



BOARD OF GOVERNORS' MINUTES

Thursday September 11, 2025

1:00 pm – 3:00 pm MST

College of the Rockies, Cranbrook Boardroom

Public Session 3

Jared	Basil	Appointed member – Chair
Ryan	Watmough	Appointed Member – Vice Chair
Lainee	Eccleston	Appointed member
Elizabeth	Farthing	Appointed Member
Anne	Glassford	Appointed member
Megan	Lohmann	Appointed Member
Kris	Murray	Appointed Member
Faye	O'Neil	Appointed Member
Amber	Van Drielen	Appointed Member
Nathan	Dueck	Chair – EdCo
Jenn	Smith	Elected CUPE
Sharon	Demaine	Elected Faculty
Ansh	Gumber	Elected Student
Grace	Deptuck	Elected Student
Michael	Crowe	President & CEO
Robin	Hicks	Vice President, Academic and Applied Research
Brian	Muscat	Vice President, Student Success
Ariane	Tennant	Executive Director, Human Resources
Nathan	Skretting	Vice President, Strategy, Budget and Operations
Dana	Wesley	Executive Director, Indigenous Strategy and Reconciliation
Susan	Woods	Executive Assistant to the Board of Governors

*Highlighted indicates NOT in attendance

3.1 Welcome and Call to Order

Meeting brought to order at 1:03 pm by Chair, Jared Basil

a. Territorial Acknowledgement

Jared delivered the territorial acknowledgement expressing thanks for the opportunity to live, work and play on the traditional territory of the Ktunaxa and home to the Shuswap and Metis communities. Jared gave thanks to those around the room for their continued support of the College and is grateful that we have a full complement of Board members.

b. Welcome to Board Members and members of the Public

Jared thanked members of the Board and Public for taking time to attend in person today. Jared welcomed new Board member Michael Murphy for his first meeting.

c. Oath of Office – Michael Murphy

Michael read and signed his Oath of Office

3.2 Order of Business

a. Additions and approval of the agenda

The following item was added to the agenda:

- c. Oath of Office – Michael Murphy

The following item was deferred due to Ariane’s absence:

- 5.a. Employee Experience Survey – Committee Recommendations



**MOTION to approve the agenda as amended
MOVED by Anne, seconded by Sharon, carried**

b. Election of Board Chair and Vice Chair

Jared relinquished the Chair to Brian Muscat to conduct the elections for the Board Chair and Vice Chair positions. Brian reminded the group that only voting members of the Board are able to nominate and vote.

Brian called for nominations from the floor for the position of Board Chair. Kris nominated Jared for the position. Jared agreed to let his name stand. Brian called for nominations two more times. No further nominations were heard.

Jared was elected to the position of Board Chair by acclamation

Brian called for nominations for the position of Vice Chair. Jared nominated Ryan for the position. Ryan agreed to let his name stand. Brian made two more calls for nominations from the floor. No further nominations were heard.

Ryan was elected to the position of Board Vice-Chair by acclamation

3.3 Consent Agenda

Items included on the Consent Agenda consisted of:

- a. Confirmation of Minutes: June 12, 2025
- b. Q1 Forecast
- c. Board Budget
- d. Cheque Register
- e. Status Report
- f. Public Bodies
- g. Media Releases

**MOTION to approve the items on the Consent Agenda as presented
MOVED by Anne, seconded by Laine, carried**

2.4 Monitoring Report:

a. Institutional Headcount Summary – Fall 2025

Brian joined members at the table and reviewed the Institutional Headcount Summary for the 2025 Fall Semester. We are not yet at Stable Enrolment which will take place next week so will still see some changes and will update once we reach that date. Since the release of this data (on Sept 2) we have an additional 57 students reported. As of this report we are seeing a decrease of 1.7% in domestic enrolments (headcount) with a 33.6% decline in international enrolments by headcount compared to last fall. Programs that have traditionally seen high numbers in international students have seen decline while some other programs are seeing increases as noted in the briefing note.

3.5 Unfinished General Business:

There was no unfinished general business

3.6 Business Arising and/or New Business:

a. Employee Experience Survey – Committee Recommendations

This presentation was deferred to the November due to Ariane not being able to attend today

b. Program Idea Profile (PIP) – Indigenous Services Specialist 2025

Robin brought forward the Program Idea Profile for the Indigenous Services Specialist program. This program is intended to replace the Aboriginal Education Support Worker Diploma which stopped taking students for the past year. The new program aims to build on the foundational goals of its predecessor. This new 10-month program expands the scope beyond K-12 educational settings to prepare graduates for diverse roles in health, social services, and community-based organizations.

