

LANDER UNIVERSITY BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Lander University
Greenwood, South Carolina

Tuesday, September 1, 2026
2:00 p.m.

Presiding: **Don Lloyd**

Other Members of the Board in Attendance:

Robert Barber
Holly Bracknell
Linda Dolny
Shawn Foxworth
Ray Hunt
Catherine Lee
Don Scott
Peggy Makins
Terry Pruitt
Robert Sabalis
Angela Strickland
Kathy Taylor
Mark Taylor
Anne Walker

Absent: Marcia Hydrick, Jim Shubert

Others in Attendance: President Richard Cosentino; Dr. Jim Colbert, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs; Joe Greenthal, Vice President for Finance and Administration; Adam Taylor, Vice President for Strategic Initiatives and Chief of Staff; Brian Reese, Director of Athletics; Todd Gambill, Vice President for Enrollment and Access Management; Amanda Darden, Vice President for Student Experience and Quality Assurance; Brian Apfel, Vice President for University Marketing and Communications; Matt Braaten, Assistant Vice President for Planning Analytics and Decision Support; Sadie Erwin, Executive Assistant to the President; Madison Herig, Governmental Relations Coordinator and Assistant to the Vice President.

Guests: Mya Atten, of the Index-Journal

Chair Lloyd called the meeting to order. He announced the passing of former board member, Fred Thrailkill who served from 2002-2014.

The chair then recognized Adam Taylor, Secretary to the Board of Trustees.

Adam Taylor stated for the record that appropriate publicity had been disseminated to comply with the Freedom of Information Act, and that the meeting was in compliance with that Act.

The next board meeting will be Monday, December 15, 2026.

I. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Anne Walker made the motion to approve the July 21, 2026 board meeting minutes; seconded by Bob Sabalis.

The board meeting minutes from July 21, 2026 were approved by unanimous vote.

II. PRESIDENT'S REPORT

President Cosentino shared a report with the Board of Trustees. His report included the following updates:

The president introduced Dave Drucker, Dean of Students, and David Finklea, Assistant Vice President of University Advancement.

University Marketing & Branding: The president congratulated Brian Apfel, Vice President of Marketing and Communications and his team for their recent efforts and successes on the Lander University social media accounts. Mr. Apfel also shared a brief branding update with the board.

State Leadership: The president announced that Attorney General of South Carolina, Alan Wilson, recently came to campus for a visit.

Growth, Innovation, and Impact: The president thanked Todd Gambill, Vice President of Enrollment & Access Management, and his team for another record-breaking year of enrollment. He stated that the university plans to reach its enrollment goal of 5,000 students next academic year.

Construction and Expansion Updates: The president stated that all university facilities are at capacity. He also announced that the university is acquiring Greenwood School District 50's Genesis Education Center property. This 21-acre property is located within walking distance to campus and will expand the campus footprint by 12%. Official plans for how the property will be utilized announced at a later date. He also announced that the recent renovations to the first floor of the Carnell Learning Center have contributed to increased patronage of "The Drop" restaurant by 60% since the beginning of the semester. The president also announced that Barnes and Noble has officially begun their work in the university bookstore.

K-12 Education in South Carolina: The president announced the plans to request funds from the General Assembly for a new College of Education building in the upcoming fiscal year.

Faculty/Staff Growth and Retention: The president announced that the university has hired 28 new faculty members for the current academic year.

Campus Safety: The president stated that campus safety continues to be a top priority. All Lander University employees are required to attend an annual campus safety seminar.

Artificial Intelligence: The president announced that Dr. Ben Deaton has been recently hired as the Associate Provost for Artificial Intelligence. He will work with students and faculty on how to best implement artificial intelligence in the classroom.

Coordinating Council on Workforce Development (CCWD): The president announced that the CCWD has discussed how artificial intelligence is affecting the workforce in the state of South Carolina. The council continues to make progress on the job portal.

Southern Regional Education Board (SREB): The president announced that the SREB recently released a list of the current top jobs. He will work with leadership to determine how Lander can align its current programs or if any new programs need to be added to fill the needs of the workforce.

Athletics: The president congratulated Brian Reese, Director of Athletics, and the athletes on their recent successes.

New Legislation: The president announced that a new law, H 4756: The Student Physical Privacy Act recently went into effect. Lander is in compliance with its requirements. The governmental relations team continues to monitor any legislation that may affect Lander and/or higher education.

State Funding: The president stated that although Lander did not receive its full funding request for tuition mitigation (now called SC FIRST), he is very appreciative of the funding for Maintenance, Renovation, and Replacement on campus.

US Department of Education: The president informed the board that Secretary of Education, Linda McMahon, recently issued an open letter launching a "National Call to Action" that asks college and university presidents and governing boards to publicly state their commitments to reform. The president asked the board if they would like to form a subcommittee/group to discuss if and how Lander would like to respond. Several board members expressed interest in joining these discussions.

III. BOARD CHAIR COMMENTS

The chairman stated that he has reviewed the 2025/2026 Board of Trustees Self-Evaluation submissions and a summary of the findings were provided to the members of the board. He also stated that a board retreat will be planned for the current academic year to further review and discuss. He also stated that the board would be voting on a new policy at this meeting, the Board of Trustees Self-Evaluation Policy, which will guide the board's actions in future years.

