



Richard Bland College

BOARD OF VISITORS

April 21-22, 2026 MEETING SCHEDULE

ACADEMIC INNOVATION CENTER

Tuesday, April 21

- 3:30 p.m.** **President's Farewell Reception and Portrait Unveiling**
[Multi-purpose Room]
- 5:00** **Rector's Dinner (voting members and president only)**
[AIC South Wing]

Wednesday, April 22

- 8:30 a.m.** **Breakfast**
[Mamie E. Locke Boardroom]
- 9:00 - 10:00** **FY 2026-27 Tuition and Fees Public Hearing**
[Mamie E. Locke Boardroom]
- 10:00 - 2:00 p.m.** **Full Board Meeting**
[Mamie E. Locke Boardroom]

NEXT MEETING: Wednesday, September 23, 2026



Richard Bland College

BOARD OF VISITORS

BOARD MEETING AGENDA

April 22, 2026 | AIC Mamie E. Locke Boardroom | 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

- 9:00 a.m.** **PUBLIC HEARING** - Proposed 2026-27 Tuition & Fee Increase - Joanne Williams *presiding*
- 10:00** **I. Call to Order, Welcome, and Introductions** – Joanne Williams *presiding as Visitor whose last name appears last in alphabetical order (of members not on proposed slate of officers)*
- **Approval** of January 28, 2026 Meeting Minutes [former Board of Visitors]
 - **Approval** of March 26, 2026 Meeting Minutes - Orientation
- 10:10** **II. Board Leadership and Organization** – Rector *presiding after slate of officers is approved.*
- **Resolution 1** - Election of 2026-28 Officers
 - **Resolution 2** - 2026-2030 Board of Visitors Meeting Dates
 - **Resolution 3** - Appointment of Ad Hoc Search Committee for Permanent President
 - **Resolution 4** - Board Member Code of Conduct | Policy on Communication, Media Relations, and Confidentiality
- 10:40** **III. The Future of Richard Bland College** - Debbie Sydow, President
Eileen Stempel, Board Consultant; Adam Zucconi, Chief Academic Officer; Tina Patterson, Jade Solutions
- **Resolution 5** - 2026-2028 Mission, Vision, Values and Strategic Priorities
 - **Resolution 6** - Phase I Report on the Future of Richard Bland College
 - **Debt-Free RBC Degree Campaign**
- 11:15** **BREAK**
- 11:30** **IV. 2026-27 College Budget | Tuition and Fee Schedule** - Stacey Sokol, Chief Business Officer; Mary Weaver, Controller
- **Resolution 7** - 2026-27 Tuition and Fees
 - **Resolution 8** - 2026-27 Operating Budget
- 12:00 p.m.** **V. College Personnel (CLOSED SESSION IS ANTICIPATED)**
- **Resolution 9** - Appointment to Fill Vacancies in the Professional Faculty
 - **Resolution 10** – Faculty Retirement
 - **Resolution 11** - Academic Faculty Promotion
- 12:45** **LUNCH and BOARD EVALUATION**
- 1:30** **VI. Faculty and Student Representatives** - Reflections on the 2025-26 Academic Year
- 1:45** **VII. Board Governance - Survey Results**
- 2:00** **ADJOURNMENT**



Richard Bland College

BOARD OF VISITORS

DRAFT MEETING MINUTES

January 28, 2026 | 10:30 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. | Virtual (Microsoft Teams)

The Board of Visitors of Richard Bland College (“RBC” or “College”) met in open and closed sessions on Wednesday, January 28. Due to Governor Spanberger’s declared state of emergency in response to inclement weather, the meeting was held virtually via Microsoft Teams.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

- John Rathbone, Rector
- Albert Poole, Vice Rector
- Vickie Schray, Secretary
- Hon. James Dyke Jr.
- Hon. Kelly Gee
- Hon. Sam Parham
- Charles Patton
- Bouwien Smits
- Hon. Christopher Winslow
- Jason Pode, Faculty Representative
- Lilli Brown, Student Representative

STAFF PRESENT:

- 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, University Center
- Ben Thoreson, Director of Student Success
- Brooklyn Bilyard, Interim Director, Student Life
- Ashley Fuller, Data and Compliance Officer
- Terelle Robinson, Associate Director of Government Relations
- Katelinn Davis, Associate Director of Development
- Carolyn Day Pruett, Associate Director of Development
- Jeff Palmore, Principal, Capital Strategies
- Ryan Jackson, President, New Crescent Strategies
- Ernest Bashikako, I.T. Manager, User Services
- Joshua Bolaji, Senior Network Engineer
- Shion Michael, Junior IT Administrator
- Nathan Moberley, OAG College Counsel

- Dr. Eileen Stempel, Strategic Planning and Governance Consultant
- Gerrit Smith, Senior Executive Administrator and Clerk to the Board of Visitors

GUESTS PRESENT:

- Basil Dosunmu, Treasurer, Richard Bland College Foundation Board of Directors
- Scott Fleming, Director, State Council of Higher Education for Virginia
- Bill Boyce, Principal, Design Director of Higher Education Studio, RRMM Architects
- Steve Hostetler, Principal, Public Land Development Division, Timmons Group
- Rich Satmaria, Principal, Public Land Development Division, Timmons Group
- Jeremy Wright, Associate Principal, Higher Education Studio, RRMM Architects

Welcome and Introductory Remarks

Rector John Rathbone called the Board meeting to order at 10:32 a.m., recognizing the presence of a quorum, and welcomed attendees to the meeting. He then read the following statement into the record:

Due to a state of emergency declared by the Governor of Virginia in response to severe winter weather, the Board determined that it was impracticable and unsafe to hold the scheduled in-person meeting on the Richard Bland College campus. In accordance with Virginia Code § 2.2-3708.2, the Board meeting will therefore be conducted by electronic communication means, using Microsoft Teams, which provides real-time audio and video access for members and the public.

Rector Rathbone then asked for a **motion to approve minutes** of the September 24, 2025, and the special October 1, 2025 Board meetings. The motion was made by Secretary Vickie Schray, seconded by Vice Rector Albert Poole, and approved unanimously by voice vote. Rector Rathbone then welcomed Christopher Winslow and Kelly Gee as the newest Board members. He then asked President Debbie Sydow to provide her report.

President’s Report

President Sydow provided an update regarding the interim presidential search, emphasizing that the creation and execution of a Presidential Transition Plan is being developed to ensure a smooth transition. She then introduced Scott Fleming, Director of the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV).

Director Fleming provided an overview of the Virginia Plan for Higher Education 2026-2032 (“Plan”). The Plan outlines a statewide strategy to strengthen the Commonwealth’s economic future by developing talent through higher education; focusing on student readiness, institutional responsiveness; and emphasizing the relevance of postsecondary education. Director Fleming also identified key challenges to higher education, including declining public confidence, demographic shifts, affordability, and rapidly changing technologies, such as AI. He concluded his remarks by saying that the ultimate goal is to position Virginia as the top state for talent.

Next, President Sydow introduced Bill Boyce, Principal at RRMM Architects, and Steve Hostetler, Principal at Timmons Group, who provided a review of the updated Campus Master Plan. They discussed existing campus conditions, noting significant development and change since the 2014 Campus Master Plan was approved by the W&M Board of Visitors. Key goals for the 2026 Campus Master Plan included reviewing the

condition and utilization of existing campus buildings; accommodating the need for public safety, administrative functions, and the IT hub; and contemplating expanded and improved sports facilities. Other goals included improving vehicular and pedestrian circulation and creating 1,000 parking spaces.

Dr. Eileen Stempel, Strategic Planning and Governance Consultant, provided an update on current status of the report on the future of Richard Bland College due to the General Assembly on June 30, 2026. She thanked Secretary Schray for her input in developing the draft report and noted that the Board will receive a draft report in time for review and adoption at the April Board meeting. Dr. Stempel then reported on the “Debt-Free RBC” initiative designed to generate philanthropic support for scholarships to increase affordability and timely degree completion.

Dr. Sydow; Dr. Tiffany Birdsong, Chief of Staff; and Dr. Stempel then reviewed the 2028 Strategic Plan with Board members. The Plan establishes institutional priorities for the next 18-24 months, focusing on student success, regional development, and sustained momentum during a period of transition. It refreshes RBC’s mission and values, emphasizing agility, belonging, and student-centric services while aligning programs and credentials with market-demand. Dr. Stempel noted that the plan is centered on three pillars: expanding high-value credentials, improving student completion outcomes, and fostering innovation to remain accessible and affordable for students.

Action Items

After the 2028 Strategic Plan presentation, Rector Rathbone asked for a motion to approve **Resolution 1**, 2026-2028 Mission, Vision, and Strategic Goals. The motion was made by Ms. Gee, seconded by Chuck Patton, and approved unanimously by voice vote.

After the passage of Resolution 1, the Board took a 10-minute break. The Board reconvened at 12:30 p.m. and then received a Finance, Audit, and Compliance (FAC) Committee report from Committee Chair Patton. He provided a brief summary of the FAC Committee meeting, including a presentation by the College’s internal auditor, Baker Tilly. Chair Patton shared that the Committee had approved resolutions 2 and 3 during their meeting and moved Board approval. Rector Rathbone then asked for approval of resolutions brought forward by the FAC Committee, specifically **Resolution 2**, Fiscal Year 2026 Internal Audit Plan; and **Resolution 3**, Policy to Delineate the Relationship, Roles, and Responsibilities of the Board of Visitors and the Foundation Board of Directors. Both were approved unanimously by voice vote.

The Rector then asked for a block vote on **Resolution 5**, 2026 Campus Facilities Master Plan; **Resolution 6**, Naming the AIC Boardroom in Honor of Senator Mamie E. Locke, Ph.D.; and **Resolution 7**, Conferral of Honorary Degree. The motion was made by Mr. Patton, seconded by James Dyke, and approved unanimously by voice vote.

Jeff Palmore then provided a brief summary of advocacy efforts to obtain Level II authorization during the 2026 General Assembly session and noted that State Senator Lashrecse Aird and Delegate Kimberly Pope Adams are patrons of the bill. Rector Rathbone then called for a roll call vote approving **Resolution 8** – Level II Authorization. Clerk Gerrit Smith called the roll, and all nine Board members voted in the affirmative.

Rector Rathbone then requested a motion to approve **Resolution 9** – Faculty Leave of Absence. Vice Rector Albert Poole made the motion, seconded by Secretary Schray, and approved unanimously by voice vote.

Rector Rathbone reviewed **Resolution 10** – Conferral of President Emerita Status and Professorship for President Sydow and then requested a motion to approve the resolution. Mr. Dyke made the motion, seconded by Mr. Patton, and approved unanimously by voice vote.

Closed Session

At 12:46, after passage of Resolution 10, Rector Rathbone requested a motion to move the Board meeting into closed session for the purpose of discussing personnel matters related to a potential reduction in force and the selection of the Interim President pursuant to the following exemptions under Va Code § 2.2-3711:

- § 2.2-3711(A)(1): *Authorizes public bodies to convene in closed session to discuss and evaluate the performance of departments or schools of public institutions of higher education when such evaluation necessarily involves the performance of specific individuals, the Board will enter into closed session to review and discuss matters related to a potential reduction in force. This evaluation will require consideration of the roles, duties, and performance of identifiable staff members who may be affected.*
- § 2.2-3711(A)(1): *Authorizes public bodies to convene in closed session to discuss, consider, or interview prospective candidates for employment. Namely, finalists for the position of Interim President.*

The motion was made by Mr. Dyke, seconded by Vice Rector Poole, and approved unanimously by voice vote.

Open Session Resumed

The Board reconvened in open session at 1:54 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 under the Virginia Freedom of Information Act were discussed and only matters identified in the motion to have a closed session was discussed. The motion was made by Vice Rector Poole and seconded by Secretary Schray. Clerk Smith called the roll, and all nine Board members "certified yes."

Following the certification vote, Rector Rathbone requested a motion to pass **Resolution 4**, Election of Interim President Kenneth Alexander, Ph.D. Vice Rector Poole made the motion, which was seconded by Mr. Dyke. The resolution passed by a 7 to 2 voice vote, with Ms. Gee and Ms. Bouwien Smits voting in the negative.

There being no further business, Rector Rathbone adjourned the meeting at 1:59 p.m.



