, for a period of three years; and

WHEREAS, as a condition for entering memoranda of understanding, the Richard Bland College Board of Visitors must approve a resolution affirmed by at least two-thirds of the Visitors stipulating that the institution is qualified to be, and should be, governed by such memoranda of understanding; and

WHEREAS, the President recommends and the Board has determined that entering into the memoranda of understanding is in the best interest of Richard Bland College and its ability to operate with greater flexibility and efficiency;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Board hereby authorizes the President, Chief Business Officer, and Chief Operating Officer to proceed in cooperation with the appropriate Cabinet Secretary to obtain the operating authority outlined in § 23.1-1003 relative to procurement

and information technology and to take all actions deemed by them to be necessary or advisable to facilitate this understanding; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that upon approval of the memoranda of understanding, the President, the Chief Business Officer, and Chief Operating Officer are granted full authority and responsibility to manage the procurement and information technology function of the College.



Richard Bland College

BOARD OF VISITORS

Resolution: No. 8 POLICY TO DELINIATE THE RELATIONSHIP, ROLES, AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE BOARD OF VISITORS AND THE FOUNDATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Date: January 28, 2026

WHEREAS, the Richard Bland College Board of Visitors (the 'Board') is the governing body of Richard Bland College, established pursuant to Chapter 21.1 of Title 23.1 of the Code of Virginia; and

WHEREAS, the Richard Bland College Foundation Board of Directors (the 'Foundation Board') is a duly incorporated 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization formed to support the mission and strategic priorities of Richard Bland College through fundraising, asset management, and community engagement; and

WHEREAS, the Board recognizes the importance of clearly delineating the roles, responsibilities, and collaborative expectations between the Board and the Foundation Board to ensure effective governance, transparency, and alignment with the College's mission; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Richard Bland College Board of Visitors that the Governance Policy to Delineate Roles, Responsibilities and the Relationship Between the Richard Bland College Board of Visitors and the Richard Bland College Foundation Board of Directors is hereby adopted and shall be incorporated into the Board's official Policy manual; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this resolution shall take effect immediately upon adoption and shall remain in force until amended or repealed by subsequent action of the Board.

Governance Policy: Delineation of Roles, Responsibilities and the Relationship Between the Board of Visitors and the Foundation Board of Directors

I. Purpose

This policy establishes clear boundaries and collaborative expectations between the governing body of the College, namely the Richard Bland College Board of Visitors (BoV), and the fiduciary body of the College's affiliated 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, namely the Richard Bland College Foundation Board of Directors (Foundation Board).

II. Legal Authority and Organizational Identity

Board of Visitors

- Established under **Chapter 21.1 of Title 23.1 of the Code of Virginia**.
- Functions as a **corporate body** known as *The Rector and Visitors of Richard Bland College*.
- Composed of **nine members appointed by the Governor**.
- Operates under the **control of the General Assembly**.

Foundation Board

- Incorporated as a **501(c)(3) nonprofit organization**.
 - Operates independently but in support of the College's mission.
 - Governed by its own **articles of incorporation and bylaws**.
 - Subject to **IRS governance standards** for charitable organizations.
-

III. Roles and Responsibilities

Board of Visitors

Governance and Oversight

- Appoints the College President.
- Holds fiduciary duty, entrusted to act with loyalty, care, and good faith in the best interest of the College.
- Approves academic programs, tuition, and budget.
- Oversees strategic planning, institutional effectiveness, accreditation, and compliance.
- Manages all College property and assets (NOTE: Board supports Foundation's utilization of campus property and assets pursuant to Operating/Support Agreements, leases, and other agreements currently in effect).

Policy and Regulation

- Adopts College policies.
 - Ensures compliance with state and federal laws.
-

Foundation Board

Fundraising and Resource Development

- Raises and manages private funds to support College priorities.
- Oversees endowed scholarships, donor relations, and major gifts.

Asset Stewardship

- Manages Foundation assets in accordance with donor intent and fiduciary standards.
- Ensures transparency and accountability in financial reporting.

Advocacy and Community Engagement

- Promotes the College's mission through community partnerships and events.
 - Serves as ambassadors to alumni, corporate partners, and philanthropic organizations.
-

IV. Collaboration and Communication

- The **President of Richard Bland College** serves as a **liaison** between the two boards and holds an **ex officio role** on the Foundation Board.
- Joint strategic initiatives must be **aligned with the College's mission and comply with current operating and support agreements** when involving College resources or branding.
- The Foundation Board shall **report annually** to the BoV on fundraising outcomes, financial health, and strategic priorities.



Richard Bland College

BOARD OF VISITORS

Resolution: No. 9 – FACULTY LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Date: January 28, 2026

As noted below, Professor David Morgan has requested a leave of absence with full pay and benefits during the 2025-2026 academic year for purposes of study and reflection. This professional enrichment will ultimately benefit Richard Bland College and its students.

BE IT RESOLVED, That upon recommendation of the President, the Board of Visitors hereby approves the following leave of absence:

David Morgan, Professor of Physics, to complete several writing projects ranging from academic papers on physics/cosmology to an English translation of a 17th-century mechanics text, and to strengthen professional expertise in AI, Human-Robot Interaction (HRI), and programming (Python/data science) to directly support courses and institutional projects at RBC.



Richard Bland College

BOARD OF VISITORS

Resolution: No. 10 – CONFERRING UPON DR. DEBBIE L. SYDOW PRESIDENT EMERITA STATUS AND AFFIRMING PROFESSORSHIP, SABBATICAL LEAVE

Date: January 28, 2026

WHEREAS, Dr. Debbie L. Sydow has served with distinction as President of Richard Bland College since July 1, 2012, providing visionary leadership, fostering academic excellence, and advancing the College's mission to prepare students for transfer and workforce success; and

WHEREAS, under Dr. Sydow's leadership, the College achieved significant milestones, including the establishment of an independent governing board, extensive revitalization of campus buildings and grounds, growth in enrollment and endowment, and enhanced institutional reputation; and

