

APPROVED MINUTES

COCHISE COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT GOVERNING BOARD REGULAR MEETING

**Tuesday, September 9, 2025
Sierra Vista Campus
HR Building 301 - Board Room
6:00 PM.**

1. GENERAL FUNCTIONS

1.01 Call to Order

Mr. Hudgins, Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

Board Members Present:

Mr. David DiPeso
Mr. Mark Farr
Mr. Don Hudgins
Mr. Steve Leeder
Ms. Stephanie Money

1.02 Pledge of Allegiance

Ms. Money led the Pledge of Allegiance.

1.03 Adoption of Agenda

The administration requested that the agenda be approved, with the modifications to replace agenda item 2.02 - Placeholder – Non-Exempt Staff Appointment for the Action item placed on the dais to hire Mayra Escarcega, Administrative Assistant for Liberal Arts. With no additional modifications, the agenda was approved.

Mr. DiPeso moved, and Ms. Money seconded a motion to approve the agenda as posted. With no further discussion, the Board unanimously approved, with Mr. Hudgins, Mr. DiPeso, Mr. Farr, Mr. Leeder, and Ms. Money all voting aye.

1.04 Citizens' In-Person Interim

There were no requests to address the Board.

1.05 Standing Reports

1.05.1 Representative to the Arizona Association of Community College Trustees

Mr. Leeder, AACCT Representative, provided an update from the AC4/AACCT Retreat; topics included:

- Excellent event, very informative
- Nick Ponder, AC4 lobbyist, provided a good report on the Legislative agenda
- Bylaws and Strategic Plan discussion – nothing new, only slight modifications.
- Mr. Hudgins asked if there was discussion regarding allowing new trustees to attend; he made a concession to the bylaws to allow Mr. Leeder to attend.

1.05.2 Senate

The Governing Board reviewed the August 2025 Senate Report and accepted it as presented.

1.05.3 Student Government Association

The Student Government Association presented updates; highlights include:

SGA Officers:

- President: Nahrin Adams
 - Major: General Studies, Certificate for Dental Assistant
- Vice President: Esmeralda Sanchez
 - Major: Nursing
- Secretary: Sebastian Hodgins
 - Major: Social & Behavior Sciences
- Vice President-Public Relations: Andrea Lemmie
 - Major: Business
- Vice President-Student Programming: Isaiah James
 - Major: Cybersecurity

Fall 2025 Events:

- SGA Officer District-wide Training
- Campus Experience (new student orientation)
- Welcome-Back Socials
- Club Fair – connecting students with resources at the campus

Coming soon:

- Constitution Day – September 17 – in partnership with Strong Oak Historical Studies Club & DAR (Tombstone Chapter)
- Blood Drive – September 18 – SGA teams up with the American Red Cross to check in donors and support lifesaving efforts
- Hispanic Heritage Month – October 8 – Events on both campuses to honor Latino culture and contributions on both campuses

2025-2026 Goals:

- Expand SGA awareness and visibility
- Evaluate student programming to ensure quality and better serve students

Ongoing Goals:

- Foster a safe, inclusive, and supportive environment through student advocacy and engagement

Mr. Hudgins thanked the students for their presentation and all they do for the students.

1.05.4 College President

Dr. Perey provided updates to the Governing Board; highlights included: The AC4/AACCT Retreat had a great presentation from Nick Ponder regarding legislation. The college also works closely with Michael Racy when it comes to legislation.

Legislative Update:

- Economic Conditions
 - Sales tax collections are growing at their lowest rate since 2011, falling short of JLBC forecasts.
 - Corporate income tax collections are also down, though revenues remain slightly ahead of the previously enacted budget.
- Judicial and Fiscal Pressures
 - A Superior Court ruling found that the Legislature failed to adequately fund school facilities.
 - The “Big Beautiful Bill” requires increased state spending, including on SNAP, further tightening fiscal capacity.
- Political Priorities
 - Republican leaders are pursuing a constitutional amendment to enshrine Empowerment Scholarship Accounts (ESAs). They are also proposing a \$4,000 across-the-board teacher pay increase, modeled on Arkansas legislation, without adjustments for metro vs. rural salary differences.
 - Democratic leaders are advocating for a “clean” renewal of Proposition 123 and opposing ESA constitutional entrenchment. Their teacher pay proposals are still being refined but are expected to emphasize proportionality based on regional salary conditions.
- While fiscal and political challenges remain, community colleges continue to demonstrate strong value and relevance in legislative discussions. The secured funding for adult education, workforce pipelines, and the promise program strengthens the ability to serve students and communities, with advocacy going into 2026.
- Federal, we continue to monitor changes brought about by the big, beautiful bill. In addition, there are two newer developments from the federal level:
 - International student restrictions, and (HSI) Hispanic-serving institutions designations. Colleges that serve 25% or more Hispanic students can receive Title V grant funds; Cochise College does not currently receive grant funds. A letter given to Congressman Ciscomani’s assistant to give to him regarding the college’s support for HSI recognition.
 - New Federal Restrictions on International Students
 - Key Developments:
 - Proposed 4-Year Cap on Student Visas (F-1/J-1): The Department of Homeland Security plans to limit international students’ legal stays in the U.S. to a maximum of four years—whichever comes first: the actual program length or the cap. Extensions after that would require additional DHS approval. Critics warn it could force students into “a sea of administrative delays” and deter applicants, especially those pursuing extended-degree programs.
 - Expanded Grounds for Visa Revocation: The federal government broadened the criteria under which student visas can be canceled—even for seemingly minor infractions like dropped charges or traffic violations. Revoked visas now equate to immediate removal from SEVIS (Student and Exchange Visitor Information System), sparking legal pushback over the lack of due process.