Richard Bland College BOARD OF VISITOR

DRAFT MARCH BOARD ORIENTATION

March 26, 2026 | 3:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. | McNeer Hall 104

New members of the Richard Bland College (“RBC” or “College”) Board of Visitors met in open session at Richard Bland College for a swearing-in and orientation on Thursday, March 26, 2026, from 3:00–6:00 p.m. at McNeer Hall 104. No action items were voted on during the orientation.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

- Shawn Avery
- Hon. Peter Blake (Mr. Blake participated remotely from Denver, Colorado. Va. Code . § 2.2-3708.3(B)(4) allows for remote participation for personal matters. Mr. Blake had a prior trip scheduled for this day and could not participate in-person).
- Kevin Massengill
- Dr. Perry Miller
- Jennifer Montague
- Penny Parayo
- Dr. Amanda Russell
- Joanne Williams
- Deborah Young
- 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
- Stacey Sokol, Chief Business Officer
- Eric Kondzielawa, Chief Operations Officer
- Justin May, Chief Enrollment Management 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. Ann Ifekwunigwe, Director, The University Center
- Ben Thoreson, Director of Student Success
- Ashley Fuller, Data and Compliance Officer
- Katelinn Davis, Associate Director of Development
- Carolyn Day Pruett, Associate Director of Development
- Shion Michael, Junior IT Administrator
- Nathan Moberley, OAG College Counsel
- Dr. Eileen Stempel, Strategic Planning and Governance Consultant
- Gerrit Smith, Senior Executive Administrator and Clerk to the Board of Visitors
- RBC Students, Faculty and Other Staff Members

GUESTS PRESENT:

- Hon. Barrett Chappel, Dinwiddie Circuit Court Clerk
- Ms. Jennifer Muller, Founder and Managing Partner, Academic Career & Executive Search
- Ms. Ann Costantino, Managing Director, Academic Career & Executive Search
- Ms. Christa Vines, Project and Recruitment Manager, Academic Career & Executive Search

Swearing-In of New Board Members

The Honorable Barrett Chappell, Dinwiddie Circuit Court Clerk, administered the oath of office for the new Board members. This was a ceremonial oath for the members who had taken their oath previously at different locations.

Welcome / Board & Cabinet Introductions

President Debbie Sydow welcomed new Board members to Richard Bland College. She then introduced Board member Mr. Kevin Massengill, RBC Class of 1995. Mr. Massengill opened the meeting with an icebreaker, asking fellow Board members to introduce themselves and to reflect on their time in college. President Sydow then asked Cabinet members to introduce themselves and their roles.

Faculty Assembly Presentation

Prof. Jason Pode, Chair of the Faculty Assembly and Faculty Representative to the Board of Visitors, provided an overview of the College's shared governance model. He explained that academic and faculty matters originate at the department level and move through established governance committees. In addition to reviewing the structure and purpose of shared governance, he discussed the RBC faculty profile, pointing out that the majority of faculty are full-time, and 86% of faculty members have a terminal degree.

Mr. Pode then introduced Dr. Adam Zucconi, Interim Chief Academic Officer; Dr. Kevin Peters, Chair of the Natural Sciences and Mathematics Department; and Dr. Jenna Zarling, Chair of the Languages & Humanities Department and Chair of the Social & Behavioral Science Department. Dr. Zucconi and the Department Chairs provided a presentation highlighting the College's current degree programs, faculty-led experiences for RBC students, and proposed new certificate programs. A question-and-answer session followed, allowing Board members and faculty to engage in discussion regarding academic programs and student outcomes.

Prof. David Majewski, Professor of Communication and Theatre, presented on student experiences, focusing on financial challenges students face in paying for college. The presentation included a discussion of the new Debbie & Harry Sydow Legacy Scholarship Fund and its importance for addressing two well documented challenges: mitigating student debt and incentivizing degree completion.

Mr. Pode then introduced 2026 RBC graduates, including Ms. Jada Ramirez, Mr. Luke Sweeney, Mr. Richard Agbo, Ms. Usra Jabri, Ms. Shyla Cooper, and Mr. James Revere. Each student shared their reason for attending Bland, their experience at the College, and their future plans. Board members thanked students for attending and wished them well in their future endeavors.

ACES Presentation

Dr. Sydow then introduced Ms. Jennifer Muller, Founder and Managing Partner of the Academic Career & Executive Search (ACES) firm and her team. Ms. Muller provided attendees a brief overview of the upcoming presidential search process and a proposed timeline. Faculty members then engaged in a discussion about key qualities desired in a new President, emphasizing the importance of understanding the College's diverse student body, being approachable, supporting experiential learning, as well as possessing other essential leadership attributes.

Dinner

At 4:45 p.m., Board members left the Faculty Assembly to have official Board photos taken in McNeer Atrium. At 5:00 p.m., all eight Board members present on campus joined Dr. Sydow and her staff for a catered dinner held in McNeer 106. Others present at the dinner were Christie Clarke, Director of the Dual Enrollment and High School Programs and Incoming Chief of Staff; Ms. Ashley Fuller, Data and Compliance Officer; Dr. Eileen Stempel, Strategic Planning and Governance Consultant; Nathan Moberley, OAG College Counsel; Gerrit Smith, Senior Executive Administrator and Clerk to the Board of Visitors. The Board Handbook and Reference Manual was briefly discussed at the dinner; however, no business was conducted. The dinner ended at 6:15 p.m.



Richard Bland College
Board of Visitors

Resolution: No. 1 – Election of 2026-28 Officers of the Board of Visitors

Date: April 22, 2026

WHEREAS, Article III of the Bylaws of the Richard Bland College Board of Visitors stipulates that at the first meeting after July 1 in every even-numbered year, the Board shall elect from its membership a Rector, Vice Rector, and Secretary, and may appoint a Pro Tempore Officer as needed; and

WHEREAS, following non-confirmation of all nine members of the inaugural board during the 2026 General Assembly session, a new Richard Bland College Board of Visitors assumed governance responsibility for the College in March, 2026; and

WHEREAS, there is the need to elect a slate of new officers; thereafter, at the first meeting after July 1 in every even-numbered year, officers will be elected in accordance with applicable sections of the Virginia Code and the Board's Bylaws; and

WHEREAS, elected officers shall constitute the Executive Committee of the Board and are empowered to act on behalf of the full Board between meetings, subject to ratification at the next full Board meeting; now

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Visitors of Richard Bland College hereby elects the following officers:

- **Rector** Kevin Massengill
- **Vice Rector** Deborah Young
- **Secretary** Perry Miller

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that in accordance with Bylaws, officers may serve no more than two consecutive terms in the same role, and any vacancies may be filled by the Board for the unexpired term; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that the elected officers shall assume their responsibilities immediately upon adoption.



Richard Bland College
Board of Visitors

Resolution: No. 2 – Calendar of 2026-2030 Meeting Dates

Date: April 22, 2026

WHEREAS, Richard Bland College is governed by the Board of Visitors pursuant to the authority granted by the Commonwealth of Virginia under Virginia Code §§ 23.1-2105 through 23.1-2109; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Visitors is required to conduct regular meetings to fulfill its oversight responsibilities, including fiduciary, planning, academic programming, and student support; and

WHEREAS, the proposed calendar of meeting dates for 2025-2026 has been developed in consultation with the President and the Clerk to the Board to optimize board engagement and effectiveness;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Visitors of Richard Bland College hereby approves the following meeting dates for 2026-2030:

September 23, 2026
January 27, 2027
April 14, 2027

September 22, 2027
January 26, 2028
April 19, 2028

September 27, 2028
January 31, 2029
April 18, 2029

September 26, 2029
January 30, 2030
April 24, 2030

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that the approved calendar shall be published on the Board page of the College website, and any changes to the schedule shall be communicated promptly and approved by the Board at a subsequent meeting.



Richard Bland College
BOARD OF VISITORS

Resolution: No. 3 - Appointment of Ad Hoc Search Committee for Permanent President

Date: April 22, 2026

WHEREAS, Dr. Debbie L. Sydow has announced her intention to step down as President of Richard Bland College, effective June 30, 2026; and

WHEREAS, the inaugural nine-member Richard Bland College Board of Visitors appointed in July, 2025, utilized the professional services of Academic Career and Executive Search (ACES) to guide the search for an interim president to succeed President Sydow, and on January 28, 2026, the Board appointed Dr. Kenneth Alexander to serve as Interim President commencing on May 11, 2026, and ending on June 30, 2027, or the date on which a new president begins his or her term of office; and

WHEREAS, the Richard Bland College Board of Visitors acknowledges and affirms the existing engagement with Academic Career and Executive Search (ACES) and will utilize their services to conduct a transparent, inclusive, and rigorous search for a permanent president; and

WHEREAS, Board Bylaws (Article VI) state that “the rector will appoint a special Ad Hoc Presidential Search Committee of at least three Board members when the presidency is vacant or a vacancy is anticipated”; and

WHEREAS, In addition to Board members, the Ad Hoc Presidential Search Committee will include key Richard Bland College stakeholders—including faculty, staff, students, alumni, and business / community partners—to ensure alignment with the values, mission, and strategic priorities of the College; and

WHEREAS, the Board affirms its commitment to oversight and accountability in all matters related to executive leadership transitions; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board affirms the Rector’s appointment of Peter Blake as Chair of the Ad Hoc Presidential Search Committee, with Joanne Williams and Jennifer Montague also serving as Board representatives on the Search Committee;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board affirms the Rector’s authorization of Ad Hoc Presidential Search Committee Chair Peter Blake to appoint—with guidance and support from ACES—a broadly representative Search Committee to:

1. Develop and recommend a comprehensive presidential search plan, including composition of a search committee, timeline, stakeholder engagement strategy, and criteria for candidate evaluation;
2. Solicit input from internal and external College stakeholders to inform the leadership profile and position description;
3. Review applications, conduct preliminary interviews, and recommend final candidates to the full Board of Visitors for consideration; and
4. Ensure confidentiality, integrity, and fairness throughout the search process.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Committee shall report regularly to the Board of Visitors and shall be dissolved upon the successful appointment of a permanent president of Richard Bland College.



Richard Bland College
BOARD OF VISITORS

Resolution: **No. 4 - Board Member Code of Conduct and Policy on Communication, Media Relations, and Confidentiality**

Date: **April 22, 2026**

WHEREAS, the Board of Visitors is committed to upholding the highest standards of ethical conduct, accountability, and professionalism in fulfilling its fiduciary, governance, and oversight responsibilities; and

WHEREAS, the Board recognizes the importance of establishing clear expectations regarding board member behavior, confidentiality, public communication, and interactions with institutional stakeholders; and

WHEREAS, the proposed Board Member Code of Conduct provides a comprehensive set of standards governing ethical conduct, fiduciary duties, confidentiality, conflicts of interest, collegiality, and expectations for professional behavior; and

WHEREAS, the proposed Board Policy on Communication, Media Relations, and Confidentiality establishes best-practice protocols for internal and external communication, media engagement, public statements, crisis communication, and the protection of confidential Board deliberations; and

WHEREAS, the proposed policies align with widely accepted principles of higher-education governance and the Board's commitment to integrity and effective leadership;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Visitors hereby approves and adopts the Board Member Code of Conduct and the Board Policy on Communication, Media Relations, and Confidentiality as presented; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that all Board members shall review, understand, and comply with both policies and shall annually acknowledge their obligations under the Board Member Code of Conduct; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that the Executive Committee of the Board of Visitors shall periodically review both policies—no less than every two years—and recommend revisions as needed to ensure continued alignment with best practices in higher-education governance, state law, and institutional needs.

BOARD MEMBER CODE OF CONDUCT

1. Purpose

This Code of Conduct sets forth expectations for all members of the Board to ensure responsible governance, integrity, professionalism, and the effective stewardship of the institution's mission, reputation, and resources. Nothing in this policy is intended to restrict a Board member's right as a private citizen, provided they do not disclose confidential information or imply institutional endorsement.

2. Commitment to Institutional Mission

Board members shall:

- Uphold and advance the mission, vision, and core values of the institution.
- Prioritize student success, educational quality, and institutional sustainability.
- Consider the long-term best interests of the institution in all decisions.

3. Fiduciary Responsibilities

Board members shall:

- Exercise **duty of care** by preparing diligently for meetings and making informed decisions.
- Exercise **duty of loyalty** by placing the institution's interests above personal or external interests.
- Exercise **duty of obedience** by ensuring compliance with applicable laws, policies, and regulations.

4. Ethical and Professional Conduct

Board members shall:

- Conduct themselves with integrity, respect, and civility.
- Maintain professionalism in all interactions with students, faculty, staff, other board members, community members, and public officials.
- Avoid behavior that could compromise the dignity, credibility, or impartiality of the Board or institution.

5. Confidentiality

Board members shall:

- Maintain strict confidentiality regarding closed session discussions, personnel matters, legal issues, and any information designated confidential.
- Protect the integrity of Board deliberations by not disclosing individual viewpoints or internal discussions outside the Boardroom.
- Continue to honor confidentiality obligations after their service ends.

6. Conflicts of Interest

Board members shall:

- Disclose any actual, potential, or perceived conflicts of interest promptly.
- Recuse themselves from discussions or decisions where a real or potential conflict exists.
- Avoid using Board service for personal, political, or financial gain.

7. Respect for Governance Roles

Board members shall:

- Recognize that the Board governs while the President manages college operations.
- Refrain from directing or attempting to influence individual employees, students, or contractors, which can undermine the president and her/his role as chief executive officer.

- Respect faculty governance and the roles of academic leaders.

8. Collegiality and Constructive Deliberation

Board members shall:

- Engage in open, honest, and evidence-based discussion during meetings.
- Respect differing points of view and seek consensus whenever possible.
- Support Board decisions publicly once they are made, regardless of individual voting positions.