WHEREAS, insofar as Dr. Sydow has announced her intention to step down as president on June 30, 2026, the Board of Visitors wishes to recognize Dr. Sydow's exemplary service and enduring contributions to the College and the Commonwealth of Virginia;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Visitors hereby confers upon Dr. Debbie L. Sydow the honorary title of President Emerita, effective July 1, 2026; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Dr. Sydow is appointed Professor of English, with tenure, effective July 1, 2026, in accordance with her employment contract and in recognition of her academic credentials and demonstrated commitment to higher education and the professoriate; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board affirms the contractual agreement granting Dr. Sydow one year of sabbatical leave, effective July 1, 2026, at her base salary for the 2025–2026 fiscal year, to support scholarly and professional pursuits; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that in accordance with Richard Bland College Human Resource Policy 1030, Administrative and Professional Leave Policy, Dr. Sydow's leave balance upon separation from the presidency and as calculated through June 30, 2026—not to exceed a maximum payout of 240 hours—will be paid on or before August 16, 2026; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that the Board of Visitors heartily commends Dr. Sydow for her outstanding leadership and service, and extends its deepest appreciation for her relentless and unwavering dedication to Richard Bland College and the Commonwealth of Virginia

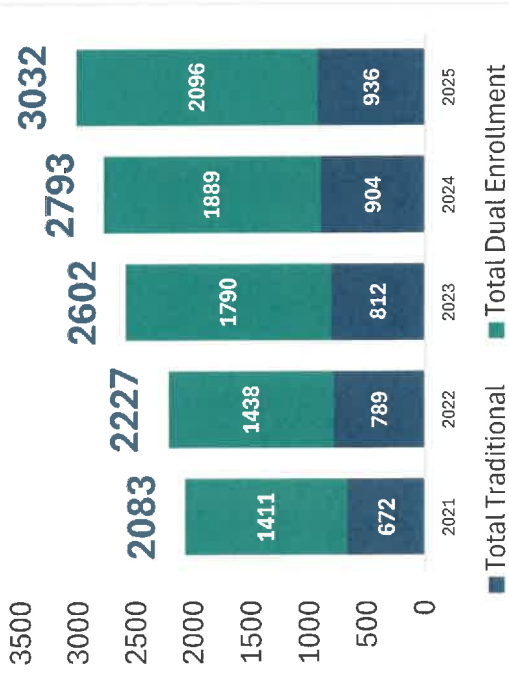
**Pre-Reads
for
January 28, 2026
Board Meeting**



