



## State board approves new RCCC president

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CONCORD - The State Board of Community Colleges approved Carol Spalding as president of Rowan-Cabarrus Community College on Friday after briefly discussing personnel issues in closed session.

The State Board does not normally convene in June, but did so this year to approve presidents at RCCC and Bladen Community College in Dublin. Members also discussed finalists for president searches at Central Carolina and Craven community colleges during closed session.

Board members convened in five locations, including RCCC's Cabarrus Business and Technology Center in Concord, using distance-learning classrooms.

Linda Earnhardt, vice president of RCCC's Cabarrus operations, played host to State Board members who drove to Concord for the meeting, including Bob Greene of Winston-Salem and Chester Middlesworth of Statesville.

Afterward, Greene and Middlesworth said Spalding would do a great job at RCCC. "We're impressed by the new president here," Middlesworth said. "She has a wonderful background, and the competition was very keen here, too."

RCCC trustees selected Spalding to be president earlier this month from a pool of 43 qualified applicants. She was lured from the Open Campus at Florida Community College at Jacksonville, where she served as president.

Earnhardt said she is looking forward to Spalding beginning her tenure at RCCC on Aug. 11. Spalding succeeds Richard Brownell, who retired May 31 after more than 30 years as president. "She brings a wealth of experience to this college," said Linda Earnhardt, vice president of RCCC's Cabarrus operations. "She has been very active in the community in Jacksonville, and she has also brought additional funding sources to the college."

Also during Friday's meeting, Scott Ralls, president of the North Carolina Community College System, praised the system's role in the Learn and Earn Early College initiative, which allows students to graduate high school with a diploma and associate's degree.

North Carolina community colleges host 22 percent of all Early College High Schools in the U.S., Ralls said. Of the state's 42 Early College High Schools, 38 are housed at community colleges. RCCC is collaborating with Rowan-Salisbury Schools to open the Rowan County Early College in the fall. It will be housed on RCCC's Salisbury campus.

RCCC is also working with the Cabarrus County and Kannapolis City school systems to create the North Carolina Research Campus Early College in 2009-10. Administrators hope to house the school in RCCC's upcoming research campus facility.

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