Facilities Update:

District

- Facility Condition Assessment (FCA) – Gordian Group
 - Data Development phase continues; Facilities and Gordian are coordinating priority asset updates prior to data qualification and acceptance
 - Deliverable phase planned to begin the first week in October

DC

- City of Douglas Wellsite
 - Property ownership transfer complete
 - The College, City of Douglas, and Customs & Border Protection are coordinating the relocation of the surveillance tower
 - Wellsite development start date is under review
- Asphalt Milling Road Improvements
 - Access road between Truck Entrance and Parking Lot A is completed
- Welcome Center Turnabout/Parking Lot A Improvements
 - On-site pre-construction meeting held with KE&G
 - Estimated start date is the week of 8 September, weather dependent
 - Use of the campus main entrance is to be maintained using traffic control
 - Expected project completion by the first week in November
- AdultEd (400) Renovation/Courtyard Drainage Improvements
 - Building construction drawings completed
 - Obtaining quotes for contracted work (Roof Replacement, HVAC Installation, Storefront Entrances, Fire Alarm System)
 - Interior build back on hold until exterior renovations are completed
 - Stormwater drainage improvements to take place concurrently with build back
 - Depending on contracted work schedules and fire system permitting, the project could potentially be completed by mid-December.
- General Classrooms (700)
 - minor renovation of existing offices, and classroom conversion to meeting rooms

SVC

- Library Barista Café (900)
 - Project completed and passed the County Health Department Inspection
- Campus Services Building (2600)
 - Electrical system installation continues
 - Interior finishes and furniture installation in progress
 - Move-in tentatively planned to start last week in September

DTC

- Flight/Police Cruiser Simulators
 - Police Cruiser simulators installed and operational
 - Helicopter Flight Simulator delivery date TBD

Initiative Update:

Community Forums:

- Last week, Cochise College hosted a Community Workforce Forum and Listening Session at the Willcox Center. The event brought together City of Willcox leadership and major local employers to discuss regional workforce needs and opportunities.

- As a result of the feedback received, the College will begin hosting monthly “Cochise College in the Community” events in Willcox and will expand training opportunities aligned with employer needs.
- The College will host similar events at the Benson Center on September 25th to continue gathering insights and strengthening community partnerships.

Workforce Development:

- Continued collaboration with the City of Benson and City of Sierra Vista to address workforce gaps in the water utilities sector.
 - A water distribution Grade 1 & 2 “Boot Camp” with testing scheduled at the Benson Center is planned for January 2026
 - An ADEQ Math Bootcamp is planned for October 2025
 - A potential ADEQ Water Distribution or Wastewater Operator Course in June 2026.
- In response to workforce recommendations from Hensel Phelps, Cullen and his team are also developing a bilingual blueprint reading course. This program will increase access for Spanish-speaking students and help meet regional demand for skilled construction professionals.

Nursing & Allied Health:

- Discussions were held with TMC Rincon, Benson Hospital, and Willcox Hospital to explore collaborative efforts in healthcare education and workforce development.
 - The goal is to create meaningful pathways for Cochise College students while supporting local healthcare workforce needs.

Gunnison Copper Mine Apprenticeship Program:

- Development of the Industrial Maintenance Mechanic Apprenticeship Program with Gunnison Copper Mine is progressing well.
 - An initial curriculum design, including the designated career path, CIP/SOC codes, and O-Net numbers, has been submitted. The College is currently awaiting state approval to officially launch the program and begin student enrollment.