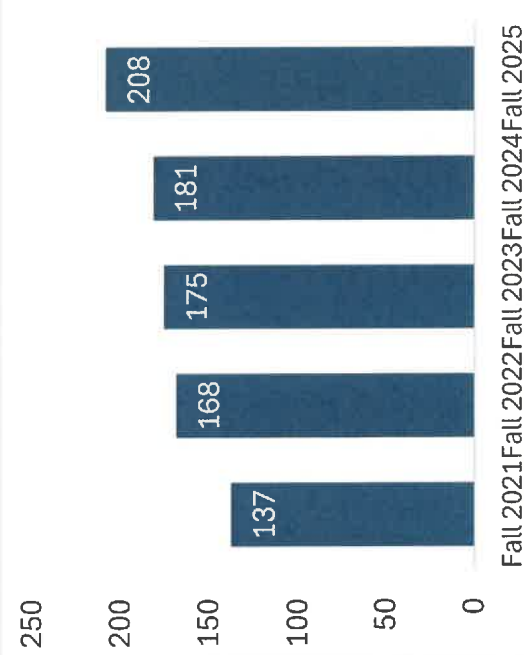
Richard Bland College

Richard Bland College Board of Visitors Metrics January 2026

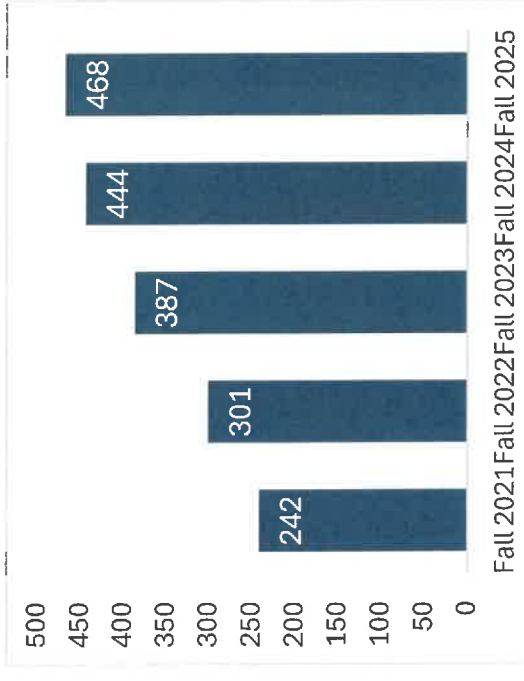
Fall Headcount



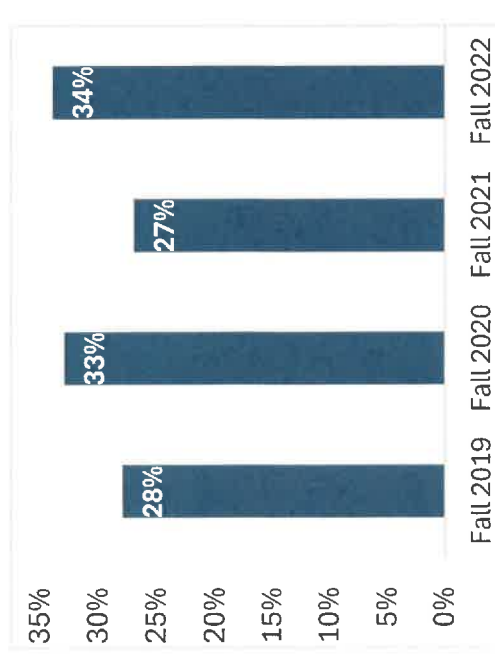
Fall Athletes Enrolled



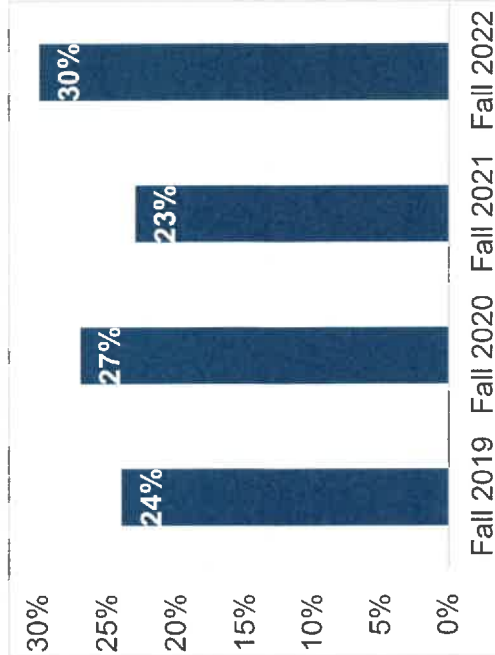
Fall Housing Capacity



Graduation 150%



Graduation 100%



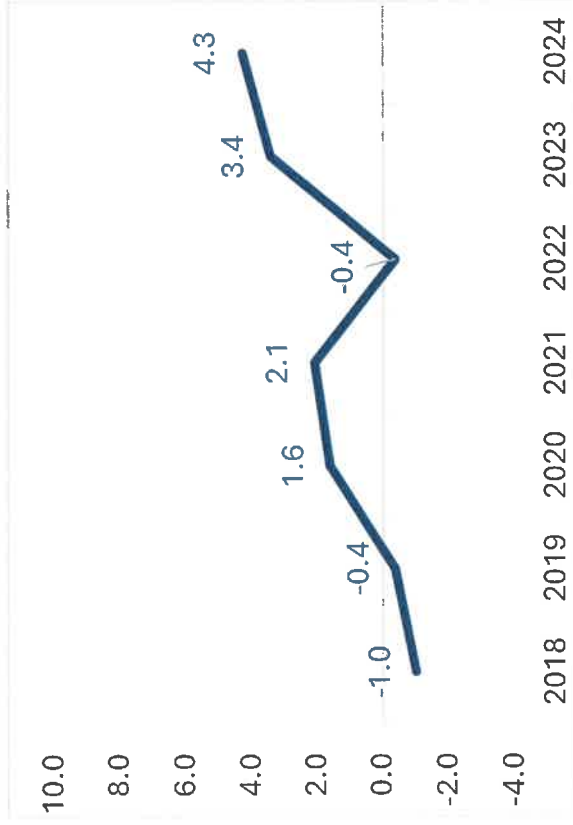
Fall to Fall Retention





**2025 Figures pending audit completion. Estimated date end of February.

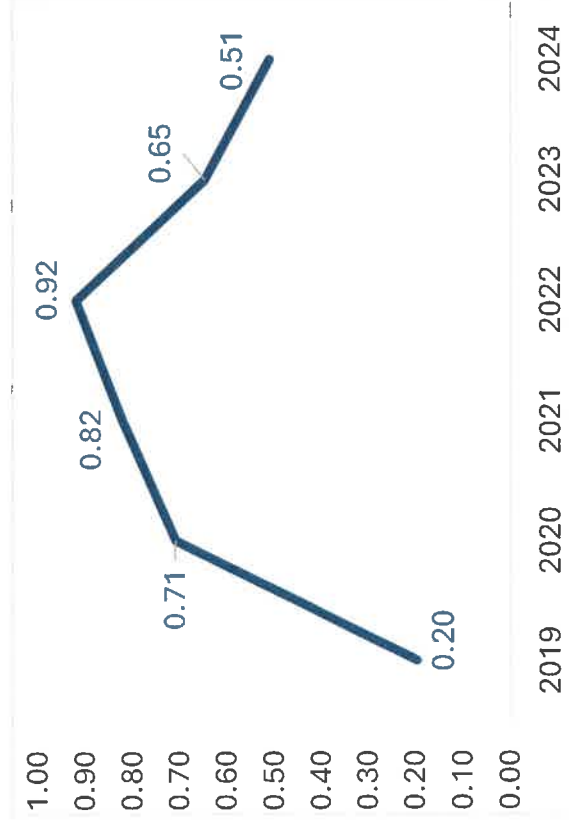
Composite Financial Index



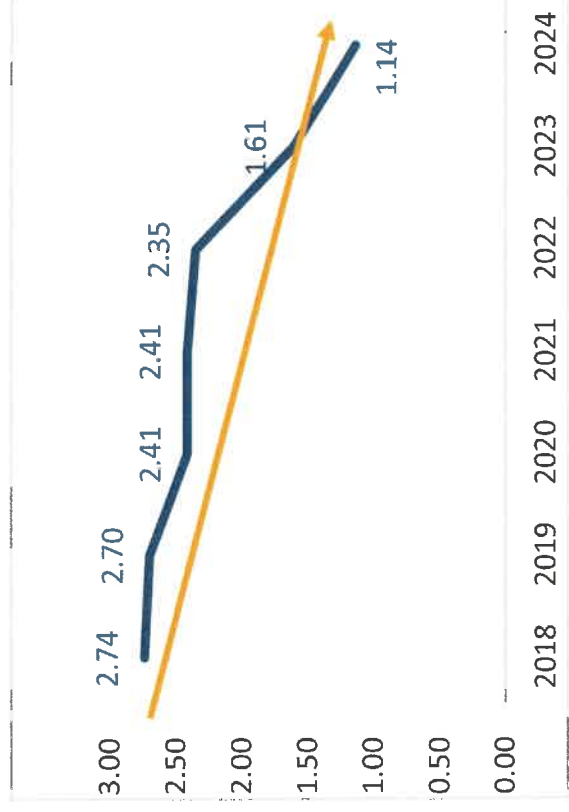
Current Ratio



Cash Ratio



Debt to Equity Ratio





Richard Bland College

SHARED GOVERNANCE AT RICHARD BLAND COLLEGE

At Richard Bland College, shared governance is a mutual commitment among the (1) Richard Bland College Board of Visitors, (2) the administration and (3) the faculty—each in accordance with their respective roles and responsibilities—to work collaboratively to honor and fulfill the mission, the promise and the strategic goals of the college in an environment of transparency, trust and respect and in full accordance with the College’s policies, procedures and Code of Ethics.