The program proposal has been shared with VPAC and EdCo receiving support at both tables. It is now posted to the province's proposal system for feedback from other institutions. If the idea continues in the approval process, it will be seen by the College President, Michael Crowe, for final approval. Projected deliver would be for September 2027.

This item was brought to the Board for information.

c. Suspension of ECE On Campus Cohort

In the fall of 2023, the College launched an on-campus delivery of the Early Childhood Education Infant Toddler Diploma program for a small cohort of international students who must take at least 50% of their programs in person. With changes in the IRCC regulations this past year, we were seeing a severe decline in applications and opened the program to domestic students as well to boost numbers. A review of applicants took place in July, which showed only two qualified international students and two domestic students, who later withdrew their applications.

Due to insufficient qualified applicants, the Fall 2025 intake of this program has been suspended, and notification was provided to the applicable departments and employees. Applicants are being contacted and offered alternative program options and/or deferral of admission to 2026. Instructor workloads will be adjusted to maintain all regular faculty – some term or auxiliary faculty will be affected.

All other ECE program intakes continue as usual for domestic students.

d. Centre for Economic and Workforce Development

In an effort to continue to grow our regional campus offerings and to better connect our campus managers to industry we have made a number of changes at the recommendation of a hired consultant (Dr. Dennis Johnson). These recommendations include; supporting short offerings, introduction of learning hubs, maintaining community engagement and the re-alignment of the role of the campus managers to the portfolio of the VP Academic which was completed in 2024.

To support the recommendations, we are planning to implement a Centre for Economic and Workforce Development and will be hiring a director who will report to the VPA. The Director's focus will be to expand existing programming and pursue new lines of revenue through short-term programming that meets the needs of local communities and beyond.

The Campus manager's role is critical for community engagement and this addition will take the administrative tasks off their desks so that they can focus on community. To emphasize this, the titles will be adjusted to "Manager of Workforce Development and Campus Operations". The current programming under ConEd and general interest will continue as well.

e. Five Year Capital Plan – Final Approval

We are required to submit our Five-Year Capital Plan to the Ministry in mid-July of each year. To accommodate the submission deadline, we proposed and received the Board's approval in principle for the projects to be included in this year's submission. The projects include:

1. **Health Science Centre**
2. **Student Housing Cranbrook**
3. **Student Housing (Fernie)**
4. **IM/IT**

We are unlikely to receive ministry support for student housing but have been asked to leave it on the list so that they can gauge needs across the institutions.

Since initial approval (June) and submittal of project details (August) to the Ministry, we have not received feedback, nor has clarification on project details been requested. This is somewhat anticipated as large projects (1-3) above are updated proposals with new

MOTION to approve the Five-Year Capital Plan as presented
MOVED by Laine, seconded by Ryan, carried

f. Institutional Accountability Plan and Report 2024 – 2025

Each year, the College is required to prepare an Institutional Accountability Plan and Report for the Ministry of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills (the Ministry). The Ministry provides guidelines and a template for the preparation of the report which is a public document designed for both the public and the Ministry.

The IAPR is required to reflect on progress towards the College's strategic plan, the Minister's Mandate Letter and related system objectives. Performance measures are developed and reviewed annually by a provincial advisory group and the College's performance metrics are reported in Appendix A of the IAPR document as actual results, targets, and a three-category assessment scale: Achieved, Substantially Achieved, or Not Achieved.

The IAPR represents the culmination of a whole-college effort to advance the priorities of the College and the Ministry in support of our students and service to our communities. Once approved by the College's Board and the Ministry, the IAPR

**MOTION to approve the 2024 – 2025 Institutional Accountability Plan and Report as provided
MOVED by Sharon, seconded by Megan, carried**

g. 2026 – 2027 Domestic Tuition Fees

Brian reviewed the proposed tuition fee changes for the 2026 – 2027 Academic Year. The Ministry has set a 2% limit on tuition and mandatory fee increases which in our case results in an estimated additional \$50,000 to 59,000 in revenue annually, depending on enrolment which goes entirely to support students and education programs. In order to keep up with financial and inflationary pressures it is advisable to consider this increase. Not approving an increase would result in a compounding shortfall moving forward.

The government is looking at adjusting the tuition cap and are currently forming a committee to conduct an analysis. There is a perception in the system that tuition is still quite manageable. With the decreased enrolments of international students across the country this needs to be a strong consideration for the sustainability of the system.