9. Communications and Media Relations

Board members shall:

- Refer all media inquiries regarding the Board or institution to the Rector or President.
- Refrain from speaking on behalf of the Board; the Rector serves as spokesperson for the Board of Visitors.
- Use good judgment in personal communications, including social media, avoiding disclosure of confidential or sensitive information.

10. Compliance with Laws and Policies

Board members shall:

- Comply with all federal and state laws, including public records requirements, ethics statutes, and higher education regulations.
- Follow all institutional bylaws, policies, and procedures governing Board conduct.
- Complete required training on ethics, governance, and fiduciary responsibilities.

11. Stewardship of Resources

Board members shall:

- Protect the institution's financial resources and ensure proper oversight of budgets and audits.
- Support efforts to cultivate donor and community relationships with integrity and transparency.

12. Attendance and Participation

Board members shall:

- Attend and actively participate in Board and committee meetings.
- Review materials in advance and be fully engaged during business sessions.
- Notify the Rector and President of anticipated absences.

13. Commitment to Fairness and Inclusion

Board members shall:

- Promote equitable treatment of all members of the campus community.
- Support policies, practices and investments that advance student access, attainment, and opportunity.
- Foster an environment of respect and inclusion in Board deliberations.

14. Accountability and Enforcement

Board members shall:

- Hold themselves and their colleagues accountable for adhering to this Code.
- Report concerns about misconduct or violations to the Rector and/or President.
- Understand that violations may result in corrective actions, including censure.

15. Annual Acknowledgment

Each Board member shall review and affirm this Code of Conduct annually as a condition of continued service.

BOARD POLICY: COMMUNICATION, MEDIA RELATIONS, AND CONFIDENTIALITY

I. Purpose

This policy defines expectations for how members of the Board of Visitors communicate about Board matters; engage with internal and external stakeholders, including the media; and protect confidential information. It promotes transparency, responsible governance, and institutional integrity. Nothing in this policy is intended to restrict Board member's right as a private citizen, provided they do not disclose confidential information or imply institutional endorsement.

II. Guiding Principles

1. Collective Authority

The Board acts as a single governing body. After decisions are made, all members support and communicate those decisions consistently.

2. Institutional Integrity and Public Trust

Board communications must reflect professionalism and strengthen the College's reputation.

3. Respect for Shared Governance

Communications should reinforce the respective roles of the Board, President, and Faculty Assembly and avoid involvement in management or operations.

4. Compliance with Law and Policy

All Board communications must comply with federal and state law, including FOIA, privacy requirements, and ethics policies.

III. Official Spokespersons

1. Institutional Spokesperson

The President (or designee) serves as the official spokesperson for institutional matters and media relations.

2. Board Spokesperson

The Rector (or Rector-designated representative) speaks for the Board.

3. Individual Board Members

- a. Do not speak on behalf of the Board unless expressly authorized.
- b. May discuss public Board decisions but may not characterize other members' views.

IV. Communication Protocols

1. Internal Communication

- c. Board members direct operational inquiries to the President.
- d. Communication with campus stakeholders is professional and respectful.
- e. Email and digital communications comply with applicable policies.

2. External Communication

- a. Public statements regarding Board decisions are issued by the Rector or President.
- b. Board members may express personal opinions publicly but must clearly state they are not speaking for the Board or the College.

3. Crisis Communication

- a. During emergencies, all statements come from the President or Rector.
- b. Board members refrain from sharing information publicly or with the media.

V. Media Relations

1. Media Inquiries

All media inquiries related to Board actions or deliberations are referred immediately to the Rector or President.

2. Speaking to Media as an Individual

When responding in a personal capacity, Board members:

- a. Avoid confidential or non-public information.
- b. Do not discuss internal deliberations or speculate on Board positions.
- c. Clearly state that their views do not represent the Board.

3. Social Media Use

- a. Confidential information and internal deliberations are never shared.
- b. Activity should reflect decorum appropriate to Board service.
- c. Posts should avoid inflammatory or derogatory content about the College or its stakeholders.

VI. Confidentiality

1. Protected Information

Members must safeguard:

- a. Closed session discussions
- b. Personnel, student, legal, or contract matters
- c. Strategic or other non-public information
- d. Any material designated confidential by law or Board action

2. Closed Sessions

- a. Note-taking is discouraged; however, if notes are taken, they must be treated as confidential and subject to applicable records laws.
- b. Opinions expressed and the substance of discussions must not be disclosed.

3. Ongoing Obligation

Confidentiality obligations continue after a member's service ends.

VII. Board Deliberations and Decision-Making

1. Respect for the Deliberative Process

Members engage openly during meetings and maintain confidentiality outside them.

2. Unified Communication

Once a vote is taken, members support the decision publicly.

3. Disagreements

Members who disagree with a decision express concerns internally and avoid public statements that undermine Board credibility or institutional stability.

VIII. Violations and Remedies

1. Consequences for Violations

Remedies may include:

- a. Formal admonishment by the Rector
- b. Referral to the appointing authority
- c. Removal from Board leadership roles
- d. Other actions allowed by state law

2. Reporting Concerns

Concerns about potential violations should be reported to the Rector or the Executive Committee.

IX. Annual Review and Acknowledgment

1. Board members shall annually review and sign an acknowledgment of this policy.
2. The Finance, Audit, and Compliance Committee reviews the policy at least every two years and recommends updates.



Richard Bland College
BOARD OF VISITORS

Resolution: No. 5 – 2028 Mission, Vision and Strategic Priorities

Date: April 22, 2026

WHEREAS, following structured strategic planning processes, President Debbie Sydow recommended, and the W&M Board of Visitors approved, two five-year strategic plans for Richard Bland College (*RBC-2019* and *Seize Your Potential 2025*), the first in April 2013 and the second in February 2020; and

WHEREAS, the goals and objectives set forth in *RBC-2019* and *Seize Your Potential* consistently informed resource allocation and ultimately resulted in 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, a clear focus, shared direction and collaboration 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, fiscal sustainability and regional development; and

WHEREAS, the 2026-2028 strategic plan aligns with the Six-Year Plan, State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV) priorities, Virginia Business Higher Education Council (VBHEC) initiatives and state mandates to drive 1) high-demand and high-quality programs and services, 2) improved student outcomes, and 3) resource optimization; and

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

I. Background and Context

Following an extensive planning process led by President Sydow, in April 2013, the W&M Board of Visitors approved the 2014-19 strategic plan for Richard Bland College. The **RBC-19** plan included a revised mission and vision, strategic goals, and key performance indicators focused on elevating the quality, relevance and reputation of Richard Bland College in direct support of Commonwealth goals. The three big goals prioritized:

1. **Students** – Increased enrollment and an enhanced 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, and high-performance operations.

Significant gains were achieved in each area of focus with established goals incrementally tracked and Bland stakeholders, including the W&M Board, receiving regular progress reports. Most significantly, by developing and implementing a carefully constructed Strategic Enrollment Management 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 increased. Operating expenses were pared, and auxiliary revenue grew to secure financial stability while, at the same time, maintaining affordable tuition and fees.

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 advances, 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.

During this period, Richard Bland College gathered extraordinary 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 and Council recommend approval of the updated **Richard Bland College 2028** strategic plan.

II. Mission Statement

Richard Bland College propels student success and community development through a high-value educational core, expertly guided academic and career pathways, and robust strategic partnerships.

III. Vision Statement

Richard Bland College delivers innovative educational solutions and transformative educational experiences that empower students to dream bigger, achieve more, and help communities to thrive.

IV. Values

- **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. Strategic Priorities

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

- a. Execute Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM) plan, including the market analysis, internal inventory and financial modeling required to launch pilot programs of micro-credentials aligned with high-demand jobs by 2027-28.

- 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.
- c. Identify and execute strategic partnerships that expand academic and career 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 Outcomes

- a. 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 by achieving at least a 60% fall to fall retention rate by 2027, and continue to increase by 0.5% year over year.
- c. In keeping with SEM goals and to reduce cost barriers, increase the dual enrollment conversion rate by 5% annually.
- d. Equip faculty, staff and students to utilize advanced technologies, including AI, to improve academic and operational outcomes.

3. Optimize Resources to Remain Affordable and Accessible

- a. Grow the Foundation's endowment—e.g., *Debt-free RBC Degree* campaign launched in 2026—and sponsored programs/grants year-over-year to increase scholarships and emergency grants, thereby reducing educational costs.
- b. Attract tenants and utilize the Business Innovation Park to provide paid internship experiences, applied research opportunities, and career exploration activities.
- c. Increase grant funding by a minimum of 2% annually, and increase paid internships -by 5% annually.
- d. Secure Tier Two authorization to reduce cost and improve operational and academic outcomes.



Richard Bland College

BOARD OF VISITORS

**Resolution: No. 6 - Resolution to Approve a Report on the Future of Richard Bland College:
Phase I**

Date: April 22, 2026

WHEREAS, Chapter 607, Chapter 21.1 of the Virginia Acts of Assembly, enacted by the Virginia General Assembly on April 2, 2025, authorized the separation from William and Mary Board governance and the establishment of an independent Board of Visitors for Richard Bland College, effective July 1, 2025; and

WHEREAS, §23.1-2802, Powers and Duties, item 7, states that “no later than June 30, 2026, the rector of the board of visitors of Richard Bland College shall submit to the Secretary of Education, the Secretary of Finance, the Chair of the House Committee on Appropriations, and the Chair of the Senate Committee on Finance and Appropriations a report providing recommendations on the future of Richard Bland College, including an examination of options for consolidation with another public institution of higher education;

WHEREAS, with input from a wide range of College stakeholders, the Rector has prepared a detailed report that addresses all requirements of §23.1-2802, Powers and Duties, item 7; and

BE IT RESOLVED, that Rector Kevin Massengill is authorized to approve and submit a final version of the report to each of the intended recipients on or before June 30, 2026.

DRAFT

THE FUTURE OF RICHARD BLAND COLLEGE Phase One Report and Recommendations

TO: Commonwealth of Virginia’s Secretary of Education, Secretary of Finance, Chair of House Committee on Appropriations, Chair of Senate Committee on Finance and Appropriations

FROM: Kevin Massengill, Rector, Richard Bland College Board of Visitors

DATE: April 22, 2026

I. Executive Summary

Pursuant to Section 21.1 of the Code of Virginia, and consistent with the charge set forth by the General Assembly in the 2025 Appropriations Act, the Richard Bland College Board of Visitors submits this inaugural report documenting the Board’s due diligence in investigating options for the future of Richard Bland College (College, RBC or Bland). This report fulfills the first of three required annual submissions and reflects the Board’s commitment to independent, data-informed governance; transparency and accountability; and optimization of the Commonwealth’s investment in Bland to promote regional and statewide economic development.

Legislative and Policy Context

In 2023, the General Assembly directed the Secretary of Education to coordinate with Richard Bland College and its stakeholders to explore options for the institution’s future. That effort culminated in a report prepared by the Boston Consulting Group and issued by Secretary of Education Aimee Guidera in August 2024. One recommendation was the creation of an independent Board of Visitors charged with a dual mission:

- To oversee rapid improvement in key student success and financial performance metrics; and
- To substantively explore and evaluate alternative structural, partnership, and consolidation options to ensure long-term viability.

In 2025 the General Assembly established an independent, nine-member Board of Visitors and directed it to explore options for Bland’s future and report annually on its due diligence over a

three-year horizon, with final recommendations due June 30, 2028. This report documents the Board's Year-One efforts and establishes a rigorous foundation for subsequent phases of exploration, evaluation, and implementation of strategic priorities.

Governance Transition and Strategic Focus

The inaugural Richard Bland College Board of Visitors assumed governance responsibility in July 2025 during a period of significant transition, including impending changes in state administration leadership and in the College presidency. Despite these transitions, the inaugural Board and, subsequently, a reconstituted Board appointed in March 2026 have acted with urgency and continuity of purpose.

The Board has affirmed independent governance as an essential prerequisite for fulfilling its statutory mandate and has focused its work on:

- Establishing best-practice policies, bylaws, and executive oversight practices;
- Monitoring RBC's longitudinal performance metrics related to enrollment, retention, graduation, post-transfer outcomes, and cost per degree;
- Hiring and onboarding an interim president and launching the search for a permanent president;
- Advancing a disciplined, phased approach to evaluating the College's future;
- Approving an [18-24 month strategic plan](#) that prioritizes the identification and delivery of industry-recognized credentials and micro-credentials to address exigent workforce gaps.

Within a higher education environment marked by enrollment pressure, fiscal constraints, shifting labor-market demands, and increased scrutiny of public return on investment, the Board's overarching goal is to ensure that Richard Bland College is strategically aligned with market and workforce needs, financially sustainable, and deeply mission-centered in service to students and economic development in Virginia's Gateway region and across the Commonwealth.

Phase One: Establishing a Baseline for Decision-Making

During Year One, the Board adopted and executed Phase One of a three-phased framework designed to ensure that all future structural and partnership decisions are grounded in evidence and aligned with General Assembly priorities.