In practice, as Richard Bland College continues to reinvent itself to the extent necessary to respond to the current and future higher education needs of the Commonwealth, an effective, efficient and fully integrated system for shared governance will ensure that the collective intelligence and specific expertise of each stakeholder is tapped and appropriately applied in support of the mission and strategic goals of the College. In addition to the primary governance role of the Board of Visitors who establishes College policy, and the responsibility of the administration to manage operations, this system is inclusive of a Faculty Assembly that will govern faculty input into institutional decision-making, and President’s Council.

THE BOARD OF VISITORS

For the most up to date information, please access the Bylaws of the Board of Visitors found at this link:

[RBC BOV Bylaws](#)

THE ADMINISTRATION

PRESIDENT’S COUNCIL

I. PURPOSE & RESPONSIBILITIES OF PRESIDENT’S COUNCIL

A. The purpose of the President’s Council will be to:

1. Improve collaboration, transparency and institutional effectiveness by serving as a central body responsible for deliberating and reviewing issues of college-wide significance that are submitted by one of the recognized College Committees or stakeholder bodies (e.g., Faculty Assembly, Student Assembly).

2. Improve the College's capacity to achieve its goals and promote organizational excellence by advancing habits of thinking and acting that reflect innovation, creativity and agility.
3. Foster an atmosphere that embraces diversity and encourages collegiality by facilitating consistent, effective campus-wide involvement in planning and institutional effectiveness.

B. The primary responsibilities of the President's Council will include, but not be limited to:

1. Facilitating shared governance at Richard Bland College by serving as a conduit between each member's constituents and President's Council, communicating fairly and accurately to enhance understanding between these entities.
2. Serving in an advisory capacity to the President.
3. Reviewing and recommending to the President actions on proposals for new programs, projects, or services with cross-institutional significance, in alignment with the strategic plan (RBC-19).
4. Reviewing institutional metrics demonstrating progress toward the mission, goals and outcomes established in the strategic plan; regularly communicating updates to the campus community regarding progress; and periodically recommending new or alternative actions to support the achievement of established targets.
5. Reviewing and monitoring the quality of programs and services, and compliance with all external accrediting and licensing agencies, e.g., SACSCOC.

II. MEMBERSHIP

A. Membership of the President's Council will be comprised of a cross-section of the campus community and will, therefore, include administrators, faculty, staff and student representatives.

Administrators – Members of President's Cabinet, Department Heads and other administrators appointed by the President.

Faculty – Faculty Assembly Chair, Faculty Representative to Board of Visitors, Department Chairs

Staff – Nominations received from Council and appointed by the President

Student – Student Representative to the Board of Visitors

B. The roles and responsibilities of the membership are to:

1. Represent the views and interests of their respective constituencies.
2. Report to their respective constituencies on the work of the President's Council.
3. Solicit input from their respective constituencies on matters that come before the President's Council.

III. CHAIR

The President presides over meetings or appoints a designee who may represent any of the above constituent groups.

IV. MEETINGS

- A. The President's Council will determine and establish its own meeting schedule, subject to the following provisions:
 1. The President's Council will meet at least two (2) times each semester during the College's academic year, and the first meeting will serve as an organizational meeting during which members will be advised by the president or her representative about the purpose of Council, the expectations for service and priorities for the year.
 2. Special meetings of President's Council may be scheduled at the request of the President.
- B.
 1. Meeting agendas will follow a standard format acceptable to the Council to include review of proposals and recommendations from college committees or stakeholder bodies, as well as standing items based on a calendar of critical topics to be reviewed and discussed throughout the year.
 2. The agenda for regular meetings, including proposals for consideration and all relevant documentation, will be distributed to the membership one (1) week prior to the meeting.

Inclusive Excellence Committee

Chair: President's Designee(s)

Reports to: President's Council

Purpose and Charge:

The purpose of the Inclusive Excellence Committee is to:

- Foster an environment of diversity, equity, inclusion, access, and justice among students, faculty, and staff at Richard Bland College.
- Aims to identify and address systemic barriers to access and success for underrepresented groups at Richard Bland College.
- Promote a sense of belonging for all members of the campus community.
- Development of spaces that encourage intellectual diversity, constructive dialogue, and community conversation at Richard Bland College.
- Foster an environment of advocacy, awareness, cultural humility, and understanding through diversity education and training.
- Cultivate a campus culture where every individual feels valued, respected, and empowered to thrive at Richard Bland College.

Scope of Activities:

The Inclusive Excellence Committee will:

- Develop and implement diversity training programs for students, faculty, and staff to promote diversity, equity, inclusions, cultural humility, and awareness.
- Facilitate dissemination of innovative approaches and best practices (developed internally and externally) to members of the campus community on matters related to inclusive excellence;
- Conduct assessments and surveys to gather feedback from the campus community on issues related to diversity and including and using this data to inform future initiatives and policies.
- Host programs, workshops, forums, group dialogue, and events that center topics around diversity, equity, culture, and inclusion for the entire campus community;
- Curate spaces for community hope and healing both proactively and reactively as response to global and national happenings
- Review data, assessment, and conduct research on key metrics around diversity and inclusion.
- Submit an annual report to the campus community and stakeholders outlining the

college's efforts to promote a more inclusive environment and paints a story of both the college's and the inclusive excellence committee's efforts and impact.

Membership: Membership of the Committee will include: (1) representative from the Office of Student Success, (1) faculty representatives, (1) representative from the Office of Student Success, (1) College ADA Coordinator, (1) representatives from athletics, (1) representatives from the Department of Student Life, (1) representatives from the Department of Marketing and Communications, (1) representatives from Finance and Administration, and (1) student representative.

Selection/Appointment of Members: Faculty representatives are recommended by the Department Chairs to the appointed chair of the committee each spring for two-year terms and may serve no more than two consecutive terms on any one committee. Administrative representatives will be recommended by their department head each spring. The student representative will be recommended by the Student Assembly each spring. All members are appointed by the President.

Meeting Frequency, Schedule, Location: The Committee meets on a regular basis during the academic year, with additional meetings scheduled as needed. All meetings are open to the campus community.

