

Fiscal Sustainability Task Force

THE FISCAL COMPASS Newsletter

Message from the President

As we navigate a dynamic landscape, the work of our Fiscal Sustainability Task Force is more crucial than ever. I am immensely grateful to each member for their dedication and hard work in building a resilient financial future for Green River College. Your commitment charts a path forward that enables us to sustain our mission of student success for decades to come. Let's continue to work together toward "One Vision, One Community, One College."

Suzanne Johnson, PhD
President, Green River College

Launched in April 2025, the Fiscal Sustainability Task Force (FSTF) set its course by the North Star of fiscal sustainability and mission fulfillment, charting a path through the ambiguous waters of changing demographics, uncertain economics, and polarizing politics that institutions of higher education must now navigate. It does so with the goal of strengthening the college as it learns to sail through fiscal uncertainty and toward a new safe harbor of equilibrium and resilience to achieve its mission of student success.

The Task Force uses six strategic "What Would Have to Be True" statements as outcomes to guide its recommendations. These six WWHTBT goals charge six collaborative and coordinated workgroups with developing solutions that support a culture and structure aligned with our North Star. They are driven by constructive problem-solving that supports trust, sustainability, and alignment.

The six workgroups – made up of staff, faculty, and leaders across the institution – set the sail, letting go of familiar lands, grateful for how far the past has taken the college. They venture into unknown waters and explore ways to learn and adapt. They understand that the work is not easy. Yet, they know that the winds of persistence favor the explorer, guiding the college through the tempest of uncertainty and toward equilibrium where fiscal sustainability makes enduring mission fulfillment possible.

The work of the Task Force is a voyage of letting go, exploration, and finally renewal. Currently, the flotilla of six ships is in between the letting go and exploration stages of the change and transition management phases. The deliverables outlined in this report represent outcomes that will improve financial literacy, streamline budget processes, align our strategic priorities with available resources, and create a culture of shared accountability. Join us in this quest.

Miebeth Bustillo-Booth, EdD, PMP | Dean of STEM | Adapted from the State of College Presentation (12/3/2025)



Fiscal Sustainability Task Force Members

Miebeth Bustillo-Booth, EdD, PMP (Project Lead), John McCormick (Executive Lead), Janee Sommerfeld (Executive Lead)

Workgroup Name	WWHTBT Statement	Members
Leadership & Culture	Leaders at all levels champion fiscal responsibility, modeling it in their decisions and resource allocation.	Kit Alston, Jamie Fitzgerald George Frasier (co-chair), Jay Rawson Sharonne Navas (co-chair), Katy Shaw
Budget Transparency & Accountability	The budget process is transparent, accessible, and easily understood by all stakeholders.	Scott Beals, Miebeth Bustillo-Booth, EdD, PMP Ben Holquist (co-chair), Dan Holverson Dave Norberg, Jennifer Ramirez Robson Rhonda Sample, Lea Ann Simpson (co-chair) Jaime Villa
Operational Efficiency & Resource Optimization	Resources are used effectively and efficiently to maximize impact.	Miebeth Bustillo-Booth, EdD, PMP Craig Bush (co-chair), Miriam Chitiga, PhD Rhonda Daulton, Dan Ferguson Sara Gordon, John McCormick (co-chair) Pam Norberg, Rhonda Sample
Strategic Planning & Alignment	The organization's strategic plan is aligned with its financial resources and long-term fiscal sustainability goals.	Miebeth Bustillo-Booth, EdD, PMP (co-chair) Burl Battersby, Miriam Chitiga, PhD Eric Greer, EdD, Ben Holquist Rhonda Sample (co-chair), Amanda Schaefer
Capacity Building & Skill Development	Staff at all levels have the skills and knowledge necessary to contribute to fiscal sustainability.	Miebeth Bustillo-Booth, EdD, PMP Erica Ihrig, PhD, Nancy Kremer (co-chair) David Larsen, Ian Sherman, EdD Wendy Stewart, EdD (co-chair) Staci Whitehouse
Continuous Learning & Adaptation	The task force continuously learns and adapts its approach based on outcomes and feedback.	Craig Bush, Miebeth Bustillo-Booth, EdD, PMP George Frasier, Ben Holquist, Nancy Kremer John McCormick, Sharonne Navas Rhonda Sample, Lea Ann Simpson Janee Sommerfeld, Wendy Stewart, EdD



Leadership, Transparency & Budget Accountability

Leadership & Culture

Workgroup Charge: Promote a culture where leaders at all levels at the college champion fiscal responsibility, modeling it in their decisions and resource allocation.

The workgroup focuses on building transparency and trust around fiscal realities. The team established community agreements, prioritized communication strategies, and identified critical gaps in financial reporting. Their work centers on creating accessible ways to share fiscal information—developing a fiscal progress dashboard, exploring project management tools, and planning budget education resources

Fall 2025: The primary deliverable is a prototype fiscal progress dashboard tracking savings goals and departmental contributions, supported by a communication plan. The team is testing report structures and aligning them with existing budget tools for consistency and accessibility. The dashboard provides regular, easy-to-read updates to foster accountability and counter perceptions of inequity. A draft has been submitted for executive review.

Winter and Spring 2026: The workgroup plans to finalize and deploy a dashboard that aligns with current reporting realities in the Business Office. Additional priorities include creating leadership development content, implementing trust-building initiatives, and establishing transition support plans to help the college navigate fiscal changes effectively.

Budget Transparency & Accountability

Workgroup Charge: Support a budget process that is transparent, accessible, and easily understood by all stakeholders.