Phase One focused on four interrelated components:

1. Establishing Baseline Performance Metrics

The Board affirmed a set of longitudinal key performance indicators—enrollment, persistence, retention, graduation, post-completion outcomes, and financial efficiency—that will be used consistently to evaluate institutional health and the relative merits of all future options.

2. Internal Inventory of Programs and Partnerships

The Board reviewed Richard Bland College's academic portfolio and extensive K-12/university/business partnership ecosystem. RBC's primary identity as a two-year, residential, university-parallel institution was reaffirmed, with associate degrees intentionally designed to deliver critical "soft skills" while minimizing credit loss and cost for students transferring to four-year institutions for degrees leading to a wide array of careers. The College maintains more than forty (40) university transfer partnerships, as well as robust collaborations with K-12 systems, healthcare providers, industry, and nonprofit partners. Notably, in April 2026, Bland entered into a joint admission program with its primary transfer partner, Virginia Commonwealth University, to reduce cost and further streamline the transition.

3. External Review of Workforce Needs

Consistent with Virginia workforce priorities and the SCHEV strategic plan, the Board examined state labor market projections and high-growth occupational fields. This review confirmed increasing student demand for flexible delivery models and short-term credentials, alongside continued demand for strong transfer preparation in high-need sectors such as information technology, business, healthcare, education, and the social sciences.

4. Gap Analysis and Alignment Assessment

A crosswalk of existing programs with Virginia's top in-demand fields demonstrates that Richard Bland College's liberal arts transfer focus is well aligned with workforce needs, particularly as preparation for high-demand bachelor's degrees. The analysis also identified clear opportunities for Phase Two exploration, including expansion of dual enrollment conversion, online education, and workforce-aligned short-term credentials.

Key Findings

The Board's Year One due diligence led to several core findings:

- Richard Bland College is mission-differentiated within Virginia's higher education ecosystem and continues to deliver strong value through high-quality, affordable transfer pathways, complementing the mission of community colleges.
- Bland's existing academic model aligns with current and projected workforce needs, particularly when viewed as foundational preparation for high-demand four-year degrees.
- Future sustainability will depend on strategic, smart growth—especially through enrollment expansion, program delivery innovation, and carefully selected alliances and/or partnerships.
- Any consideration of consolidation or alternative structural arrangements must be evaluated against clear performance, student success, financial, and regional impact criteria.

Next Steps

With Phase One complete, the Board is prepared to move into Phase Two: Exploration and Evaluation. This will include engaging Jade Solutions to conduct a comprehensive market feasibility study, identify and prioritize strategic opportunities, and develop a multi-criteria framework and implementation roadmap for future action. Findings from Phase Two will be presented in the June 30, 2027 report. Phase Three will focus on implementation and outcomes.

Conclusion

The Board of Visitors embraces its responsibility to lead Richard Bland College through a disciplined, transparent, and student-centered evaluation of its future. This first-year report demonstrates that the Board has established a strong foundation for decision-making and is proceeding deliberately, consistent with legislative intent. The Board remains committed to ensuring that Richard Bland College continues to provide measurable value to students, supports regional and statewide workforce and economic development, and fulfills its distinctive mission as an affordable gateway to baccalaureate attainment and a provider of high-demand, industry-recognized credentials in the Commonwealth.

II. Background and Context

As a component of rigorous strategic planning and on the basis of [extensive research conducted by Huron Consulting](#) about [“future state” opportunities for Richard Bland College](#), in 2021 President Debbie Sydow escalated conversations with W&M board leadership and General Assembly representatives about the [documented need for independent board governance as a missing link for driving educational solutions](#) in the Virginia Gateway Region and statewide. Eventually, in response to a request of the 2022 General Assembly (via the appropriations act), Bland submitted a report in November 2022 entitled [Richard Bland College: A Model for Higher Education Innovation](#). [Collectively, all of these reports](#) document the need for an independent governing board to guide future development of RBC as a unique provider of industry-recognized credentials in support of regional and statewide economic development.

During the same time period, in response to demographics shifts and other forces impacting higher education and to support data-informed decision making at all levels of Virginia higher education operations, governance and policy, Governor Glenn Youngkin’s Secretary of Education (SoE), Aimee Guidera, directed the State Council for Higher Education (SCHEV) to engage the Boston Consulting Group to create “fact packs” for each institution of higher education (IHE) to compel rigor in the 2023 six-year planning process. The so-called fact packs were to be the first step toward an in-depth, rigorous analysis of the performance and financial health of each college and university, accompanied by recommendations for the future that would inform subsequent six-year plans. This would, it was believed, result in a virtuous cycle whereby higher education outcomes would improve and, simultaneously, state investment would decrease.

Richard Bland College, typically under the radar, attracted the attention of the new Youngkin administration by proposing a bill in the 2023 General Assembly session—consistent with its

mission and strategic plan—that would sever control of W&M’s governing board and establish a new, dedicated Richard Bland College governing board. That bill fared well but ultimately did not make it to the Governor’s desk in 2023.

Subsequently, the 2023 General Assembly (via the appropriations act) directed Governor Glenn Youngkin’s Secretary of Education (SoE), Aimee Guidera, to coordinate with Richard Bland College and its key stakeholders to explore options for the future of Richard Bland College and deliver a report by December 30, 2023 that would inform Bland’s 2024 legislative strategy. Utilizing the RBC fact pack as a baseline, Secretary Guidera engaged the [Boston Consulting Group to interview Bland stakeholders and draft a final report](#) that was submitted to Governor Youngkin and key legislators in August 2024, well after adjournment of the 2024 General Assembly. Affirming Huron’s findings, the creation of an independent Board of Visitors for Richard Bland College was recommended by the Secretary of Education. It was recommended that this governing board be directed to improve key student and financial outcomes and to explore options for consolidation.

The 2025 General Assembly in Section 21.1 of the Code of Virginia established a nine-member Board of Visitors for Richard Bland College and directed the Board to submit annual reports on its due diligence in investigating options for the future of Richard Bland College, with the first report due on June 30, 2026; a second report due on June 30, 2027; and a final report due on June 30, 2028.

To help guide and support the Richard Bland College Board’s exploration of strategic opportunities and viable options for the future, in August 2025, Dr. Eileen Strempe¹ was engaged as a consultant to work directly with the rector and board, the president, executive staff (president’s cabinet and president’s council), Faculty Assembly and national experts in higher education mergers and acquisitions to conduct due diligence and draft a report for submission on or before June 30, 2026.

The inaugural nine-member Richard Bland College Board of Visitors appointed by Governor Glenn Youngkin began their service in July 2025. In March 2026, a new Richard Bland College Board of Visitors was appointed by Abigail Spanberger to fill nine vacant board seats (resulting from 2026 General Assembly rejection of Youngkin appointees). The new Richard Bland College Board of Visitors was sworn in at a campus orientation on March 26, and at the April 22, 2026 meeting, officers were elected to constitute the Executive Committee of the Board.

The reconstituted Richard Bland College Board of Visitors is focused on continuing to improve and monitor executive-level metrics (FTE enrollment, retention and graduation rates; post-completion outcomes; and cost per degree) that have been in place since 2014. This is within the context of the current complex environment facing higher education, ranging from decreased

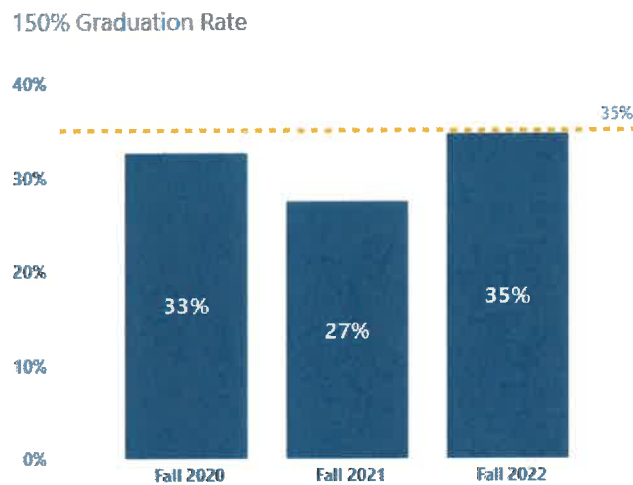
¹ Dr. Strempe’s publications include *Beyond Free College: Making Higher Education Work for 21st Century Students*. Co-author with Stephen Handel, Rowman & Littlefield Press, 2021; *Transition and Transformation: New Research Fostering Transfer Student Success*. Co-editor with Stephen Handel, University Press of North Georgia, 2018; and *Transition and Transformation: Fostering Transfer Student Success*, Co-editor with Stephen Handel, University Press of North Georgia, 2016.

enrollment, increased competition, declining state support, and a continued focus on the American public’s perceived value and return on investment of higher education.

In keeping with General Assembly priorities, the Board’s goal is to ensure that the College is strategically aligned to fulfill its mission and provide market-driven, industry-recognized credentials in Virginia’s Gateway region and across the Commonwealth. To support its strategic goals, the Board has implemented a three-phased process to explore, evaluate and execute strategic alliances, partnerships and collaborative/alternative options with a clear focus on student enrollment and outcomes. The goal is to continually expand Richard Bland College’s contribution to regional and statewide workforce and economic development and to document its impressive ROI for the Commonwealth.

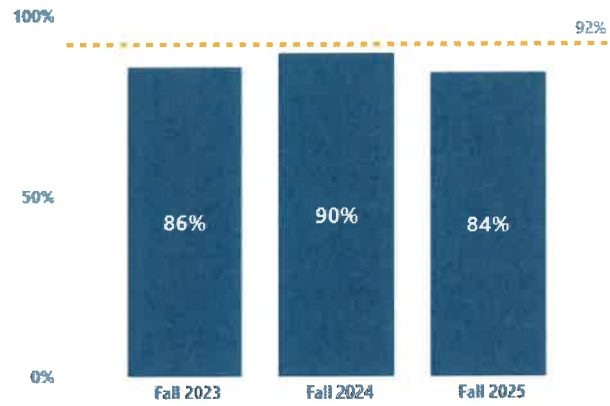
III. Performance Metrics

The Richard Bland College Board of Visitors has established key performance indicators (KPIs) to monitor the College’s status and progress within a longitudinal framework. Representative dashboards are included below for reference.



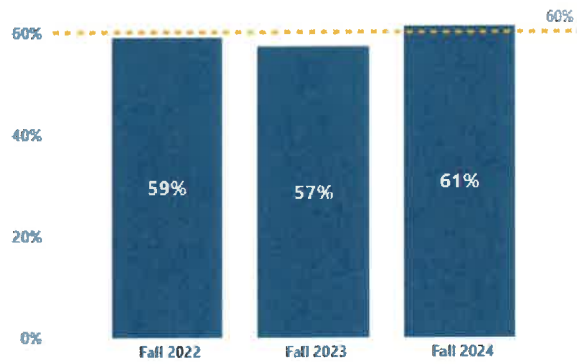
Note that the 150% graduation rate depicted above does NOT include Verto students; however, they are included in IPEDS data.

Fall-to-Spring Persistence



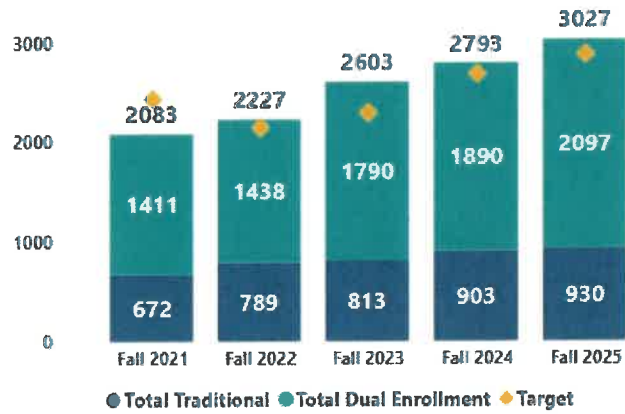
Fall-to-Spring Persistence reflects first-time full-time degree seeking students. These data are as of March 30, 2026.

Fall-to-Fall Retention



Fall-to-Fall Retention is for first-time full-time degree seeking students.

Enrollment

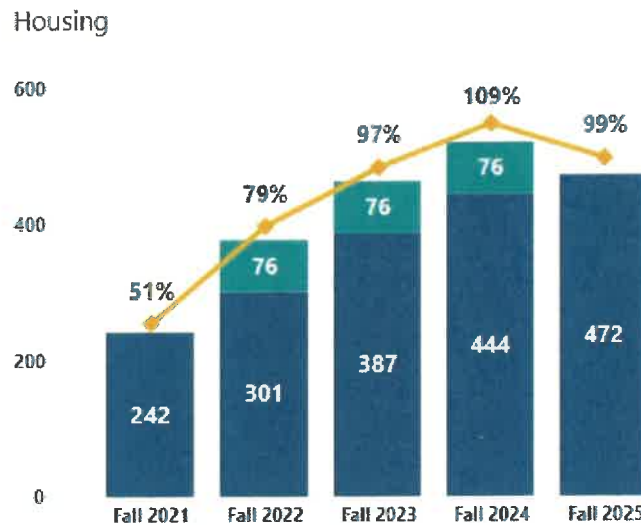


Enrollment counts reflect all students. The numbers differ from IPEDS in fall 2021 due to VERTO students being included in IPEDS and fall 2022 due to Prior Year Revisions not being posted publically. Note that there are slight differences from IPEDS in other terms; for example, fall 2023-fall 2025, due to a small number of audits that are included here but are not reflected in IPEDS data.