Communications, Recommendations and Reporting: The Committee provides regular updates to the President's Council and, through one of its faculty representatives, to Faculty Assembly. Progress toward goals is updated and distributed to the campus through a biennial report and dashboard. Recommendations, including a summary of campus feedback collected and the process used for gathering the feedback, should be submitted to the Council at least one week prior to the meeting at which the Council is expected to review. All minutes and committee reports will be available to the campus community for review.

Institutional Effectiveness Committee

Chair: Chief Institutional Effectiveness Officer or President's Designee(s)

Reports to: President's Council

Purpose and Charge:

The purpose of the Institutional Effectiveness Committee is to:

- Link academic and institutional assessment efforts to College-wide strategic planning;
- Create a strong feedback loop between research and assessment data and the planning, development, and modification of existing programs and academic support services in order to facilitate innovation and the achievement of the highest standards of excellence in academic programs and services;
- Advance a collaborative, integrated approach to academic and institutional planning and assessment that maximizes communication and transparency among all campus constituents;
- Serve as a recommending body to the Council regarding academic and institutional planning and assessment practices.

Scope of Activities:

The Institutional Effectiveness Committee will:

- Facilitate the review of proposals for new academic programs and major modifications to existing programs and provide recommendations to Council based on needs data, pertinent input from stakeholders, cost benefit analysis, and the College's overall goals relative to its program portfolio;
- Facilitate dissemination of innovative approaches and best practices (developed internally and by other colleges and universities) to members of the campus community;
- Inform the development of an institution-wide, systematic, evidence-based institutional effectiveness plan, and assess existing planning and assessment practices at the College related to academic, student services, and administrative functions with a focus on integrated, meaningful, and sustained improvement;
- Inform the Council of progress made toward achieving the College's mission and goals as defined in the Strategic Plan through systematic review and monitoring of academic division, administrative department, program and student outcomes assessment plans and activities;
- Monitor compliance with all pertinent SACSCOC Standards (see purpose and charge above);
- Communicate the results of institutional effectiveness efforts to appropriate campus and external stakeholders to promote accountability and transparency.

Membership: Membership of the Committee will include: three (3) faculty representatives, two (2) representing administrative departments, a staff representative (1) and a student representative (1).

Selection/Appointment of Members: Faculty representatives are recommended by the Department Chairs to the appointed chair of the committee each spring for two-year terms and may serve no more than two

consecutive terms on any one committee. Administrative representatives will be recommended by their department head each spring. The student representative will be recommended by the Student Assembly each spring. All members are appointed by the President.

Meeting Frequency, Schedule, Location: The Committee meets on a regular basis during the academic year, with additional meetings scheduled as needed. All meetings are open to the campus community.

Communications, Recommendations and Reporting: The Committee provides regular updates to the President's Council and, through one of its faculty representatives, to Faculty Assembly. Progress toward goals is updated and distributed to the campus through a biennial report and dashboard.

Recommendations, including a summary of campus feedback collected and the process used for gathering the feedback, should be submitted to the Council at least one week prior to the meeting at which the Council is expected to review. All minutes and committee reports will be available to the campus community for review.

Information Technology Governance Committee

Chair: Chief Business Officer

Reports to: President's Council

Purpose and Charge:

The purpose of the IT Governance Committee is to:

- Serve as a recommending body to Council to promote timely, sound, and mission-driven decision-making regarding IT investments, ensuring alignment with strategic priorities.
- Provide a college-wide IT vision that utilizes research-based information and industry best practices to consider and recommend IT needs and requirements that align with the College's strategic priorities and higher education trends.
- Seek opportunities for college-wide collaboration that encourage efficiency and innovation while managing within known and acceptable risk.
- Create transparency and build a college-wide understanding of IS operations and the full portfolio of IT/IS initiatives.

Membership: Membership of the Committee will include the Chief Business Officer (Chair); Chief Information Officer; Information Security Officer (ISO); Procurement Officer; Ellucian contract administrator (if different than ISO or Procurement Officer); three (3) faculty members representing each respective academic department, three (3) administrators representing enrollment management, student success, and one additional department (TBD on an as-needed basis).

Selection/Appointment of Members: Faculty representatives are recommended by Department Chairs to the appointed chair of the committee each spring for two-year terms and may serve no more than two consecutive terms on any one committee. Administrative representatives who are not represented by title will be recommended by the Committee Chair. All members are appointed by the President.

Meeting Frequency, Schedule, Location: The Committee meets on a regular basis during the academic year, with additional meetings scheduled as needed. All meetings are open to the campus community.

Communications, Recommendations and Reporting: The Committee provides regular updates to the President's Council and, through one of its faculty representatives, to the Faculty Assembly. Progress toward goals is updated and distributed to the campus community through an annual report and dashboard. Recommendations should be submitted to the Council at least one week prior to the meeting at which the Council is expected to review. All minutes and committee reports will be available to the campus community for review.

Online Education Committee

Chair: Chief Enrollment Officer or President's Designee(s)

Reports to: President's Council

Purpose and Charge:

The purpose of the Online Education Committee is to:

- Serve as a recommending body to the Council regarding online education planning, programming, and assessment practices;
- Utilizing research-based information and data on best practices, recommend strategies for supporting high quality teaching and learning in online courses and programs;
- Create a strong feedback loop between research and assessment data and the planning, development, and modification of existing online programs and academic support services for online students;
- Contribute to planning, assessment and growth of the RBC-VSU Joint School for Professional and Technical Studies;
- Advance a collaborative, integrated approach to online planning and assessment that maximizes communication and transparency among all campus constituents.

Scope of Activities:

The Online Education Committee will:

- Review the practices and effectiveness of online education;
- Develop recommendations concerning standards and policies for online educational programs (synchronous, asynchronous, and hybrid);
- Support and monitor priorities established in the Strategic Plan as related to online and virtual education modalities and provide updates and recommendation to Council;
- Monitor compliance with all pertinent SACSCOC Standards (see purpose and charge above);
- Facilitate dissemination of innovative approaches and best practices related to online education, online delivery, modes, online tools, and online student experience.
- Communicate the results of online education efforts to appropriate campus and external stakeholders to promote accountability and transparency.

Membership: Membership of the Committee will include: two (2) faculty representatives, three (3) representing administrative departments, a staff representative (1) and a student representative (1).