IV. COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Academic Affairs

Robert Barber was recognized to share updates from the Academic Affairs Committee Report. Mr. Barber asked Provost Jim Colbert to summarize the report on behalf of the Academic Affairs Committee. The committee brought forward 7 action items:

1. **Lander Mission Statement** - According to the policy of the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education (CHE), university missions include a range of descriptive details that Lander provides in a formal Mission Statement and in a Role and Scope statement. Taken together, these two statements describe the mission of Lander University as recognized by CHE. The proposed revisions of the Role and Scope statement is a simple update for the target enrollment to a new target of 6,500 students. This revision supports the current SACSCOC compliance certification process. This change has been pre-approved by CHE pending approval by Lander University Board of Trustees.

The motion passed unanimously.

2. **Program Terminations** – (Pending BOT approval, CHE approval, and SACSCOC approval.)

- a. Business Administration (B.S.) - removing concentrations only: Accounting, Financial Services, Healthcare Management, Hospitality Management, Information Technology Management, Management/Marketing, Sports Management.
- b. Clinical Nurse Leader (MSN) with concentrations in Nurse Educator, and Nursing Leadership and Administration
- c. Environmental Science (B.S.)
- d. Humanities (B.A.)
- e. Physical Education (B.S.)
- f. Spanish (B.A.)
- g. Visual Arts (MFA)
- h. Secondary Education Concentrations:
 - Chemistry (BS) – removing Secondary Education concentrations only
 - English (BA) - removing Secondary Education concentrations only
 - History (BS) - removing Secondary Education concentrations only
 - Mathematics (BS) - removing Secondary Education concentrations only

The board voted on the action items as a group. The motion passed unanimously.

B. Enrollment and Access Management / Student Experience and Quality Assurance

Angela Strickland was recognized to share updates from the Enrollment and Access Management / Student Experience and Quality Assurance Committee report. The committee brought forward no action items.

C. Finance, Facilities and Audit / Governmental and Strategic Initiatives

Don Lloyd was recognized to share the updates found in the Finance, Facilities, and Audit, and Governmental and Strategic Initiatives Committee reports. The committee brought forward no action items.

D. Institutional Advancement

Holly Bracknell was recognized to share updates from the Institutional Advancement Committee report. The committee brought forward no action items.

E. Student Experience & Quality Assurance/Intercollegiate Athletics

Cathy Lee was recognized to share updates from the Student Experience & Quality Assurance/Intercollegiate Athletics Committee report. The committee brought forward no action items.

F. Policy

Robert Sabalis was recognized to share updates from the Policy Committee report. The committee brought forward 7 new policies and 3 updated policies.

1. Board of Trustees Self-Evaluation (LP1.9)

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the board fulfills its fiduciary and governance responsibilities, promotes continuous improvement in its governance practices, and maintains documented evidence of self-review as required for accreditation purposes.

2. AI Governance and Responsible Use (LP7.8)

This policy and related guidelines establish a shared framework for the responsible use and governance of artificial intelligence (AI) technologies at Lander University.

3. Data Classification and Protection (LP7.9)

Lander University relies on information and information technology systems to support its academic administrative and operational missions. University data and systems are institutional assets that require protection. This policy establishes requirements for data privacy, data classification and data protection.

4. Vulnerability Management (LP7.7)

This policy establishes a structured, repeatable, measurable vulnerability management program that enables timely identification, remediation, and reporting of vulnerabilities in university information systems and infrastructure. This program supports the confidentiality, integrity, and availability of university data, and aligns with recognized best practices and applicable state regulatory expectations for system and information integrity.

5. Emotional Support Animal Policy for Students (LP6.6)

The purpose of this policy is to establish a consistent, fair, and legally compliant process for reviewing and approving requests from students with disabilities to reside with an emotional support animal in university-owned or university-operated housing.

6. Student Data Privacy and Protection (LP7.2)

This policy establishes requirements for the collection, access, use, disclosure, storage, transmission, and protection of student information in accordance with the applicable federal and state laws, institutional policies and industry best practices.

7. Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS/Drone) (LP11.4)

This policy establishes requirements for the safe, responsible, and lawful operation of drones on university-owned or university-controlled property while protecting the safety, privacy, and interests of the Lander University community.

8. Senior-level Administrator Evaluations (Update – LP2.1)

The purpose of this policy is to establish a regular, structured process for evaluating the performance of senior level administrators at Lander University. Evaluations are intended to assess progress towards institutional and divisional strategic goals, strengthen leadership effectiveness and accountability, support professional development, and inform the president's decisions regarding administrator performance, in alignment with Board of Trustees governance responsibilities.

9. Academic Grading System (Update – LP3.16)

This policy establishes the official grading symbols, associated quality point values, and the methodology for calculating grade point averages (GPA), Providing a uniform framework that supports accurate academic record keeping, informs

decisions related to academic standing and financial aid eligibility, and satisfies federal reporting requirements including Title IV return of Title IV Funds (R2T4) regulations.

10. Email Signature and Brand (Update-LP11.3)

This policy provides clear and consistent e-mail identification and establishes and strengthens the Lander University brand.

All policies were approved with a unanimous vote.

V. OTHER BUSINESS / ANNOUNCEMENTS

A. Faculty Senate

Dr. Ralph Layland provided an update. A report for the Faculty Senate was shared in the board packet.

B. Staff Senate

Kenneth Roach provided an update. A report for the Staff Senate was shared in the board packet.

VI. EXECUTIVE SESSION

A motion was made by Anne Walker to enter executive session; seconded by Ray Hunt.

The motion passed by unanimous vote.

The Lander University Board of Trustees returned from executive session. No action was taken and the public session was resumed.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

The motion was made by Peggy Makins to adjourn the meeting; seconded by Holly Bracknell. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