Athletes Enrolled



Athlete enrollment by Fall Term for all sports.



Housing numbers based on accounting charges by Fall Term. Fall 2022-Fall 2024 numbers reflect 76 housing slots leased by Virginia State University for those years.

IV. The Future of Richard Bland College: A Phased Approach – Phase One

Newly established amid an impending gubernatorial transition and a transition in the RBC presidency, the first nine members of the RBC Board of Visitors were appointed by Governor Glenn Youngkin. This Board led by Rector John Rathbone put into place an effective governance framework based on standards of best practice; implemented a robust short-term plan to maintain focus and momentum during a period of transition; and clarified the roles, responsibilities and expectations of College boards (Board of Visitors and Foundation Board of Directors) and key leadership. For example, the Board appointed in 2025 established board bylaws, board policies, an [18-24 month strategic plan](#), and an updated 2026 campus master plan. In addition, they utilized a professional search firm, Academic Career and Executive Search, to conduct the search for an interim president to follow President Debbie Sydow.

Understanding the importance of its charge from the General Assembly, this Board also conducted extensive due diligence and adopted a three-year, phased approach to the review and exploration of options for the future of Richard Bland College. Phase One contains four main components:

1. Establish a baseline. Richard Bland College has developed strategic baseline metrics (section two, above) that will be used to identify, prioritize and evaluate all options and to ensure the decisions will create value for the college and all key stakeholders (students, faculty, staff, alumni, community, Commonwealth, et al).

2. Conduct an internal review and inventory of programs and services. This inventory will include all programs and pathways available at RBC—and via existing partnerships with regional and statewide institutions—that prepare students for university transfer and careers (section four, below).
3. Conduct an external review of workforce needs and educational program options available to students in the region and state. Review the inventory of current workforce needs in the region/state (section five, below) and available options.
4. Crosswalk the external review with an inventory of programs and pathways available at Richard Bland College (and via existing partnerships with regional and statewide institutions) to prepare students for university transfer and careers. This will create a gap analysis (section six, below).

V. Internal Inventory of Educational Solutions

Richard Bland College’s niche and identity is as a two-year, residential, university-parallel experience. Its associate degrees are designed to prepare students for transfer to four-year institutions in Virginia and beyond, while minimizing credit loss and reducing overall cost. In the age of advanced technologies like artificial intelligence, the liberal arts education and degrees that Bland offers are now more crucial than ever as employers seek employees with strong communication and computation skills, intellectual curiosity, adaptability, critical reasoning, a disciplined work ethic, and the capacity to collaborate effectively.

Richard Bland College associate degrees—the Associate of Arts Degree (A.A.) and the Associate of Science Degree (A.S.)—align with over forty university transfer partners, including:

- | | | |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|--|
| ▪ William & Mary | ▪ UVA Wise | ▪ Mary Baldwin University |
| ▪ University of Virginia | ▪ Virginia State University | ▪ Pfeiffer University |
| ▪ Virginia Tech | ▪ Virginia’s Community Colleges | ▪ Randolph-Macon College |
| ▪ Virginia Commonwealth University | ▪ Purdue University Global | ▪ Regent University |
| ▪ Longwood University | ▪ Averett University | ▪ Roanoke College |
| ▪ Christopher Newport University | ▪ Bluefield College | ▪ Shenandoah University |
| ▪ George Mason University | ▪ Bridgewater College | ▪ Southern Virginia University |
| ▪ James Madison University | ▪ Eastern Mennonite University | ▪ Southside Regional Medical Center Professional Schools |
| ▪ University of Mary Washington | ▪ Ferrum College | ▪ Saint Leo University |
| ▪ Old Dominion University | ▪ Hampden-Sydney College | ▪ Sweet Briar College |
| ▪ Norfolk State University | ▪ Hampton University | ▪ Virginia Union University |
| ▪ Radford University | ▪ Liberty University | ▪ Virginia Wesleyan University |
| | ▪ University of Lynchburg | |

In addition, Richard Bland College currently offers three certificates in Communications, Fine Arts, and Uncrewed Aerial Systems (UaS).

Virginia Code Title 23.1 (6), Chapter 28, requires Richard Bland College to file annually—on or before July 1—a report to the Chairs of the House Committee on Appropriations, the House Committee on Education, the Senate Committee on Education and Health, and the Senate Committee on Finance and Appropriations regarding the institution’s progress in exploring and expanding partnership opportunities for shared services and academic programming with other higher education partners. In accordance with this annual requirement, the College annually submits a progress report outlining its robust array of strategic partnerships. As detailed in the most recent report, in addition to [university partnerships](#), the College partners with K-12, industry, and others to offer:

- [Dual Enrollment](#)
- [iRBC International Student Program](#)
- [Health Careers-Bon Secours Partnership](#)
- RBC Foundation Business Innovation Park
- RBC Health Zone University-Led Telehealth & STEAM-H Expansion
- [Research, Innovation, and Grants](#)
- Drone and Aviation Fellowship Program with Richmond Airport
- STEM Summer Camps
- [Transfer Scholars Network](#)
- [University College](#)

Comprehensive documentation detailing each partnership is hyperlinked.

VI. Inventory of Current Workforce Needs

RBC monitors the workforce needs of the Commonwealth and identifies the State’s high-growth occupations from the Virginia Employment Commission.

Projected to 2026
VIRGINIA
JOB
OUTLOOK



Job opportunities in Virginia are expected to continue to expand.

Overall, employment in Virginia is projected to grow 10.1 percent by 2026 exceeding the national growth rate of 7.4 percent.

Which jobs are expected to grow or decline in Virginia?

This Job Outlook brochure lists a sampling of high-growth occupations by educational attainment and annual wages projected to 2026 as well as occupations that are projected to decline.

For more information, visit these websites:

- www.careerinfonet.org
- www.bls.gov/ooh
- www.VirginiaWorks.com

High-Growth Occupations by Educational Attainment:

| Bachelor's Degree | Projected Job Growth to 2026 | Median Annual Wage | Associate's Degree, Post-Secondary Non-Degree Award, or Some College | Projected Job Growth to 2026 | Median Annual Wage | High School Diploma or Equivalent | Projected Job Growth to 2026 | Median Annual Wage |
|--|------------------------------|--------------------|---|------------------------------|--------------------|--|------------------------------|--------------------|
| Software Developers, Applications | 11,730 | \$105,500 | Nursing Assistants | 7,861 | \$26,500 | Personal Care Aides | 29,347 | \$16,650 |
| Management Analysts | 10,686 | \$96,770 | Medical Assistants | 4,352 | \$32,260 | Home Health Aides | 5,926 | \$21,770 |
| Registered Nurses | 9,341 | \$66,690 | Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses | 3,294 | \$42,210 | Stock Clerks and Order Fillers | 5,393 | \$24,070 |
| Accountants and Auditors | 6,151 | \$75,250 | Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers | 3,506 | \$40,150 | Customer Service Representatives | 4,969 | \$32,550 |
| General and Operations Managers | 4,899 | \$122,710 | Tractor Operators | 3,189 | \$26,150 | Receptionists and Information Clerks | 4,617 | \$20,770 |
| Market Research Analysts and Marketing Specialists | 5,149 | \$67,210 | Computer User Support Specialists | 2,672 | \$53,090 | Sales Representatives, Services, All Other | 3,420 | \$62,520 |
| Information Security Analysts | 4,817 | \$105,540 | Dental Hygienists | 2,079 | \$41,690 | First-Line Supervisors of Food Preparation and Serving Workers | 3,275 | \$33,540 |
| Managers, All Other | 4,585 | \$127,190 | Hairdressers, Hairstylists, and Cosmetologists | 1,925 | \$30,030 | Maintenance and Repair Workers, General | 3,216 | \$38,220 |
| Elementary School Teachers, Except Special Education | 3,882 | \$64,090 | Agriculture, Forestry, and Fishing Workers | 1,345 | \$42,220 | Security Guards | 3,107 | \$32,240 |
| Software Developers, Systems Software | 3,731 | \$119,430 | Heating, Air Conditioning, and Refrigeration Mechanics and Installers | 1,369 | \$40,950 | First-Line Supervisors of Office and Administrative Support Workers | 2,556 | \$55,610 |
| Business Operations Specialists, All Other | 3,549 | \$78,640 | Paralegals and Legal Assistants | 1,368 | \$41,700 | First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers | 2,277 | \$40,490 |
| Computer Systems Analysts | 3,527 | \$96,450 | Dental Assistants | 1,240 | \$32,400 | Nonfarm Animal Caretakers | 2,223 | \$22,230 |
| Secondary School Teachers, Except Special and Career/Technical Education | 2,968 | \$64,230 | Phlebotomists | 1,171 | \$33,790 | Fitness Trainers and Aerobics Instructors | 2,066 | \$41,460 |
| Operations Research Analysts | 2,950 | \$105,770 | Emergency Medical Technicians and Paramedics | 1,037 | \$33,110 | Billing and Posting Clerks | 1,964 | \$37,120 |
| Financial Managers | 2,918 | \$141,880 | Massage Therapists | 1,007 | \$15,420 | Police and Sheriff's Patrol Officers | 1,749 | \$53,820 |
| Human Resources Specialists | 2,187 | \$78,040 | Freighters | 973 | \$50,160 | First-Line Supervisors of Construction Trades and Extraction Workers | 1,731 | \$62,970 |
| Network and Computer Systems Administrators | 2,174 | \$81,930 | Physical Therapist Assistants | 920 | \$40,940 | Light Truck or Delivery Service Drivers | 1,694 | \$29,080 |
| Child, Family, and School Social Workers | 2,037 | \$46,490 | Legal Support Workers, All Other | 895 | \$17,210 | Childcare Workers | 1,637 | \$20,430 |
| Computer and Information Systems Managers | 1,947 | \$166,950 | Preschool Teachers, Except Special Education | 762 | \$32,440 | Plumbers, Pipefitters, and Steamfitters | 1,415 | \$42,270 |
| Training and Development Specialists | 1,891 | \$65,890 | Medical Records and Health Information Technicians | 751 | \$37,290 | Self-Enrichment Education Teachers | 1,455 | \$39,430 |

Virginia Employment Commission. *2026 Jobs Outlook*. Virginia Labor Market Information. Published 2026. PDF file. <https://prod-valmi.mt.gov/docs/Publications/LMI-Publications/VA-Jobs-Outlook/PDF/2026-Jobs-Outlook.pdf>.

College leadership monitors these high-growth job opportunities to assure the relevance of degree pathways. The continuous pursuit of these prospects is referenced in the [2026-28 Strategic Plan](#): “Analyze and pursue resolution of all barriers that impede delivery of a full range of high-demand programs and credentials.” The Board particularly notes the increasing interest and enrollment in short-term programs, with the National Clearinghouse finding that short-term credentials are currently experiencing the greatest enrollment growth at 6.6 percent.²

² Johanna Alonso, “Enrollment Growth Continues, Bolstered by Short-Term Credentials,” *Inside Higher Ed*, 11 Nov. 2025, <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/admissions/traditional-age/2025/11/11/short-term-credentials-bolster-enrollment-boom>

VII. Gap Analysis

At the January 28th, 2026, meeting, the Board of Visitors adopted an updated [Richard Bland College strategic plan](#) that established priority goals for the next 18-24 months. The plan assures alignment with the SCHEV strategic plan and the Commonwealth's current workforce needs. A crosswalk of the College's existing educational offerings with the Virginia's top in-demand fields confirms that the current liberal arts transfer focus aligns with Commonwealth workforce needs. In addition to the crosswalk programs listed below, the College offers more generalized transfer pathways for students geared toward various 4-year degrees, including the General A.S., A.S in Physical Science, and A.S in Life Science.