Selection/Appointment of Members: Faculty representatives are recommended by Department Chairs to the appointed chair of the committee each spring for two-year terms and may serve no more than two consecutive terms on any one committee. Administrative representatives will be recommended by their

department head each spring. The student representative will be recommended by the Student Assembly each spring. All members are appointed by the President.

Meeting Frequency, Schedule, Location: The Committee meets on a regular basis during the academic year, with additional meetings scheduled as needed. All meetings are open to the campus community.

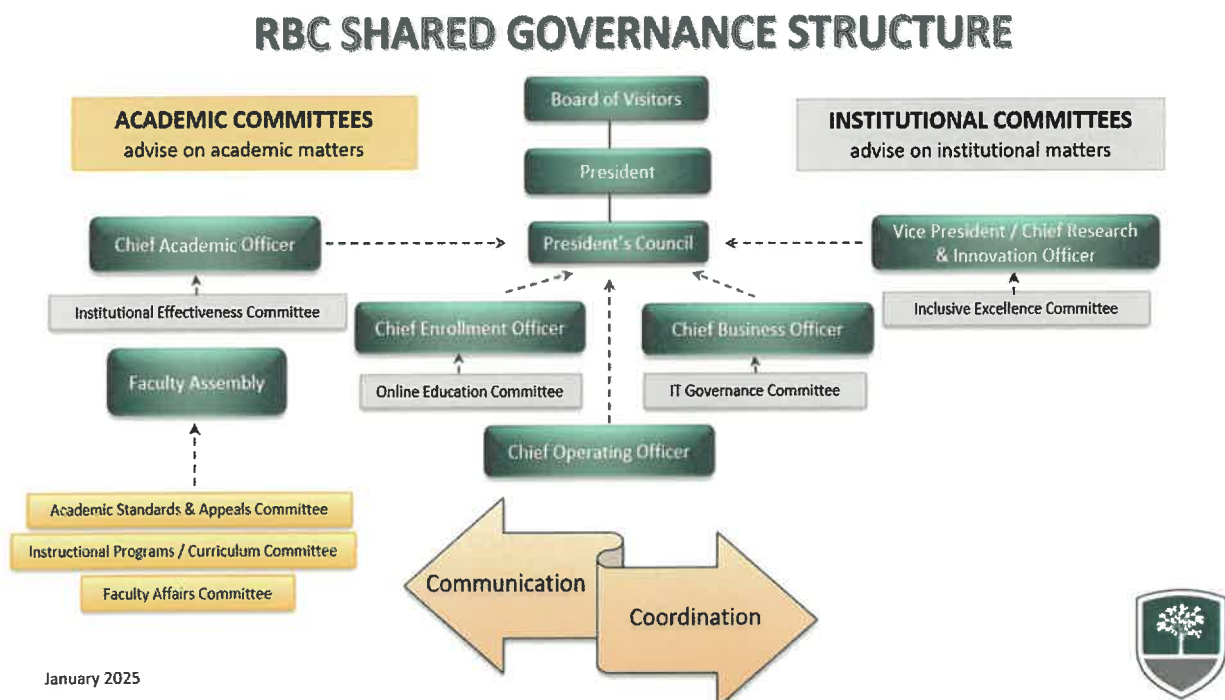
Communications, Recommendations and Reporting: The Committee provides regular updates to the President's Council and, through one of its faculty representatives, to Faculty Assembly. Progress toward goals is updated and distributed to the campus through a biennial report and dashboard.

Recommendations, including a summary of campus feedback collected and the process used for gathering the feedback, should be submitted to the Council at least one week prior to the meeting at which the Council is expected to review. All minutes and committee reports will be available to the campus community for review.

THE FACULTY

Faculty Assembly

For the most up to date information on Faculty Assembly, please access Section III of the Faculty Handbook found at this link, [Faculty Handbook - Agencies of Faculty Self-Governance](#).





January 6, 2026

Dr. Debbie L. Sydow
President
Richard Bland College
11301 Johnson Road
South Prince George, VA 23805

Dear Dr. Sydow:

The following action regarding your institution was taken by the Board of Trustees of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) during its meeting held on December 7, 2025:

The SACSCOC Board of Trustees conducted a focused review. No additional report was requested.

We appreciate your continued support of SACSCOC's activities and work. If you have questions, please contact your assigned SACSCOC Vice President and refer to case RC001006 or Action ACT-29742.

Sincerely,

Stephen L. Pruitt, Ph.D.
President

cc: Dr. John R. Donnelly, Vice President, SACSCOC



Richard Bland College

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

A REPORT TO THE VIRGINIA GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Status Update for Governance Transition to the Richard Bland College Board of Visitors

Prepared by: Dr. Debbie L. Sydow, President, December, 2025

Executive Summary

In accordance with Chapter 607, Chapter 21.1, of the Virginia Acts of Assembly, Richard Bland College (RBC) has initiated a comprehensive transition to independent governance under its newly established Board of Visitors (BoV). This report outlines the status of the transition, key accomplishments to date, and remaining steps necessary to ensure full implementation and operational excellence.

I. Governance Transition Team and Planning

The President's Council has served as the Governance Transition Team since Senate Bill 742 was approved on April 2, 2025, overseeing the development and execution of a detailed Transition Plan. This team has:

- Drafted and monitored the Transition Plan.
- Assumed responsibility for task execution and progress reporting.
- Acted as internal and external influencers to build understanding and support.
- Communicated progress to stakeholders throughout the 2025–26 academic year.

II. Board Infrastructure and Effectiveness

To support the inaugural BoV, Richard Bland College has:

- Prepared a robust Board orientation program held on August 27, 2025.
- Engaged with AGB, SACSCOC, and AG college counsel to define board roles and responsibilities as part of the Board orientation program.
- Created a BoV webpage and email (bov@rbc.edu).
- Scheduled regular 2025-26 board meetings (8/27/25, 9/24/25, 1/28/26, 4/22/26).
- Hired a Chief of Staff and a part-time Strategic Planning and Governance Specialist.
- Adopted Bylaws via Board action on August 27, 2025.
- Designed Board evaluation program to measure performance relative to role and responsibilities, which went into effect at the September 24, 2026, meeting.

