

GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE
Kansas Board of Regents
MINUTES
September 17, 2025

The Kansas Board of Regents Governance Committee met on Wednesday, September 17, 2025. Chair Blake Benson called the meeting to order at 9:16 a.m. Proper notice was given according to the law.

MEMBERS PRESENT:	Blake Benson, Chair	Alycia Johnston
	Diana Mendoza	Neelima Parasker

MINUTES

Regent Mendoza moved to approve the minutes of the Committee's June 11, 2025, meeting. Regent Parasker seconded the motion. The motion carried.

REVIEW GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE WORK PLAN FOR FISCAL YEAR 2026

John Yeary, General Counsel, reviewed the committee meeting schedule, including the dates, planned discussion topics, and assigned responsibilities. He also noted that the committee charter was included in the agenda for informational purposes, particularly for new members.

REVIEW BOARD MEMBER CONFLICT OF INTEREST DISCLOSURES AND MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS TO ADDRESS ANY ACTUAL OR PERCEIVED CONFLICTS

General Counsel Yeary provided an update on Board policy regarding conflict-of-interest disclosures by Board members. He reminded the Committee that each year, Board members must disclose their affiliations and memberships, which the Board members submitted in July.

General Counsel Yeary highlighted several cases in which Regents serve on various boards. For example, Regents Benson, Dicus, and Ammar serve on the governing boards of non-controlled affiliated corporations of institutions governed by the Board. Regent Dicus serves on an advisory Board of an institution that is governed by the Board and on a non-governing board of an institution that is coordinated by the Board. And Regent Parasker serves on the governing Board of an organization created by Executive Order of the Governor of Kansas to assist an office within the Kansas Department of Commerce, and also on a council that promotes apprenticeship. Staff recommends approving continued services on these Boards, as these roles were deemed beneficial to the institutions and are not considered conflicts of interest under Board policy.

However, General Counsel Yeary recommended that certain Regents recuse themselves from participating in Board actions related to any contracts or transactions involving entities they are affiliated with. These recommendations included:

- Regent Benson is employed by the Pittsburg Area Chamber of Commerce, which occasionally has business transactions with Pittsburg State University.
- Regent Benson is a member of the Board of Directors for the Crawford County Career and Technical Education Center, a non-profit entity that works with the Wichita State University Campus of Applied Sciences and Technology.
- Regent Mendoza is a Doctoral Student at Kansas State University.
- Regent Parasker has a 100% ownership interest in SnapIT Solutions, a limited liability company that conducts trainings for which the Board of Regents provides certificates of approval to offer in Kansas, and is a partner in Nilofer Venture Holdings, which holds related intellectual property.

General Counsel Yeary concluded by recommending that Regents Benson and Parasker excuse themselves from participating in Board actions involving or related to contracts or transactions for entities they are affiliated with, and that Regent Mendoza excuse herself from participating in Board actions directly affecting academic programs in which she is enrolled. These steps ensure compliance with the Board's conflict of interest policy.

Regent Johnston moved to approve the staff recommendations regarding the disclosed conflicts of interest. Regent Mendoza seconded, and the motion carried.

CONSIDER PROPOSED UPDATES TO BOARD REGULATIONS NOT BEING WORKED BY ANOTHER COMMITTEE: KANSAS NURSING SERVICE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

Gage Rohlf, Associate General Counsel, presented a request by Board Staff to amend the Board's regulations regarding the Nursing Service Scholarship program. The primary objective is to remove the current requirement that scholarship recipients must be enrolled full-time and carry at least 12 credit hours per semester to be eligible. The proposed amendment would relax these requirements, allowing more students to qualify for the scholarship. Additionally, this presents an opportunity to modernize the regulation language, which is now over 35 years old and contains, for example, outdated student financial aid terminology. The regulations would be revised accordingly.

If approved, the legal department will initiate the state's notice-and-comment rulemaking process. A final draft of the amended regulations will then be submitted to the Board for consideration and potential adoption.

Blake Flanders, President and CEO, expressed support for the initiative, noting that any effort to expand the nursing talent pipeline is beneficial. He referenced recent legislative testimony highlighting concerns about the reliance on contract nurses and the associated costs. He emphasized the importance of giving colleges flexibility, especially as program structures have evolved and not all students are able to maintain full-time status.

Regent Mendoza added that the proposed changes would significantly benefit students—not only due to shifts in credit hour requirements but also because many students face barriers to full-time enrollment, such as employment or family responsibilities. She expressed appreciation for efforts to make the scholarship more accessible to a broader range of students.

Regent Mendoza moved to approve the proposed regulation changes. Regent Johnston seconded, and the motion carried.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Benson adjourned the meeting at 9:25 a.m.