VIRGINIA'S TOP IN DEMAND FIELDS

RICHARD BLAND COLLEGE ALIGNMENT

Information Technology & Computer Science Fields

Software Developers (Applications & Systems)
Information Security Analysts
Computer Systems Analysts
Network & Computer Systems Administrators
Computer & Information Systems Managers
Operations Research Analysts

A.S. in Math/Computer Science – foundational STEM courses required for CS/IT majors at 4-year institutions

Business, Management & Accounting Fields

Management Analysts

A.A. with social sciences coursework supporting economics/management transfer pathways

General & Operations Managers
Accountants & Auditors
Market Research Analysts
Financial Managers
Business Operations Specialists

A.S. in Business Administration (listed within RBC's Business, Management & Marketing fields)

Education Fields

Elementary School Teachers

A.S. in Behavioral Sciences → prepares students for Social Work, Counseling, Education



Phase Two – Program Inventory and Gap Analysis. Richard Bland College is partnering with Jade Solutions to inform this second phase work, with a special emphasis on the short-term credentials most frequently sought by today’s students. Jade Solutions will conduct a comprehensive market feasibility study to guide the development of short-term credentials, certificates and workforce-aligned programs under the Richard Bland College Online Initiative. The scope of this work will involve a deep market landscape foundation and competitive mapping, dual-geography market sizing (under 75-90 miles from campus and Virginia statewide), an analysis of industry-specific opportunities (healthcare, business, IT, skilled trades, emerging fields), and an analysis of partnership provider opportunities. This work will also include in-depth employer interviews across target industries, provide market-driven enrollment and revenue projections, program investment analysis and cost structure, and a partnership vs build cost-benefit analysis. In summary, the engagement with Jade Solutions will result in a strategic prioritization framework and implementation roadmap that will set the stage for Phase Two.

Informed by market analysis data generated during Phase One, Richard Bland College will next inventory both its own offerings, as well as all regional higher education offerings (both public and private) that align with the market analysis conducted in Phase One to identify the gaps with the greatest market needs. This gap analysis will frame the internal examination of RBC’s capacity to offer these high demand programs/credentials/micro-credentials. This internal analysis will include a robust financial modeling in order to prioritize the potential offerings. The second report, due summer 2027, will include a multi-criteria opportunity ranking framework and program portfolio recommendations.

Phase Three: Implementation of Recommendations. Richard Bland College leadership will conduct comprehensive due diligence as it seeks potential partners (higher education, industry and commercial). The college will evaluate potential strategic alliances, partnerships and collaborative/alternative options. This broad framework will inform the identification of potential partners, prioritize initial

outreach, and guide due diligence to determine best options for achieving strategic objectives. The Board of Visitors will review the framework and approve a project plan that prioritizes pilot program development and partnerships in accordance with regional and statewide needs while simultaneously assessing alternative approaches, partners, and/or third parties for achieving goals. The Year-Three report (June 30, 2027) will present the results of exploration and evaluation efforts and set forth a plan for ongoing exploration of strategic partnerships that advance the Richard Bland College mission and priority goals.

The Board of Visitors for Richard Bland College embraces the independent governance model and its responsibility to guide future direction with a focus on delivering educational solutions that align with regional and statewide workforce needs. Furthermore, the Board understands and appreciates that setting future direction for Richard Bland College requires vigilance in performing each of its governance duties.



Richard Bland College
Board of Visitors

Resolution: No. 7 - FY27 Tuition and Fees

Date: April 22, 2026

WHEREAS, Richard Bland College strives to deliver high quality educational programming, high-value university pathways, and an innovative educational model at an affordable price; and,

WHEREAS, the proposed FY27 tuition and fees (summary chart is attached) meet the 2026-2027 funding requirements for academic programs, student support services, and auxiliary services through a pricing strategy that is intended to optimize affordability and educational excellence and, simultaneously, enable the College to continue to advance its mission and strategic priorities; and,

WHEREAS, Richard Bland College maintains its commitment to affordability through the strategic use of needs-based scholarships; state appropriated financial aid; and Federal programs, such as Pell and Supplement Educational Opportunity Grants (SEOG) to mitigate increases to student tuition and fees; and,

WHEREAS, Richard Bland College's tuition and fee rates remain among the lowest in the Commonwealth, even with the proposed FY27 in-state tuition and mandatory E&G fee rate of \$243 per credit hour (\$11 increase to the current FY26 tuition rate), and a \$1 increase to the current FY26 Mandatory E&G Fees; and the proposed out-of-state tuition and mandatory E&G fee rate of \$465 per credit hour (\$22 increase to the current FY26 out-of-state tuition rate); and,

WHEREAS, the proposed FY27 tuition rates ensure RBC compliance with SCHEV's out-of-state cost-of-instruction requirements; and,

WHEREAS, it is recommended that FY27 mandatory auxiliary comprehensive fees for in-state and out-of-state students increase by \$2.75 (~3%) to a per-credit hour rate of \$83; and,

WHEREAS, for FY27, the proposed pricing for all residential rooms and food plans remains the same as in FY26; and,

WHEREAS, the Board of Visitors of Richard Bland College, on the recommendation of the President and in consideration of the unforeseen financial circumstances impacting students and their families, may require the College to adjust or reconsider non-mandatory fees and charges, and,

WHEREAS, an \$11 per-credit-hour increase to in-state tuition, a \$21 per credit hour increase to out-of-state tuition, and a \$3 total per-credit-hour increase to mandatory fees in FY27 maintains Richard Bland College's commitment to student affordability; and now,

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the President and the Chief Business Officer are granted the authority and the discretion to determine whether non-mandatory fees will be waived or applied for courses, programs, and activities; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that upon recommendation of the President, the Board of Visitors of Richard Bland College approves the 2026-2027 Tuition and Fee Schedule as presented for the 2027 fiscal year.

| Per Credit Hour Tuition & Fees | | | |
|---|----------|----------|-------------------|
| | FY26 | FY27 | Increase |
| | Approved | Proposed | (Per Credit Hour) |
| In-state | \$ 214 | \$ 225 | \$ 11 |
| Out-of-State | \$ 425 | \$ 447 | \$ 22 |
| E&G Technology Fee | \$ 17 | \$ 18 | \$ 1 |
| Auxiliary Comprehensive Fee | \$ 80 | \$ 83 | \$ 3 |
| Online | \$ 213 | \$ 224 | \$ 11 |

| Annual Tuition & Fees | | | | | | | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------|------------------|------------------|---------------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------|--|
| <i>(Based on 30 credit hours)</i> | | | | | | | | | | |
| | FY27 | | Total | FY26 | | FY27 | | Total | FY27 | |
| | FY26 | Proposed | Annual | Out-of- | Proposed | Annual | FY26 | Proposed | Annual | |
| | In-State | In-State | Increase | State | Out-of-State | Increase | Online | Online | Increase | |
| Tuition | \$ 6,420 | \$ 6,750 | \$ 330 | \$ 12,750 | \$ 13,410 | \$ 660 | \$ 6,390 | \$ 6,720 | \$ 330 | |
| E&G Tech Fee | \$ 510 | \$ 540 | \$ 30 | \$ 510 | \$ 540 | \$ 30 | \$ 510 | \$ 540 | \$ 30 | |
| Aux Comp | \$ 2,400 | \$ 2,490 | \$ 90 | \$ 2,400 | \$ 2,490 | \$ 90 | \$ - | \$ - | \$ - | |
| Total | \$ 9,330 | \$ 9,780 | \$ 450 | \$ 15,660 | \$ 16,440 | \$ 780 | \$ 6,900 | \$ 7,260 | \$ 360 | |



Richard Bland College
Board of Visitors

Resolution: No. 8 - Richard Bland College 2026-2027 Operating Budget

Date: April 22, 2026

WHEREAS, the proposed 2026-2027 operating budget for Richard Bland College below includes three major sources of **revenue** to support RBC's operations:

1. state general fund appropriations (E&G program) to support the academic mission and need-based student financial aid,
2. student tuition and mandatory E&G fees to support the academic mission, and
3. student fees for auxiliary programs, including housing, dining, and student activities; and,

WHEREAS, The FY27 budget reflects state general fund support appropriated for Richard Bland College based on proposed actions of the 2026 General Assembly Session, and appropriations revenue is contingent upon General Assembly approval and subject to change; and,

WHEREAS, the budget includes anticipated tuition and fee revenue based conservatively on 25,000 credit hours (65% in-state, 5% out-of-state, and 30% online) for the 2026-2027 academic year; and,

WHEREAS, auxiliary revenue estimates for FY27 are conservatively based on an average housing occupancy level of 90% (~475 beds), and other sources of auxiliary revenue are based on student dining contracts and the comprehensive auxiliary fee paid by students, which is used to support athletics, student recreational services, parking, transportation, and other student programs; and,

WHEREAS, projected revenues for FY27 are expected to reach \$32.9 million as reflected in the table below; and,

WHEREAS, the FY27 budget reflects anticipated personnel and non-personnel **expenses** by major program, e.g., Educational & General, Financial Aid, and Auxiliary Services; and,

WHEREAS, as part of the 2026-2027 budget development process, management identified cost-saving and strategic workforce realignment measures to maintain a balanced budget while also prioritizing resources to support RBC's mission and strategic goals; and,

WHEREAS, projected expenditures for FY27 are expected to be \$32.9 million as reflected in the table below; and now,

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that upon recommendation of the President, the Board of Visitors of Richard Bland College approves the 2026-27 operating budget for Richard Bland College.

2026-2027 Richard Bland College Budget

| REVENUES | FY26 Approved Budget | FY26 Projected | FY27 Proposed Budget | Budget Variance (\$) | Budget Variance (%) |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|---------------------|
| ¹ State Appropriations | \$ 16,986,075 | \$ 16,986,075 | \$ 18,144,402 | \$ 1,158,327 | 6.82% |
| Tuition and E&G Fees | \$ 7,050,679 | \$ 7,301,731 | \$ 7,216,440 | \$ 165,761 | 2.35% |
| Other Revenues | \$ 578,150 | \$ 368,414 | \$ 677,904 | \$ 99,754 | 17.25% |
| Student Housing | \$ 3,831,300 | \$ 3,717,210 | \$ 3,831,300 | \$ - | 0.00% |
| Food Services | \$ 1,277,100 | \$ 1,765,650 | \$ 1,277,100 | \$ - | 0.00% |
| Comprehensive Fees | \$ 1,147,255 | \$ 1,313,680 | \$ 1,406,753 | \$ 259,498 | 22.62% |
| ² Other Auxiliary Services | \$ 300,000 | \$ 44,430 | \$ - | \$ (300,000) | -100.00% |
| Grant Revenue | \$ 629,900 | \$ 551,419 | \$ 431,061 | \$ (198,839) | -31.57% |
| Total Revenues | \$ 31,800,459 | \$ 32,048,610 | \$ 32,984,961 | \$ 1,184,502 | 3.72% |

| EXPENDITURES | FY26 Approved Budget | FY26 Projected | FY27 Proposed Budget | Budget Variance (\$) | Budget Variance (%) |
|----------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|---------------------|
| ³ Total Personnel | \$ 15,875,409 | \$ 15,977,334 | \$ 17,280,543 | \$ 1,405,134 | 8.85% |
| <i>Operating:</i> | | | | | |
| ⁴ Education & General | \$ 8,845,158 | \$ 8,643,801 | \$ 8,849,203 | \$ 4,045 | 0.05% |
| Sponsored Programs | \$ 239,200 | \$ 250,770 | \$ 214,200 | \$ (25,000) | -10.45% |
| ⁵ Auxiliary Services | \$ 2,190,062 | \$ 2,416,029 | \$ 1,938,385 | \$ (251,677) | -11.49% |
| Athletics | \$ 2,236,000 | \$ 1,958,366 | \$ 2,236,000 | \$ - | 0.00% |
| Financial Aid | \$ 2,414,630 | \$ 2,422,793 | \$ 2,466,630 | \$ 52,000 | 2.15% |
| Total Operating | \$ 15,925,050 | \$ 15,691,759 | \$ 15,704,418 | \$ (220,632) | -1.39% |
| Total Expenditures | \$ 31,800,459 | \$ 31,669,093 | \$ 32,984,961 | \$ 1,184,502 | 3.72% |

¹ State Appropriations include student financial assistance \$2.4M

² Other Auxiliary Services revenue is conservative and does not include partnership revenue

³ Total Personnel includes Interim President salary and Sabbatical leave, increase in health insurance, and General Assembly mandatory raises

⁴ Education & General expenditures include additional IT cloud services support and required VITA oversight

⁵ Auxiliary Services budget includes operational cost savings strategies



Richard Bland College
Board of Visitors

Resolution: No. 9 – Appointment to Fill Vacancies in the Professional Faculty
Date: April 22, 2026

HR-Related Resolution – Text will be publicly available after the Board takes action.



Richard Bland College
BOARD OF VISITORS

Resolution: No. 10 – Retirement
Date: April 22, 2026

HR-Related Resolution – Text will be publicly available after the Board takes action.



Richard Bland College
Board of Visitors

Resolution: No. 11 – Academic Faculty Promotion
Date: April 22, 2026

HR-Related Resolution – Text will be publicly available after the Board takes action.