III. Institutional Identity and Messaging

As Richard Bland College separates from more than six decades of governance by the W&M Board of Visitors, the College is reintroducing its identity, values and brand:

- Engaged brand consultant Julia Yager to advise on rebranding and core messaging from April to August 2025.
- Created core messaging and transitional logo and began utilizing new branding for marketing and communications.
- Phased removal of W&M branding from materials and platforms in process.
- Developed messaging to explain the governance change to stakeholders.

IV. Legal, Logistical, and Compliance Measures

Key legal and operational steps include:

- SACSCOC conducted an onsite review on October 28, 2025. At the conclusion of the visit, the Committee confirmed that the College is fully compliant with all governance-related quality standards. These findings guided the SACSCOC Board of Trustees' decision, and final approval of the substantive change was granted at the Board's December 2025 meeting.
- Reviewed enabling legislation with legal counsel.
- Confirmed Commonwealth liability coverage for BoV members.
- Included a line item for Board of Visitors expenses in FY26 budget and hired a fractional internal auditor, Baker-Tilly, who presented to the BoV at the September 24, 2025 meeting.
- Reviewed implications for Foundation contracts and state systems.
- Updated EIN, Cardinal classification, and federal registrations.

V. Cultural Realignment and Traditions

RBC is aligning campus culture and traditions with its new governance structure:

- Reset commencement dates (May 16 @ 2:00 p.m. / May 17 @ 2:00 rain date) to align with Richard Bland College—not W&M—schedule and redesigned diplomas and transcripts.
- Established new traditions, e.g., 2025 convocation ceremony.
- Updated library consortium agreement, academic calendars, etc.

VI. Foundation Board Integration

Efforts to align the RBC Foundation with the new Board of Visitors include:

- Foundation Board retreat on September 3, 2025, included invitations to Visitors with a focus on roles and responsibilities of each board.
- Scheduled joint social events to foster collaboration, including September 3, 2025, Foundation Board retreat, Pecan Festival, Awards of Distinction event, etc.

- Board of Visitors adopted a resolution on August 27, 2025, to authorize the president to request that the W&M Foundation transfer the Sutherland Fund to RBC's Foundation. Funds were transferred from W&M Foundation to RBC's Foundation in October of 2025.
- Board of Visitors will act on Resolution to Delineate the Relationship, Roles, and Responsibilities of the Board of Visitors and the Foundation Board of Directors during the January 28, 2026 meeting.

Guiding Philosophy

Inspired by advice from Mike Petters (William & Mary BoV), Richard Bland College views its inaugural Board of Visitors as the “first crew of the ship,” setting the tone, culture, and standards for generations to come. Every aspect of their integration was prioritized to ensure that they enthusiastically embrace RBC's mission, values, and promise to the Commonwealth.

Remaining Steps

- Complete presidential search and appointment by July 1, 2026.
- Continue rebranding efforts, e.g., new RBC logo, mascot, etc. (ongoing)
- Finalize updates to contracts, systems, and compliance documentation. (ongoing)

Conclusion

In anticipation of General Assembly support for Richard Bland College independence, which was granted on April 2, 2025, the college administration meticulously planned, designed and executed the transition to an independent governing board over the past several years. As a result, since the new Richard Bland College Board of Visitors went into effect on July 1, 2025, the College has already begun to realize the benefits of a dedicated, high-performing Board of Visitors that is committed to working collaboratively in a shared governance environment to advance the institution's mission and values.

Appendices



August 2025 BOV
Agenda.pdf

August 2025 BOV Agenda



August 2025 BOV
Minutes.pdf

August 2025 BOV Minutes



RBC Board of
Visitors Bylaws.pdf

RBC Board of Visitors Bylaws



September 2025
BOV Agenda.pdf

September 2025 BOV Agenda



September 2025
BOV Agenda.pdf

September 2025 BOV Draft Minutes



January 2026 BOV
DRAFT Agenda.pdf

January 2026 BOV Draft Agenda



BOV Members &
Bios.pdf

BOV Members & Bios



Report of the
SACSCOC Substanti

Report of the SACSCOC Substantive
Change Committee October 2025

A BRIEF HISTORY OF RICHARD BLAND COLLEGE



Richard Bland College

November 2025

Report from the Faculty Representative to the Richard Bland College Board of Visitors

January 2026

Dr. Timothy Rohrbach, Associate Professor of Biology, along with Dr. Eric Miller, Associate Professor of Biology, took seven, BIO 211: Microbiology, students on a tour of the local Trapezium Brewery in Petersburg. The tour was a fantastic opportunity for our microbiology students – many of whom are pursuing careers in allied health – to explore industrial and food science microbiology in action. The brewers at Trapezium did an excellent job explaining the fermentation process, emphasizing how controlling microbial growth through temperature and nutrient management not only affects the growth of microorganisms but also influences the flavor profile of the beer. Students also observed the use of cell counting techniques to estimate microbial populations in each batch, providing a hands-on example of how microbiological principles are applied in a real-world setting. Overall, this experience was a valuable demonstration of how classroom theory and foundational lab skills translate into practical applications.

Dr. Eric Miller and Lee Smith, Assistant Professor of English, took three students to London, England from December 15-21st for RBC's first ever study abroad program. The trip included a walking tour of the city, a tour of Shakespeare's Globe Theater, several museums such as Tate Modern and The British Museum, and three plays (Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Dickens' *A Christmas Carol*, and *Hamilton*). From traveling on the tube, eating pub food, and countless conversations around history, culture, theater, and art, it was a remarkably enriching experience for students and faculty alike.

Dr. Miller also led students on several trips this past semester. He led 15 students on a kayaking ecotour of the Great Dismal Swamp on September 15th, where they learned about the history and complex ecosystem that animals and humans have relied upon for centuries. Shortly after, he took 8 students flyfishing and hiking in Pocohontas County, WV, from September 19-21st. In addition to the outdoor activities, they walked the town and enjoyed a bluegrass concert at the local opera house. He also took 15 students to the Appomattox River on October 9th, where students learned about the local flora and fauna, as well as invasive species removal. They also visited the water treatment facility on Lake Chesdin, where students learned about drinking water.

Dr. Mary Gurnick, Professor of Chemistry, co-authored an article published in the *Journal of Archaeological Science* titled "Ceramic rehydroxylation dating by infrared diffuse reflectance spectroscopy", Vol. 177, May 2025.

