

OSBN Deans & Directors Meeting Minutes

Date: October 8, 2026

Time: 10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

Location: Teams

Facilitator: Dr. Laura Blackhurst, PhD, RN, CNE, CNL, Policy Analyst, Nursing Education

Meeting notes:

- **Board Staffing and Licensing Updates:** Laura Blackhurst and Kimberly Goddard shared Oregon State Board of Nursing staffing changes, the preferred shared policy-team email process, expected background-check fee increases, and fingerprint-submission guidance for students and programs.
 - **Policy Team Staffing:** Kimberly Goddard is serving as interim executive director after previously serving as deputy director. Laura Blackhurst reported that Dr. Wickenhagen has left the Oregon State Board of Nursing and asked programs to use the shared policy-team email for education-program questions so staff can triage requests and provide responses more efficiently. OSBN.Policy@OSBN.oregon.gov
 - **Fingerprint Timing:** The Board expects a small increase in fingerprint and background-check fees because of higher Oregon State Police and FBI costs. Laura Blackhurst reported that fingerprints are increasingly being submitted without an application on file, which can delay processing and require graduates to repeat fingerprinting. Programs should instruct students to apply for licensure first and then complete fingerprinting afterward.
 - **Director Recruitment:** In the open forum, Deb asked about hiring a permanent director. Kimberly Goddard said the process is underway behind the scenes and will proceed through the Board, but no current update was available.

- **NCLEX Fee Increase and Registration Timing:** Laura Blackhurst explained that the NCLEX fee for both RN and PN examinations, including retakes, will increase to \$350 on February 1, 2027, and answered Tina’s questions about registration, eligibility, authorization-to-test timing, and student cost resources.
 - **Fee Change:** The National Council voted to increase the NCLEX fee effective February 1, 2027. The \$350 fee applies nationwide to both RN and PN examinations and is the same for first attempts and retakes. The increase is attributed to technology, exam-security, and inflation-related costs after 26 years without a fee adjustment.
 - **Registration Date:** The fee is determined by the registration date. Students who register before February 1, 2027, can receive the current lower fee, but programs should ensure students understand the timing consequences before encouraging early registration.
 - **Authorization Window:** Laura Blackhurst clarified that the preferred sequence is to apply for licensure, complete fingerprinting, and then register with Pearson VUE, although all three steps may occur before graduation. Reporting graduation triggers NCLEX eligibility and issuance of the Pearson VUE authorization to test, which remains valid for **90 days** and **cannot be rescheduled or extended**. Students registering early must be prepared to test within that window after graduation.
 - **Student Cost Resources:** Tina requested an itemized document covering the costs of becoming a newly licensed nurse in Oregon, including board, fingerprinting, and NCLEX expenses, so schools can coordinate accurately with students, foundations, and financial-support organizations. Laura Blackhurst agreed to take the suggestion back for discussion and said the board staff are also working toward clearer graduate resources covering the licensing, registration, and cost process.
- **Nursing and Nursing Assistant Program Requirements:** Laura Blackhurst and Michelle Bell clarified that nursing and nursing assistant programs are governed by different portions of the Nurse Practice Act, with nursing assistant programs also subject to federal HHS and CMS requirements affecting personnel, clinical sites, and curriculum.
 - **Different Legal Frameworks:** Nursing programs operate primarily under Division 21, while nursing assistant programs are governed by a different portion of the Nurse Practice Act and additional federal requirements from

HHS and CMS. The Board is considering future modernization of Division 61, but the current rules remain distinct.

- **Director and Faculty Standards:** A nursing assistant program director must have one year of long-term-care experience. If the director does not meet that requirement, the nursing assistant instructors must all meet the long-term-care experience requirement. Laura Blackhurst explained that otherwise qualified deans or directors may not be approved to direct a nursing assistant program because of the federal rules.
- **Faculty and Clinical Approval:** For nursing assistant programs, the board approves instructors and clinical teaching associates and also approves clinical sites. CMS requires the board to verify that a facility has not been prohibited from accepting nursing assistant students; this federal restriction generally does not apply in the same way to nursing-student clinical sites. Michelle Bell clarified that Oregon does not issue a separate instructional license, but it does approve nursing assistant faculty.
- **Required Curriculum:** Nursing assistant programs must implement a Board-developed, Board-approved curriculum with specific content and required laboratory and clinical competencies. Michelle Bell explained that the curriculum document is intended as the minimum specification for program design and should also be mapped to other applicable standards; an outdated section showing educational weights can be disregarded pending an updated version.
- **Oregon Nurse Faculty Collaborative:** Jana Bitton presented the Oregon Center for Nursing's statewide Nurse Faculty Collaborative, a grant-funded cohort model intended to prepare, connect, and retain new clinical faculty while building a sustainable statewide infrastructure.
 - **Workforce Need:** Jana Bitton reported findings from focus groups at publicly funded schools: clinical instructor turnover was approximately 23%, down from 43% the prior year; clinical instructor vacancies were 18.7%, up from 13%; and nurse educator turnover was 17%, up from 16%. The design work identified the transition from expert clinician to educator as a point where many faculty lack preparation and peer support.
 - **Cohort Structure:** The planned collaborative will run for approximately nine or ten months across an academic year and serve about 20 to 25 new clinical faculty per cohort. It will include monthly facilitated virtual

workshops, with the first and final meetings held in person; travel and lodging support is expected for those in-person sessions.

