



President's Report

January 2026

Dr. Brian Knetl, President



Kicking Off the Spring Semester with RISE Real Talk and a Stellar Start for Students

It is always an honor to officially kick off the spring semester with my All-College Address. This semester, as we near the one-year anniversary of our official internal RISE 2030 launch, I spent some time addressing “Real Talk” about the plan, now that we’ve moved from strategy to implementation. I also gave examples of the “Real Work” and “Real Impact” already demonstrated through the plan.

The [“All-Access Pass: Building Bridges, Not Barriers - One Class at a Time”](#) faculty development day programming then followed.

All that was, of course, to prepare us all to welcome students back to campus and to class on Tuesday, Jan. 20. As organized by Student Life, this semester’s theme is “Stellar Start” with celestial and space program analogies, including WCC serving as a launchpad for students for a successful lift-off. A special highlight this year includes the Jan. 21 “Rise and Shine Breakfast,” open to students at all campuses to help welcome and instill a sense of campus belonging right away.

My thanks to all involved in these wonderful preparations and welcoming activities.

Connecting Campuses, Expanding Opportunities

Waubonsee helps local community residents travel the road to success. But what happens to those individuals who are literally unable to get on that road – when a lack of transportation limits their opportunities? This semester, the college launches a new solution to that problem – [a free shuttle service between Waubonsee’s Sugar Grove and Aurora Downtown Campuses.](#)

In a recent survey of WCC students, more than one-third said they lacked a reliable mode of transportation, with 80 percent saying they would be interested in a shuttle between campuses. We listened and responded with a service that runs Monday-Thursday mornings and afternoons, opening up more academic and career opportunities to our students.





Easing Students' Local Transfer Pathways

Waubonsee students benefit not only from the high-quality higher education here, but also from the many four-year college and university options in the area. With its location in the heart of our district, we're pleased to continue strengthening our partnership with Aurora University through a new Early Interest/Admission agreement.

AU is already a top transfer destination for WCC students, with nearly 300 WCC students transferring to AU to continue their education every year.

Building on the guaranteed admission agreement currently in place, this new program will benefit students through early academic planning, coordinated advising, transitional support, and eligibility for specific AU scholarships and student services.

Participating in the AAC&U Meeting

I am happy to get the opportunity to attend The American Association of Colleges and Universities annual meeting in DC this month, with the theme, "Answering the Call for Constructive Engagement."

During the event, I will participate in a panel discussion on the topic of creative leadership with other presidents and deans from community colleges and four-year schools from across the country.



Coming Up

January 29

Rise as One: A Community Tribute to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

February 9-11

Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT) National Legislative Summit

February 1-3

Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges (AGB) Foundation Leadership Forum