Dr. Katie Bjorkman-Till, Associate Professor of Mathematics, served as an organizer for a regional conference on Research in Undergraduate Mathematics Education (RUME) at James Madison University. There were about 40 participants including undergraduate and graduate students, and she organized the panel discussion this year titled “All Roads Lead to RUME: How Many Discipline Backgrounds Become Part of Our Community”.

Dr. Bjorkman-Till also co-authored the paper “A Synthesis of Mathematical Departmental Change Efforts: Framing, Foci, and Future Opportunities”, a part of PRIMUS’ Special Issue on Infusing active learning into precalculus and calculus courses: Mathematics department transformation in challenging times [v.35.4-5]. The paper was also selected as an editor’s pick for 2025.

Abbigayle Poirier, Assistant Professor of Art, took students to the Lamb Arts Fest in Hopewell on October 4th. Students made t-shirts, viewed work from local artists, and represented RBC. Recently, Prof. Poirier had a solo exhibition in the Thyen-Clark Gallery at Jasper Community Arts in Jasper, Indiana. The gallery is located roughly 70 miles southwest of her alma mater, Indiana University. This January, she will be attending the Green Olive Arts residency in Morocco, which welcomes top artistic talent from around the world.

Dr. Daniel Franke, Associate Professor of History, attended the 44th International Conference of the Haskins Society in November, hosted at the University of Miami. He presented a paper entitled “The Logistics of the Siege of Milan, 1158-1162.” He brought RBC student Usra Jabri to the conference to make connections and explore a possible major and career as a historian; she was warmly received by the scholarly community and had a very productive experience.

Dr. Franke also published an article in December, “The Last March to Jerusalem: Manuscripts and Eyewitness Testimony in the Crusade of Frederick Barbarossa.” This was part of an edited volume, *The Third Crusade: New Interpretations* (Boydell Press). The article presented research by Dr. Franke conducted in Germany and Austria that was funded by a grant from the American Philosophical Society in 2024.

Dr. Kevin Peters, Chair of the Natural Science and Mathematics Department and Professor of Biology, attended the Southeastern Phycological Colloquy (SEPC) at VIMS-ESL in Wachapreague, VA from October 17-19th.

Report from the Student Representative to the Board of Visitors

January, 2026

Submitted by Lilli Brown

Introduction

Unfortunately, I was unable to attend the last board meeting in September, so if you aren't familiar with me, my name is Lilli Brown. I am President of the Student Assembly and honored to be the Student Representative to the Richard Bland College Board of Visitors. Some background on me: I am a sophomore in my final semester here at Richard Bland and am a student-athlete on the Women's soccer team. I have also been privileged to work with the lovely search team in finding an Interim President for the college these past couple of months. I fell in love with Richard Bland's mission for student life and can honestly say I've formed a home and community that I hold very close to my heart. During my time here, I have learned incredible lessons about overcoming hardship and leaning into challenges, both physically and mentally. The relationships at this institution are one of a kind. I plan on transferring to William & Mary in the fall but am waiting to hear from other options currently. It is my honor to represent the students of Richard Bland College.

JMU Student Representatives Conference

In November I was asked by JMU's Student Body President, Sydney Strafford, to attend a conference gathering other Student Body Presidents from institutions all over Virginia. The Student Body President of Mary Washington, Virginia Tech, and William & Mary attended along with other members of their student assemblies, such as their Treasurers and Secretaries. At the conference, the JMU Advisor of Student Assembly, Dr. Miller, introduced us and made us feel welcomed on their campus. Other guests of the event included the Secretary of Health and Human Resources, Janet Kelly; Rector Suzanne Obenshain; and Academic Committee Chair Nicole Wood. They answered our questions about how we can improve as Student Body Presidents, and they advised us about the importance of caring for ourselves while balancing multiple extracurricular activities. The event was very insightful and informational about how to navigate college as President of your Student Body and the importance of utilizing your resources.

Student Assembly - Fall Semester Events

The Student Assembly created multiple events on campus in the Fall semester. We volunteered and dedicated our time toward the RedCross blood drive, Virginia21, and a food drive for the holiday season. Our Commuter Representative offered doughnuts and coffee to students passing by once they filled out a survey about the commuter experience. We received lots of constructive feedback, which we plan to use for improvement. A Student Assembly

Meet and Greet was held in the Student Engagement Center this fall. Students were introduced to the Council, and we had the opportunity to play games while also exploring their concerns about campus life and culture, helping us sketch out where we can improve as an Assembly. As for serving the community, our Friendsgiving event was a major success. We partnered with Parson's Cafe and served hot plates to students as they enjoyed holiday music and games with friends. The Student Assembly had a very successful fall semester, and we look forward to what's next in store.

Student Engagement Center and Coordinator Hire

Our long-awaited Student Engagement Center has opened for student-occupancy as a space for academic and recreational use. With access to a large flatscreen, bean bag chairs, couches, books, and a basketball arcade game, the Student Engagement Center is a place for students to relax and connect with one another.

In addition to the Center, our new Student Engagement Coordinator, Adrian Rios, promises to better the student atmosphere and work to improve student engagement around campus.

Fall Sports Update

Our athletic programs were once again very successful and worked incredibly hard this fall semester, challenging themselves every day, which has paid off. The win/lose/tie scores include:

Men's Soccer: 8-4-2 overall

Women's Soccer: 6-4-2 overall

Rhianna Pena was titled Region 10's DII Player of the year due to her strengths offensively shown through her 12 goals and 26 points across 11 matches.

Women's Volleyball: 20-6

Men's Basketball: 4-6

Women's Basketball: 3-11

Student Assembly's Goals and Events for Spring 2026

As the Student Assembly reflects back on what worked and what did not in the fall, we plan to implement improvements. One area for improvement was a lack of student feedback, which we plan on expanding with a Town Hall event early in the spring semester. This would include an open session for members of the student body to pass the mic to voice their suggestions or concerns. We focused a lot on creating engaging events in the fall, but we are anticipating a semester focused on understanding and resolving student issues in the Spring.

I am honored to provide an update to the Board of Visitors regarding the RBC student experience this past Fall. Go Statesmen!