

"As we look at this 4% rate increase – to tuition – not to other fees – but I want to make known that we are – that I am personally and I think this Board is and the Administrative culture at the College are committed to maintaining as low and accessible tuition rates as possible, so anybody in our county can access higher education no matter what their economic situation might be. The WCC Board of Trustees cares about its students – our students – and is committed to keeping tuition affordable, ensuring students from any economic background access to an exceptional and affordable education. After five consecutive years of freezing tuition costs, the Board – if we approve this – will be approving a modest increase in tuition, continuing to keep our in-district tuition below \$100 per credit. Students taking a full load of 15 credit hours a semester will pay \$60 more for tuition per semester. 12-15 credit hours is a typical full course load. The increase in tuition from \$95 to \$99 per credit hour will help the College continue to invest in the quality of instruction and academic support for students here – that our students and our taxpayers expect from our community college. Students with Pell Grants will not feel this impact of this tuition increase because Pell Grant awards are also increasing for the Fall 2023 academic year. Our College and the WCC Foundation continue to increase its range of scholarship offerings, including support for childcare expenses and emergency expenses for students who may need extra help with day-to-day expenses to continue along their educational path here at the College. WCC has also invested heavily in establishing Open Educational Resources, so that many courses now offered at WCC can be taken with low or even zero textbook costs. I'm proud of our institutional commitment to provide this opportunity for everyone in the county to access high quality higher education at affordable cost, and I recognize the need to support this modest tuition increase."