April 2026 BoV Pre-Reads



Richard Bland College

2026-2027 Organization Chart

BOARD OF VISITORS

Charita Johnson
Chief Information Officer

Jason Collins
Property Manager

Brooklyn Bilyard
Residence Life

Thomas Travis
Campus Police

Jennifer Schoonmaker
Dining Manager

ERIC KONDZIELAWA
VP Operations

KENNETH ALEXANDER
Interim President

KIMBERLY BOYD
VP & Chief Research & Innovation Officer

Marcina Porterfield
Sponsored Programs

Babette Hammond
Workforce & Career Readiness

Christie Clarke
Chief of Staff

Gerrit Smith
Senior Executive Administrator & Clerk to the Board of Visitors

Ashley Fuller
Data & Compliance Officer

VACANT
Provost & VP Academics

Ben Thoreson
Student Success

Tim Hurley
Librarian

Jena Zarling
Chair of Social & Behavioral Sciences / Language & Humanities

Collegiate Admission & Retention Solutions
Registrar

Adam Zucconi
Educational Strategy & Operations

Kevin Peters
Chair of Natural Science & Mathematics

JUSTIN MAY
VP Advancement, Enrollment, Student Success

Scott Newton
Associate VP for Residence Life & Athletics

Ann Ifekwunigwe
Associate VP for Student Engagement, Transfer, and Career Services

Lisa S. Johnson
Financial Aid

The Monument Group
Advancement

Kyle Doby
Admissions

VENDOR TBD
Marketing

Dianna Banks
Human Resources

Mary Weaver
Controller

Layne Peebles
Procurement Officer

STACEY SOKOL
VP Administration & Finance



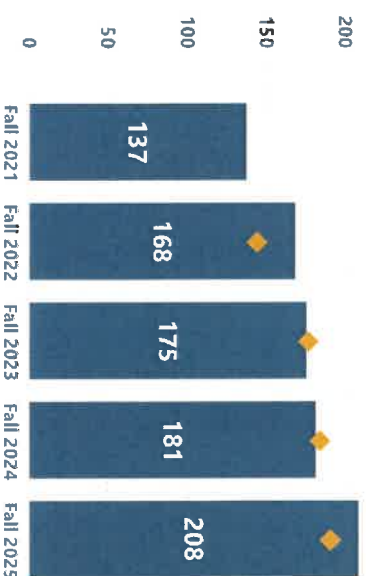
Richard Bland College

Dashboard

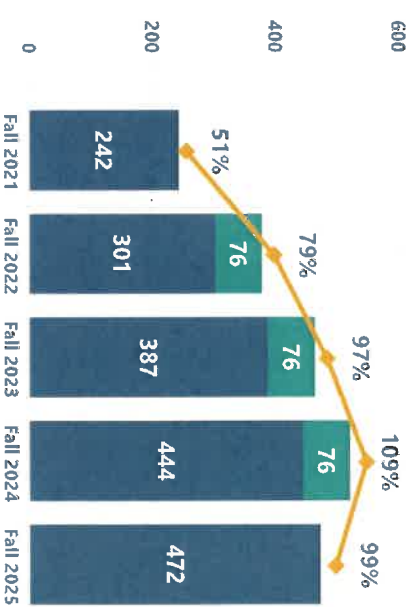
Enrollment



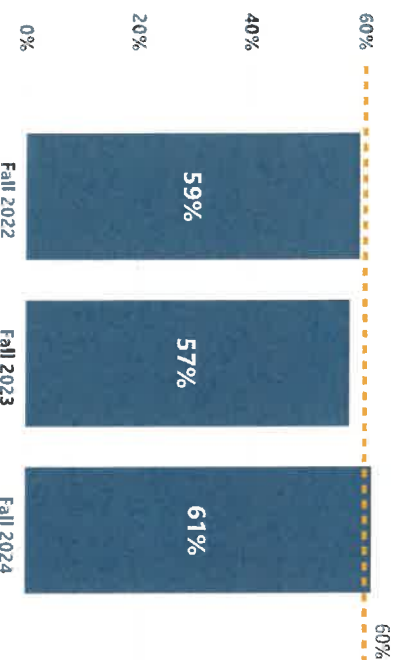
Athletes Enrolled



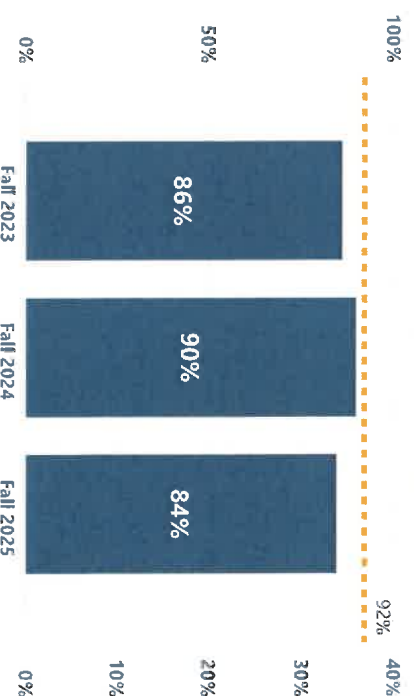
Housing



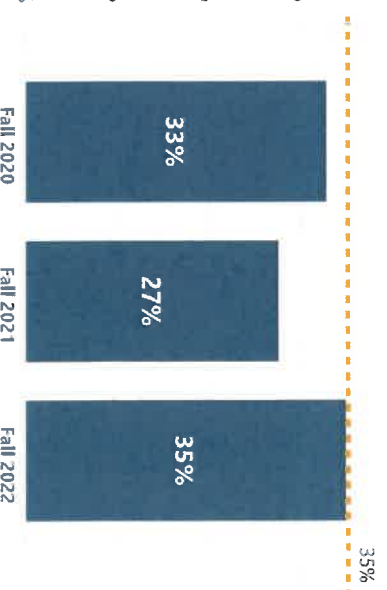
Fall-to-Fall Retention



Fall-to-Spring Persistence



150% Graduation Rate





Richard Bland College

FY26 Budget Summary

Unadjusted Through 3/31/26

| REVENUES | 2023-24 Audited | | | 2024-25 Audited | | | 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 | \$ 12,745,842 | 75.0% |
| Tuition and E&G Fees | \$ 5,986,834 | \$ 6,543,933 | 109.3% | \$ 6,632,909 | \$ 5,690,675 | 85.8% | \$ 7,050,679 | \$ 7,103,054 | 100.7% |
| Other Revenues | \$ 577,717 | \$ 554,652 | 96.0% | \$ 629,397 | \$ 582,411 | 92.5% | \$ 578,150 | \$ 368,414 | 63.7% |
| Student Housing | \$ 2,439,095 | \$ 2,675,349 | 109.7% | \$ 2,954,278 | \$ 3,620,159 | 122.5% | \$ 3,831,300 | \$ 3,717,210 | 97.0% |
| Food Services | \$ 1,058,763 | \$ 1,150,290 | 108.6% | \$ 1,296,600 | \$ 1,482,719 | 114.4% | \$ 1,277,100 | \$ 1,765,650 | 138.3% |
| Comprehensive Fees | \$ 912,353 | \$ 1,423,433 | 156.0% | \$ 1,035,644 | \$ 1,058,712 | 102.2% | \$ 1,147,255 | \$ 1,313,680 | 114.5% |
| Other Auxiliary Services | \$ 1,778,800 | \$ 1,317,535 | 74.1% | \$ 493,800 | \$ 1,265,609 | 256.3% | \$ 300,000 | \$ 44,430 | 14.8% |
| Grant Revenue | \$ 970,439 | \$ 190,111 | 19.6% | \$ 1,070,439 | \$ 459,294 | 42.9% | \$ 629,900 | \$ 551,419 | 87.5% |
| Total Revenues | \$ 28,619,788 | \$ 29,577,538 | 103.3% | \$ 30,057,592 | \$ 30,060,783 | 100.0% | \$ 31,800,459 | \$ 27,609,699 | 86.8% |

| EXPENDITURES | 2023-24 Audited | | | 2024-25 Audited | | | 2025-26 Current | | |
|---------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|--------------|----------------------|----------------------|--------------|----------------------|----------------------|--------------|
| | Budget | Actual | % of Budget | Budget | Actual | % of Budget | Budget | Actual | % of Budget |
| Personnel: | | | | | | | | | |
| Total Personnel | \$ 15,011,140 | \$ 14,533,966 | 96.8% | \$ 15,680,351 | \$ 16,812,801 | 107.2% | \$ 15,875,409 | \$ 11,970,629 | 75.4% |
| Operating: | | | | | | | | | |
| Education & General | \$ 8,154,943 | \$ 5,977,482 | 73.3% | \$ 7,697,840 | \$ 5,316,635 | 69.1% | \$ 8,845,158 | \$ 5,995,351 | 67.8% |
| Sponsored Programs | \$ 217,000 | \$ 239,396 | 110.3% | \$ 221,200 | \$ 1,010,998 | 457.1% | \$ 239,200 | \$ 188,078 | 78.6% |
| Auxiliary Services | \$ 1,801,925 | \$ 2,878,085 | 159.7% | \$ 2,228,821 | \$ 2,944,017 | 132.1% | \$ 2,190,062 | \$ 1,362,022 | 62.2% |
| Athletics | \$ 1,367,700 | \$ 1,341,891 | 98.1% | \$ 1,883,300 | \$ 1,480,464 | 78.6% | \$ 2,236,000 | \$ 1,468,775 | 65.7% |
| Financial Aid | \$ 2,067,080 | \$ 1,179,933 | 57.1% | \$ 2,346,080 | \$ 2,440,265 | 104.0% | \$ 2,414,630 | \$ 1,817,095 | 75.3% |
| Total Operating | \$ 13,608,648 | \$ 11,616,787 | 85.4% | \$ 14,377,241 | \$ 13,192,379 | 91.8% | \$ 15,925,050 | \$ 10,831,319 | 68.0% |
| Total Expenditures | \$ 28,619,788 | \$ 26,150,753 | 91.4% | \$ 30,057,592 | \$ 30,005,180 | 99.8% | \$ 31,800,459 | \$ 22,801,948 | 71.7% |

Surplus/(Deficit)

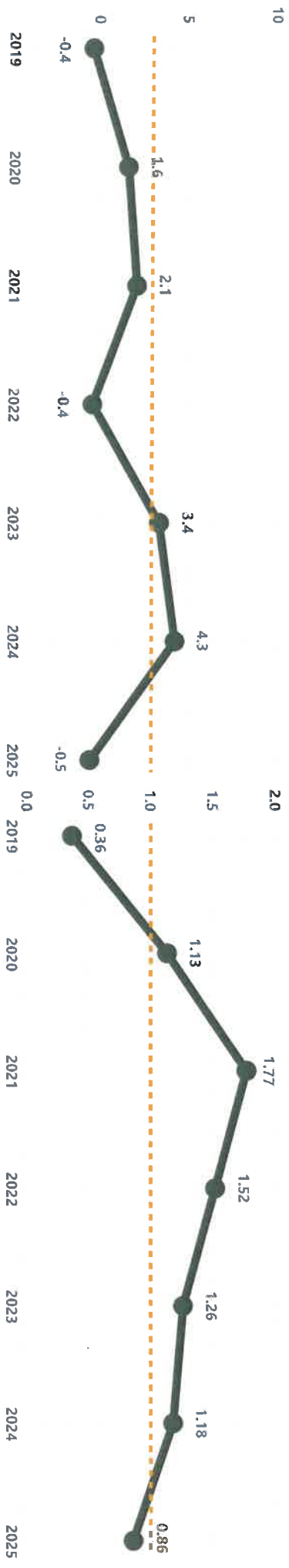
¹ Projected personnel total includes estimated one-time bonus (+taxes) paid out in June & Strategic Workforce Realignments