- **Content and Peer Support:** The orientation will be statewide rather than school-specific and will be open across public, private, ADN, and BSN settings. It will address education-specific onboarding, use NLN core competencies and certification domains in coordination with NLN, and establish peer relationships so graduates can support later cohorts. The advisory council is still determining eligibility and whether faculty with one or two years of teaching experience may participate alongside brand-new faculty.
- **Governance and Sustainability:** The Oregon Center for Nursing will host the collaborative as a neutral organization, with funding from the Oregon Health Authority's Renew grant and guidance from a nurse-educator advisory council. Heather Peacock and Jay Brownson were identified as co-chairs. OCN intends to develop evaluation measures, infrastructure, and sustainability models so the program can continue after grant funding ends in 2028, potentially through participation fees.
- **Program Timeline:** The design phase began in January 2026, the advisory council has now formed, curriculum development and OHA contract updates are underway, and the first cohort is tentatively targeted for fall 2027. Jana Bitton asked schools to provide input on participant identification, onboarding gaps, release time, and acceptable participation costs; Steve Hobbs's request for raw focus-group data was answered with an offer to send the report to Laura Blackhurst for distribution.
- **Clinical Placement Summit:** Jana Bitton announced that the Oregon Center for Nursing and the University of Portland plan to hold a statewide clinical placement summit on March 3 at the University of Portland to identify shared challenges and potential improvements.
 - **Summit Purpose:** The summit will bring nursing educators and other stakeholders together to discuss clinical placement capacity and practices in Oregon. Proposed discussion areas include out-of-state placements, placement effectiveness, board, accreditation, and university requirements, and approaches used in other states that might be adapted locally.
 - **Agenda Development:** The agenda has not yet been finalized because Jana is seeking input from participating programs. The event is intended to

emphasize peer discussion and community problem-solving rather than a conventional keynote presentation. Simulation utilization was identified as one possible agenda topic, and Dorothy offered to share a prior presentation.

- **Participant Follow-Up:** Jana asked attendees to save March 3 and email ideas, current placement challenges, and possible agenda topics. The Oregon Center for Nursing will continue developing the agenda and provide updates to the group.
- **Nursing Education Open Forum:** During the open forum, participants raised questions about nurse-administrator turnover and RN-to-BSN articulation agreements, while Laura Blackhurst provided the available information and invited continued coordination among programs.
 - **Administrator Turnover:** Heather asked whether data are being collected on the reasons for high nurse-administrator turnover. Laura Blackhurst said there is no formal Oregon-specific data currently available, although the issue is being observed nationally and NCSBN is examining it. She noted that workload and administrative demands are among the suspected factors but did not identify confirmed causes.
 - **RN-To-BSN Pathways:** Tiffany reported that Tillamook Bay Community College is seeking information from ADN programs whose university RN-to-BSN pathways have ended and asked whether schools have established replacement articulation agreements. Laura Blackhurst clarified that the issue may result from universities discontinuing the RN-to-BSN program itself, leaving no program to articulate into, rather than intentionally ending an individual agreement. Carrington College was identified as having an open RN-to-BSN program, and participants were invited to share contacts and approaches.

Follow-up tasks:

- **Fee Resource Development:** Discuss and develop a consolidated, itemized resource covering Oregon nursing licensure, fingerprinting/background checks, NCLEX, and related graduate costs for distribution to programs and student-support organizations. (Laura Blackhurst, OSBN policy team)
- **Licensure Video Review:** Verify that the OSBN licensure-process video is current and revise it if any information requires updating. (Blackhurst)

- **Faculty Collaborative Advisory Council:** Continue recruiting Advisory Council members and finalize the statewide nurse-faculty collaborative curriculum and participation requirements. (Jana Bitton)
- **Clinical Placement Summit:** Provide feedback and suggested discussion topics for the March 3 clinical placement summit and send relevant presentations or ideas to Jana for agenda development. (Deans and Directors)
- **Clinical Placement Summit:** Share the summit date and logistics with nursing-program stakeholders and continue developing the agenda with community input. (Bitton)
- **Articulation Agreements:** Share current RN-to-BSN articulation options and replacement strategies with Tillamook Bay Community College and other programs affected by discontinued RN-to-BSN offerings. (Deans and Directors)