



Boards of Visitors Orientation

November 12-13, 2025

The Westin Hotel
Blue Ridge Ballroom
6631 W. Broad Street
Richmond, VA 23230

REVISED AGENDA: 9/19/25

NOVEMBER 12 – REQUIRED FOR NEW APPOINTEES & THOSE WHO DID NOT ATTEND IN 2024

- 9:00 am** **REGISTRATION OPENS; INFORMAL NETWORKING**
Blue Ridge Ballroom Foyer
- 10:00 am** **Welcome, Overview and Acknowledgements**
Scott Fleming, Executive Director, State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV)
Gen. John Jumper, Chair, SCHEV Council; former President, Board of Visitors, Virginia Military Institute
- 10:15 am** **The Art – and Science – of Institutional Governance**
Session Objective: Provide an overview of best practices in institutional governance. What constitutes good governance, and how do boards achieve and maintain it? What are the distinctives of a high-performing governing board? Where does governance end and (micro) management begin?
Moderator: **Michael Poliakoff**, President of ACTA; Board of Visitors, Longwood University
Panelists:
Todd Haymore, Hunton Law Firm, Former Rector, Board of Visitors, Virginia Commonwealth University
Gen. John Jumper, Chair, SCHEV Council; former President, Board of Visitors, Virginia Military Institute
Christy Tomlinson Morton, Rector, Christopher Newport University
- 11:15 am** **Governance 101 – Fundamentals of Service on the Governing Board of a Public Institution of Higher Education**
Session Objective: Provide an overview of service on a public board. To whom are Virginia’s public higher-education boards – and individual members – responsible? How do these boards meet their statutory, regulatory, and fiduciary obligations? How do they function internally (committees, retreats, strategic plans, etc.)?
Introduction: **Gen. John Jumper**, Chair, SCHEV Council
Speaker:
Armand Alacbay, Secretary, Boards of Visitors, George Mason University; Chief of Staff & Senior Vice President of Strategy, American Council of Trustees & Alumni (ACTA)

- 12:00 pm** **LUNCH** (Buffet Meal Provided)
Students from SCHEV's Student Advisory Committee invited to have lunch with their respective institutional Board Members
- 1:00 pm** **Virginia-specific Responsibilities (FOIA, Ethics and COIA)**
Session Objective: Provide overviews of the requirements of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), the State and Local Government Conflict of Interests Act (COIA), and institutional ethics generally.
Alan Gernhardt, Executive Director, Virginia Freedom of Information Advisory Council
Rob Bell, Deputy Attorney General
Nathan Moberly, Assistant Attorney General
- 1:45 pm** **Dollars and Cents**
Session Objective: Explore institutional budgeting, financing, operating, construction, maintenance, and advancement – with a focus on tuition (and fee) setting – by boards who are informed, thoughtful, and accountable stewards of Virginia's (and families') assets.
Moderator: Michael Maul, Director, Department of Planning & Budget (DPB)
Panelists:
Robert Denton, Former Director of the School of Communication, Virginia Tech; Board of Visitors, Virginia State University
Marquett Smith, Regional President, Verizon Wireless; Former Rector, Radford University
- 3:00 pm** **BREAK (Refreshments Provided)**
- 3:15 pm** **Strategic Planning for Institutional and Student Success: Asking Tough Questions, Making Informed Decisions**
Session Objective: Explore best practices in strategically planning, executing, and assessing institutional and student success. What are the questions that board members should ask, and what should they know/learn in order to understand the answers? How do your boards' decisions improve the outcomes of students; of graduates (ROI); of the institution; of the state/the taxpayer (ROI)? How do you know?
Moderator: **Steve Cummings**, Secretary of Finance
Panelists:
Gen. John Jumper, Chair, SCHEV Council; former President, Board of Visitors, Virginia Military Institute
Terri Thompson, Member and Former Chair, State Board for Community Colleges
Suzanne Obenshain, Rector, James Madison University
- 4:45 pm** **Reflections and Preparations for Day Two**
Scott Fleming, Executive Director, SCHEV
- 5:15 pm** **Evening Reception (Light Refreshments Provided) – REQUIRED FOR ALL APPOINTEES**
Governor's Executive Mansion (Shuttle buses will provide transportation from The Westin Hotel to the Executive Mansion and back)
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NOVEMBER 13 REQUIRED FOR ALL APPOINTEES