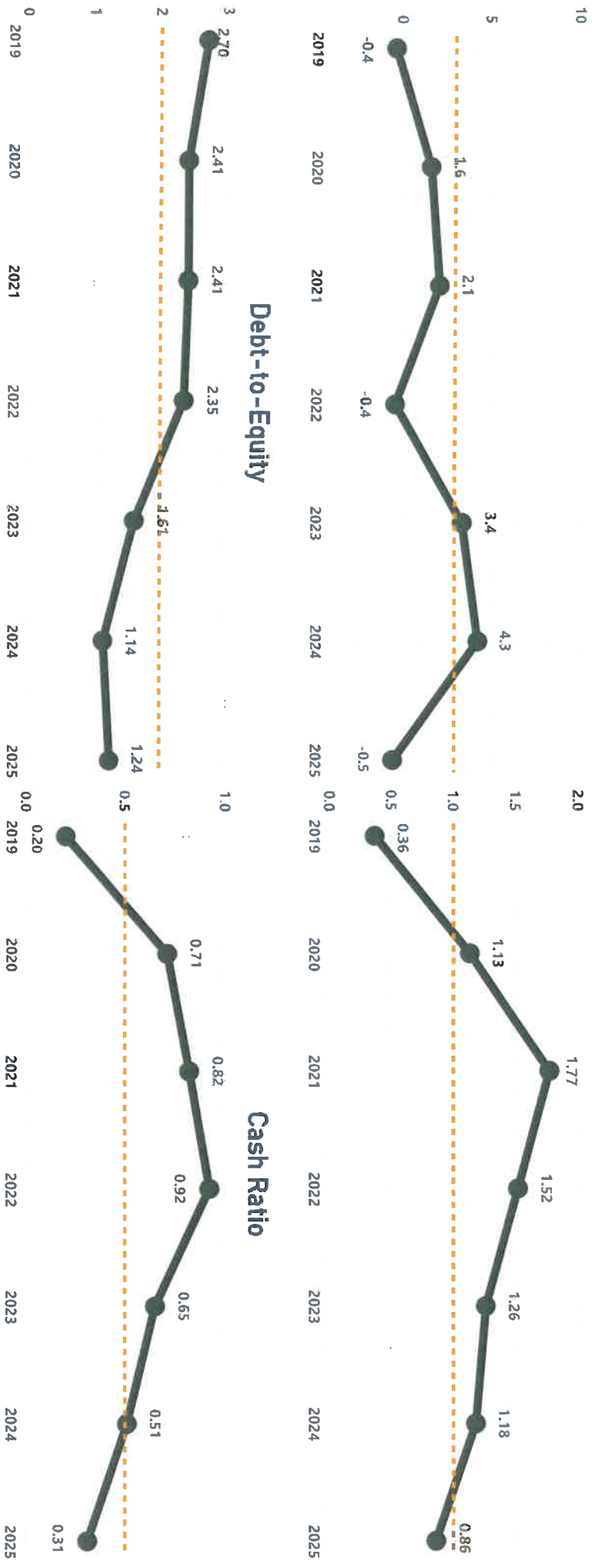
Richard Bland College

April 2026 BOV meeting

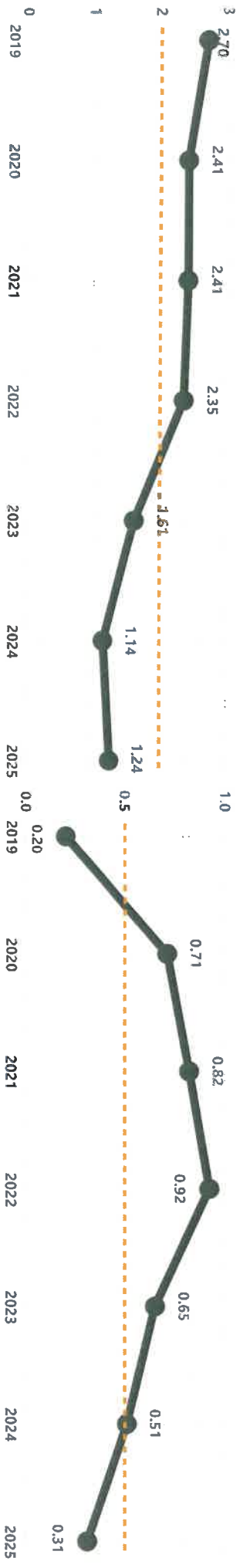
Composite Financial Index



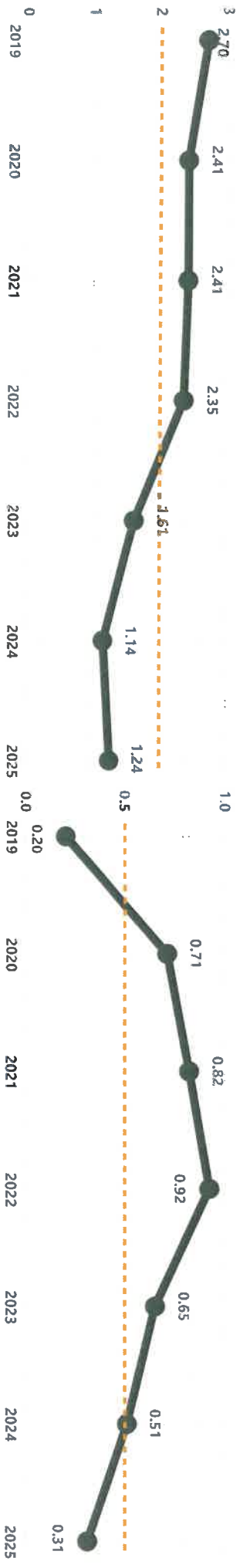
Current Ratio



Debt-to-Equity



Cash Ratio



Composite Financial Index (CFI): Composite picture of the financial health of the institution at a point in time. CFI is measured on a scale of -4 to 10 with a score of 3 being the threshold for institutional financial health.

Current Ratio: The College's ability to pay off its short-term debts and operational costs with short-term assets. A current ratio below 1 would mean that the College does not have enough liquid assets to cover its short-term liabilities.

Debt-to-Equity Ratio: Indicates how much debt the College is using to finance its assets relative to equity. This ratio should not be above 2.0.

Cash Ratio: Measures whether an institution can cover its short-term liabilities using only cash and cash equivalents. A cash ratio between 0.5 and 1.0 is generally viewed as an acceptable or healthy level.

2026 Cost Savings and Workforce Realignment Plan

A Summary Report of Outcomes

In response to a projected \$1.8 million budget gap in the 2026-27 budget, Richard Bland College developed and implemented a Cost Savings and Workforce Realignment Plan that successfully balanced the FY27 operating budget, which will be presented to the Board of Visitors for approval on April 22. The plan—with input from Cabinet, HR, and Finance—reflects a thoughtful, measured approach to fiscal stewardship while, at the same time, maintains the College's commitment to its core mission of teaching and learning and Board-approved 2026-28 strategic priorities.

Actions taken to balance the FY27 budget included a combination of strategic outsourcing, operational/organizational adjustments, workforce reductions and realignment. The College explored opportunities to outsource selected functions through formal RFP processes to improve performance and reduce costs in non-essential operations. As a result, landscape management for West Campus has been outsourced to a local vendor; an RFP for advancement services has been completed, and a matrix-management model will be in place moving forward. An RFP for marketing services is under development to optimize brand integrity/awareness, fundraising and enrollment management outcomes.

Additional savings were achieved by rightsizing campus police operations during periods when students and faculty are not on campus, allowing for seasonal efficiencies. The College also updated staffing policies to align with best practices, clarifying the use of 9-month, 10-month, and 12-month professional administrator (PA) appointments and appropriately aligning leave structures.

All workforce changes were made with care and purpose, including a reduction in staff to prioritize resources in support of Bland's instructional mission. Savings were further realized through attrition and targeted reorganization designed to improve efficiency and effectiveness.

Taken together, these actions position Richard Bland College to enter FY 2026–27 on sound financial footing while continuing to invest in student success and institutional sustainability.



Richard Bland College

BOARD OF VISITORS

HANDBOOK AND RESOURCE MANUAL

<https://www.rbc.edu/board-of-visitors-handbook-and-resource-manual/>

The online Handbook and Resource Manual is intended to provide a practical, durable reference guide for Board members throughout the year. The online Manual includes:

Part I: Board Fundamentals

- A. Statement of Shared Governance and Flowchart
- B. Position Descriptions – For Individual Visitors and the Board as a Governing Body
- C. Board of Visitors Roster
- D. SCHEV Governing Board Orientation
- E. Professional Development and Informational Resources
- F. Board Bylaws, Policies, and Relevant Virginia Code
- G. Board meeting Schedule (Annual and Multi-year)
- H. Sample Agendas
- I. How and when meeting materials are distributed and expectations for Visitor preparation for each meeting
- J. Guidelines for motions, voting, and roll call procedures
- K. Travel, reimbursement, and expense policies

Part II: College Fundamentals

- A. Quick Guide (regularly updated)
- B. History and Future Plans
 - 1. A Graphical Richard Bland College History
 - 2. Board-approved Strategic Plan, including mission, vision and core values
 - 3. Campus Master Plan (updated every 10-15 years)
- C. Accreditation - The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC)
 - 1. Richard Bland College's SACSCOC Accreditation Status
- D. External Sources for Information about Richard Bland College Relative to Peers
 - 1. Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) – annual report

2. State Council for Higher Education in Virginia (SCHEV) – comprehensive data
- E. Organization Chart - Board → President → Cabinet → Operational Units
 1. Contact Sheet for President, Chief of Staff, Board Clerk, Office of the Attorney General (OAG) Legal Council
- F. Finances and Audit
 1. Current Board-approved Operating Budget
 2. Current Board-approved Six-year Plan, including Capital Budget
 3. Current Audit Plan
 4. Most recent audited financial statements by Virginia Auditor of Public Accounts (APA)

Part III: Richard Bland College Foundation and Board of Directors

- A. Endowment overview
 1. Current Investment Policy
 2. Performance summary
- B. Foundation Board Bylaws
- C. Foundation Board of Directors membership roster
- D. Current Operating/Support Agreement(s) and MOU(s)
- E. Most recent audited financial statements
- F. RBC Foundation website

Part IV: Additional Resources

- A. Past two years of Board meeting minutes
- B. Key Performance Indicators (KPI) dashboard (enrollment, retention, completion)
- C. Glossary of higher education terms
- D. Communications/branding guidelines
- E. Overview of Robert's Rules of Order
- F. Campus Map



Richard Bland College

REPORT OF THE FACULTY REPRESENTATIVE TO THE BOARD OF VISITORS

FROM: Prof. Jason Pode

DATE: April 22, 2026

In February, Dr. Katie Bjorkman attended the Special Interest Group of the Mathematical Association of America on Research in Undergraduate Mathematics Education (RUME) where she led a working group on RUME research in two-year colleges, served as a discussion facilitator for the interest group on RUME for non-STEM majors, hosted a mentoring table for seeking teaching positions in RUME, and organized the social event of tabletop games in the lobby. She also secured \$2,000 from Dominion Energy to sponsor the Mid-Atlantic RUME conference in September. The conference will be hosted at RBC, and Dr. Bjorkman will serve as a co-organizer.

Dr. Eric Miller received a \$300 grant from Bass Pro Shop to add to the RBC “adventure inventory,” which makes gear available to students to check out for outdoor adventures (camping, hiking, fishing, etc.). He also received a \$2,000 grant to take six students and Dr. Kalota Stewart on an alternative Spring Break trip; they traveled to Marlinton, West Virginia. Over a five-day period, the students hiked in the Cranberry Glades wilderness, learned to flyfish, and explored the banks of the Greenbrier River and its tributaries for fossils. Additionally, the students visited Greenbank Observatory, which is the first national radio astronomy observatory and home to the world’s largest fully steerable radio telescope. On one evening, they signed up at the local library to learn mahjong, which was not only exciting for the students but also for the ladies who taught the class. They were thrilled to have so many new people interested in learning mahjong. Lastly, they spent several evenings exchanging stories and enjoying smores over the campfire. A special thanks to Anne-Leigh Kerr for her gracious donation to fund the trip and keep the RBC Alternative Spring Break alive.

Dr. Alexandra Youmans received a partial fellowship to study at the Martha’s Vineyard Summer Writer’s Conference this upcoming June. She also contributed writing to the book, *Good Writing – 36 Ways to Improve Your Sentences*, which was published on March 17th and is currently on the New York Times bestseller list.

Dr. David Morgan has been invited to serve on the organizing committee for the Fall 2026 meeting of the regional section of the American Association of Physics Teachers (CSAAPT) conference, which will be held in October at The College of William & Mary. The AAPT is a professional society dedicated to strengthening physics education, supporting teachers, and disseminating physics knowledge to students at all levels.

Dr. Olivia Burgess presented “Using Open Letters to Teach Authentic Writing in First-Year Composition” at the National Conference for the Two-Year College English Association on March 4.

Dr. Andrea Beyer recently contributed to a published article, “Science Communications Tools: Rubrics for Generating Posters and Manuscripts that are Authentic to the Practice of Science,” in the *Journal of Microbiology and Biology Education (JMBE)*. The paper is from a large collaboration of SEA-PHAGES faculty across the country and includes two rubrics designed to guide the teaching and evaluation of science communication in ways that mirror how scientists prepare and share their research. Additionally, her inaugural BIO 299 SEA-PHAGES research class has five students enrolled this semester. To date, they have learned multiple microbiology lab techniques and isolated two novel viruses from soil (named Resilion and Quvenger). Their phage data pages will soon be “live” on the internet at phagesdb.org for the public to see. The students will present their findings on a poster at the annual SEA-PHAGES virtual symposium at the end of April. This conference includes faculty and undergraduate students from schools across the U.S. and a few other countries.

Dr. Kevin Peters is currently working with his biology majors to grow pecan trees. They currently have 45 seedlings and another 100+ ready to be transferred to pots soon. The students—and Dr. Peters—have learned a lot about pecan propagation, and they look forward to analyzing their data on germination success between different collections. In mid-April, they will be transferring the plants to spots outside for further growth.

Dr. Jamia Davis attended the 24th Hawaii International Conference on Education in January. Throughout the conference, she gained valuable insights from distinguished individuals in higher education and engaged in discussions across a diverse range of topics. Additionally, Dr. Davis continued her work on the feminine product initiative on the RBC campus, which she helped establish in partnership with Sylvia Sisters in Richmond. The initiative continues to make a meaningful and positive impact by reducing the number of missed classes, supporting student productivity, and contributing to a more equitable and supportive campus environment. Feminine care products are now consistently available in bathrooms across campus, ensuring that students have access to essential monthly hygiene products. Dr. Davis graciously supports this initiative through a personal monthly donation.