The workgroup's first major task was managing the college's audit and financial analysis procurement—critical for building transparency. After reviewing initial proposals, the team revised the scope based on faculty and staff feedback, then guided vendor selection and contract finalization, now underway.

As the financial analysis progresses, the workgroup pivots to making budget development more transparent and accessible. They're outlining improvements and longer-term goals to help the campus community understand and participate in the budget process.

Fall 2025: Recommendations for communicating budget development timelines and implementing support structures at the department and division level, including documenting existing budget processes and identifying resource needs.

Winter 2026: Support executive leadership during budget development and document pain points throughout the process.

Spring 2026: Review gathered information on departmental processes, identify priority areas for intervention, and develop recommendations for improved budget management practices.



Strategic Planning & Operational Excellence

The Strategic Planning workgroup focuses on long-term sustainability by aligning the strategic plan with financial resources, guiding strategic planning through forecasting, scenario planning, and clear fiscal metrics. The Operational Efficiency team maximizes organizational impact by systematically streamlining operations and optimizing resources through process improvements, technology adoption, and data-driven decision-making. Together, these efforts position Green River College to operate more effectively and sustainably.



Strategic Planning & Alignment

Workgroup Charge: Provide advisory and technical support to align the strategic plan with financial resources and long-term fiscal sustainability goals while guiding the "New Beginnings" transition phase.

Fall 2025:

- Established weekly meeting rhythm and revised charter
- Conducted two in-person brainstorming workshops
- Developed strategic alignment gaps analysis
- Developing framework for integrating financial considerations into strategic planning

Winter and Spring 2026: Develop guidelines with RAA (Responsible, Accountable, Authority) definitions, long-term financial forecasts, performance metrics and dashboards, scenario planning models, and communication plans for celebrating success.



Operational Efficiency & Resource Optimization

Workgroup Charge: Identify and implement opportunities to optimize college operations and resource utilization for improved fiscal sustainability.

Fall 2025:

- Developed comprehensive project management tracking tool
- Created evaluation rubric and submission templates
- Established framework to guide implementation
- Discussed broader taskforce operational structures

Winter 2026: Evaluate water service and water bottle filling stations across all campuses, utilizing a data-based framework and criteria-based assessment tools.

Spring 2026: Identify collegewide operations (e.g., waste/recycling setup, P-card protocols, food form usage, and printing systems) to maximize institutional efficiency and effectiveness.



Capacity Building & Skill Development

Workgroup Charge: Promote skill and knowledge development among employees at all levels to support fiscal sustainability.

The Capacity Building & Skill Development Workgroup uses a listening-first approach to enhance financial literacy. It is prioritizing a needs assessment via focus groups to accurately identify budget knowledge gaps before developing any training materials.

Spring & Fall 2025

01

Assessment Method Determination

Determined method to assess baseline knowledge and skills. Initially considered a campuswide survey but recognized that survey fatigue would make this a less optimal method.

02

Focus Group Decision

Focus groups were chosen for the assessment method, structured by constituent groups (staff, faculty, and administration) with 5-6 participants in 50-minute sessions.

03

Planning & Question Development

Created a grid to chart constituent groups and possible participants. Developed draft questions: Customized around categories of knowledge for each constituent group.

04

Resource Identification & Gap Analysis

Assessed current training and resource offerings. Consulted Budget Office experts to gain a deeper understanding of offerings and identify training gaps.

Winter 2026

Conduct focus groups and gather crucial feedback from the February All Managers meeting on the budget. Following this, CBSD will analyze the collected data to effectively define the necessary curriculum requirements

Spring 2026

Share feedback with all FSTF Workgroups to inform the development of new and modified training materials. These resources will be created in collaboration with the Business and HR offices and delivered through diverse channels, including Gatonet, Manager/IC meetings, in-service sessions, and dedicated weekly Teams/Canvas drop-in support.



Continuous Learning & Adaptation

Group Charge: To promote the establishment and implementation of systems, structures, and measures at all levels of the college to support the ongoing review, refinement, and continuous improvement of policies, procedures, and processes, supporting alignment with fiscal sustainability goals.

“[T]ransition always starts with an ending. To become something else, you have to stop being what you are now; to start doing things a new way, you have to end the way you are doing them now; and to develop a new attitude or outlook, you have to let go of the old.”

~William Bridges, *Transitions: Making Sense of Life's Changes*

The Continuous Learning & Adaptation workgroup, made up of the FSTF leads and co-chairs, coordinates all task force efforts, ensuring everything stays aligned and effective across the institution. Their primary charge is to build the systems and structures we need for ongoing review, refinement, and continuous improvement of our policies, procedures, and processes. The workgroup's value lies in creating a framework that doesn't just react to change – it actively drives positive institutional evolution while keeping all efforts aligned with our fiscal sustainability goals.

Key Tasks

- Develop an assessment framework to evaluate the current state of fiscal sustainability within the college
- Establish processes for the regular review and refinement of policies, procedures, and processes
- Implement continuous improvement methodologies (e.g., PDCA cycle) to drive ongoing enhancement of practices
- Create a dynamic action plan that allows for adjustments and adaptations based on evaluation and changing circumstances

Example Deliverables

- Assessment framework and tools for evaluating fiscal sustainability
- Baseline assessment report documenting the current state of policies, procedures, and processes
- Implementation plan for continuous improvement methodologies, including training materials
- Monitoring and evaluation framework with key performance indicators (KPIs) and reporting mechanisms
- Communication and feedback mechanisms to support ongoing improvement

***The Fiscal Compass* Newsletter will issue quarterly reports.**