- 7:00 am** **BREAKFAST (*Provided*); INFORMAL NETWORKING**
Blue Ridge Ballroom
- 8:30 am** **Call to Order, Introductions and Preview**
Scott Fleming, Executive Director, State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV)
- 8:45 am** **National and Virginia Trends, Challenges and Opportunities for Higher Education**
Session Objective: Provide a review of the latest trends, current and future challenges, and emerging opportunities for higher education in the Commonwealth and the U.S. via a panel discussion and Q&A.
Moderator: **Preston Cooper**, Senior Fellow at the American Enterprise Institute (AEI); Board of Visitors, George Mason University
Panelists:
Lindsay Fryer, President & Founding Principal, Lodestone DC SCHEV Council Member
Dr. Steven Taylor, Director and Senior Fellow, Stand Together Trust; Founder and Principal, ED2WORK; and SCHEV Council Member
Wendy Kang, Executive Director, Virginia Office of Education Economics (VOEE)
- 10:00 am** **Boards' Use of Data in Institutional Governance – Data Sources and Strategic Use of Data in Planning and Decision-making (Interactive Exercise)**
Session Objective: Involve participants in an interactive scavenger-hunt exercise that will provide an immersive deep dive into each institution's fact pack and how it can be used in board decision-making and ROI assessment.
Moderator: **Scott Fleming**, Executive Director, SCHEV
Speakers:
John Markowitz, Deputy Secretary of Finance
Tod Massa, Policy Analytics Director, SCHEV
- 12:15 pm** **LUNCH (Buffet Meal Provided)**
Remarks by Secretary Aimee Guidera: "A Call to Action"
- 1:00 pm** **Hot Topics in Higher Education**
Session Objective: Provide interactive opportunities for attendees to learn about multiple "hot topics" in higher education. During the time, participants may visit as many topic-specific tables as they desire, learning a little about many topics or learning a lot about a few topics, depending on each participant's interests.
Table 1: Artificial Intelligence (Panel Leads: **Reeve Bull**, Director of Virginia's Office of Regulatory Management; **Chrysoula Malogianni**, Senior Associate Vice President for Digital Innovation, Old Dominion University; and **Jeff McClurken**, Professor of History & American Studies, Vice President of Strategy, Chief of Staff to the President, University of Mary Washington
Objective: To understand how artificial intelligence is impacting students, faculty, institutions, and higher education generally.
Table 2: K-12 Bridge Building (Panel Leads: **Zach Jacobs**, Deputy Secretary of Education and **Scott Fleming**, Executive Director, SCHEV)
Objective: To discuss student preparation, readiness, and the talent pipeline, including lab schools, merit admissions, and direct admissions.

Table 3: Free Speech/Expression, Civil Discourse and Diversity of Thought (Panel Leads: **Mary Kate Cary**, Director, Think Again, University of Virginia and **Kara Dillard**, Executive Director, James Madison Center for Civic Engagement; Assistant Professor, School of Communication Studies; Director, Civic Leadership Minor; and Co-Director, Institute for Constructive Advocacy and Dialogue (ICAD), James Madison University)
Objective: To learn more about how campuses are ensuring and promoting these key underpinnings of free, democratic society and academia.

Table 4: Mental Health Issues on Campus (Panel Leads: **Rose Pascarell**, Vice President for University Life, George Mason University; **Kelly Crace**, Executive Director of the Contemplative Sciences Center at the University of Virginia; and **Emily Salmon**, Assistant Director of Strategic Planning and Policy Studies, SCHEV)
Objective: To learn about students' mental health challenges and strategies for addressing students' needs.

Table 5: Campus Safety (Panel Leads: **Carl Rowan**, Chief of Police & Assistant Vice President for Public Safety, George Mason University; and **Todd Brewster**, Special Assistant, Virginia Department of Public Safety and Homeland Security)
Objective: To discuss the many aspects of campus safety and student well-being.

Table 6: Deep Dive into Fact Packs 2 (Panel Leads: Secretary **Steve Cummings** and Deputy Secretary **John Markowitz**)
Objective: To continue the conversation from the 10am session by answering additional questions board members may have, including about the College Outcomes Portal.

Table 7: Accreditation (Panel Lead: **Daniel Harrison**, Vice President of Academic Affairs, University of North Carolina System)
Objective: To better understand the Executive Order on accreditation and how boards can ensure that their efforts are more outcomes oriented.

Table 8: Role of Higher Ed in Economic Development (Panel Leads: **Christy Tomlinson Morton**, Rector, Christopher Newport University; Megan Healy, **Jason EL Koubi**, President, Senior Vice President of TALENT AND workforce Strategy, Virginia Economic Development Partnership (VEDP))
Objective: To communicate how institutions can and should engage their local and state business communities.

Tables 9 & 10: Additional Topics of Interest (Panel Leads: TBD)
Objective: To allow participants to receive information on additional topics that interest them but do not appear overtly on the agenda.

2:45 pm **Conclusions, Reflections and Appreciation**
 Kelly Gee, Secretary of the Commonwealth
 Scott Fleming, Executive Director, SCHEV

3:00 pm **ADJOURNMENT**