**MOTION to approve the proposed 2026 – 2027 Domestic Tuition Fees as presented and recommended by the Finance committee
MOVED by Anne, seconded by Michael M, carried**

3.7 Correspondence:

a. Ministry – Final Funding Letter

The final funding letter from the Ministry was provided for information. No substantial changes noted.

3.8 Officer Reports:

a. Board Chair's Report

Jared reaffirmed his pleasure in the full Board compliment in person for today's meeting and is grateful for everyone's continued support in his role as Chair. He thanked Michael C for the work he is doing in his role as President. Jared noted that Minister Anne Kang has switched to a new portfolio and Jessie Sunner is now in the role of Minister of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills.

Jared encouraged all members to attend the Board Retreat in November.

b. President's Report

Michael shares Jared's optimism about the year ahead and feels privileged to work with the College team.

Summer is generally a quieter time around campus and Michael has taken the opportunity to look forward, reshape our direction and meet with community. Convocation took place in June, (with good Board involvement which he is grateful for), Long Service Awards also took place recognizing employees for their service to the College along with honouring our retirees. Michael met with Ministry of Infrastructure regarding our student housing needs. We have 198 beds in Cranbrook with 150 people on the waitlist and no housing in our other communities. This lack of housing impacts enrolment and is one of our levers to increase revenues. Shortages also affect offerings at our regional campuses.

He also met with Darren Jamieson, CAO of KNC and discussed enterprise projects that are underway that we could help support. Michael along with some ELT members attended a KNC celebration at Aqam. Michael attended the KORE Summit and engaged with participants to discuss how we can partner with them. They support an outdoor gear incubator project and used our trailer over the summer to visit regional communities.

He also had an introductory meeting with our new Minister, Jessie Sunner, meetings with EVR senior leaders and enjoyed a tour of mining operations. Jared and Michael met with Michael Murphy to conduct his Board orientation. Met with Shawn Tomlin of the RDEK, Shawn Tomlin to discuss a potential future purchase of their building and possible land availability for their new build. A meeting was held with Darren Brewer, Economic Development for the City of Cranbrook to look at aerospace and defense spending opportunities.

We held a "Kick-Off event for employees to launch of the new academic year and welcomed students back to campus with a similar event.

Michael spent the last few days in Vancouver for Skilled Trades Council, PSEA, and COP meetings. While there he also met with the Ravi Kahlon, Minister of Housing and Municipal Affairs who is working on new strategy.

Sector wide trends across the country shows a huge decline of international student enrolments (70 – 80% down) causing many institutions to layoff employees and suspend programs while also having lower domestic enrolments. Minister Sunner's focus is on sustainability through quality education and innovation. She will be striking a working group to look at it from a provincial level. The Ministry is considering increasing the 2% cap on domestic tuition as well as looking at shared service models to find efficiencies. The province is looking at a \$18 billion deficit with higher education only being approximately 3% of the provincial budget.

c. EdCo Report

Nathan Dueck provided a written report for the Board. EdCo elections will be taking place next week with 10 new faculty seats available. As well election will be taking place for the EdCo chair which is a one-year position.

3.9 Agenda Items for Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Board will be taking place on November 7th.

The following item was identified for inclusion on the agenda:

- Update on Center for Workforce training

Anyone having further items for the agenda are asked to send them to Jared and Susan.

3.10 Information and Good of the Institution:

- Avalanche teams pre-season games starting tomorrow
- Economic Development Summit happening on October 1st. Partnering with CFEK and KSCU. The event will include a Key speaker and panel discussion.



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- Nathan Dueck will be giving a talk titled “Jesus and Superman”, in the lecture theatre, Sept 25th. Listen for his radio spot on the local station

3.11 Questions from the Public regarding any Agenda item:

Sheena inquired about how the suspension of our English Language Learning program aligns with the Ministers direction that these are essential programs. Robin has spoken with the ministry and confirmed that we have leeway to suspend the language program due to circumstances.

Kristy inquired about where the proposed “Health Hub” would be located. We currently have two concepts in mind – one being on campus and one off. No final decision yet and will depend on funding.

3.12 Adjournment

MOTION to adjourn

MOVED by Liz

Distribution to Members:

Jared Basil, Lainece Eccelston, Elizabeth Farthing, Anne Glassford, Megan Lohmann, Michael Murphy, Kris Murray, Faye O’Neil, Amber van Drielen, Ryan Watmough, Jenn Smith, Sharon Demaine, Nathan Dueck, Grace Deptuck, Ansh Gumber

College:

Michael Crowe, Robin Hicks, Brian Muscat, Nathan Skretting, Ariane Tennant, Dana Wesley