Arizona G&T/SSVEC Apprenticeship Program:

- The College remains in a holding pattern for the launch of the Arizona G&T and SSVEC apprenticeship program, due to federal grant funding delays associated with the transition in presidential administration at the national level.

General Comments:

Community Engagements:

- Aug 14 – KBRP Radio Interview
- Aug 15 – Southern Arizona Hispanic Chamber Mixer
- Aug 21-22 – AC4/AACCT Retreat in Flag.
- Aug 28 – SASTFA Mini Retreat at PCC
- Sept 2 – Meeting with Rural Hospitals & Shaun Phillips (Tuition Reimbursement)
- Sept 4 – Dual Enrollment Coalition Meeting
- Sept 5 – Groundbreaking for Douglas Port of Entry
- Sept 9 – Good Morning Sierra Vista
- Sept 9 – Board Meeting - SV

Upcoming Events

- Sept 12 – Mexican Independence Day - Consulate
- Sept 15 – Presenting to Rotary Club (noon)
- Sept 17 – AZ State Board of Nursing Visit
- Sept 19 – Investiture for Dr. Perey (SV Community Room @ 4 pm)
- Sept 24 – Caterpillar Foundation Advisory Meeting
- Sept 24-25 – AC4 Meeting & Aspen Leadership Program Kickoff Meeting
- Sept 26 – Hosting tour of Police Academy and Simulation Lab for Pima CC
- Sept 30 – Board Retreat SV Boardroom at 9 am
- Oct. 3-10 – Annual Leave
- Oct. 13 – College Closed (Columbus/indigenous people's day)
- Oct 13-15 – Arizona Community College Administrator Conference (Pima)
- Oct. 14 – Regular Board meeting on Douglas Campus
- Oct. 21-25 – ACCT Leadership Congress (New Orleans)

1.05.5 Monthly Financial Report – August 2025

The Financial Report for August 2025 was presented and accepted as submitted.

1.05.6 Monthly Academic Progress Report

The Governing Board reviewed the Academic Progress Report regarding Center for Lifelong Learning (CLL) updates.

2. NEW BUSINESS *

2.01 Consent Agenda *

The following items were approved:

- 2.01.1 * Non-Exempt Staff; Appointment (*Esteban Liera, Building Maintenance / HVAC Technician, Douglas Campus*)
- 2.01.2 * Exempt Staff; Appointment (*Heather Gijanto, Director of Testing, Sierra Vista Campus*)
- 2.01.3 * Exempt Staff; Appointment (*Joseph McGeachy, System Administrator, Sierra Vista Campus*)
- 2.01.4 * Non-Exempt Staff; Resignation (*Diego Iglesias, Facility Services Technician, Sierra Vista Campus*)
- 2.01.5 * Exempt Staff; Separation (*Dr. Vivian Miranda-Wendelken, Director of Advising and Career Services, Sierra Vista Campus*)
- 2.01.6 * Faculty; Retirement (*Lisa Reed, Instructor of Biology, Douglas Campus*)
- 2.01.7 * Acceptance of Minutes for August 12, 2025 – Regular Meeting

Mr. DiPeso moved, and Ms. Money seconded a motion to approve the Consent Agenda, with no further discussion. The Governing Board unanimously approved, with members Don Hudgins, David DiPeso, Stephanie Money, Steve Leeder, and Mark Farr all voting aye. **MOTION CARRIED.**

***Introductions of new employees ***

Mr. Wick Lewis, Director of Human Resources, introduced Martin Versluis, Educational Technologist; Toby Scott, Director of Workforce Development; Brian Stover, Chief Information Officer; and Hadassah Smith, Learning Management System Manager.

2.02 Placeholder – Non-Exempt Staff Appointment – Administrative Assistant for Liberal Arts

The administration requested that the Governing Board adopt a motion to approve the hiring of the administration's recommended candidate.

Mr. DiPeso moved, and Mr. Leeder seconded a motion to approve the hiring of Mayra Escarcega, administrative assistant for Liberal Arts, with no further discussion. The Governing Board unanimously approved, with members Don Hudgins, David DiPeso, Stephanie Money, Steve Leeder, and Mark Farr all voting aye. **MOTION CARRIED.**

2.03 Revised Policy 303 President Succession – Second Read

Revised Policy 303 – President Succession was presented to the Board for a second read and approval.

Mr. DiPeso moved, and Mr. Leeder seconded a motion to approve Revised Policy 3030 – President Succession, with no further discussion. The Governing Board unanimously approved, with members Don Hudgins, David DiPeso, Stephanie Money, Steve Leeder, and Mark Farr all voting aye. **MOTION CARRIED.**

3. INFORMATION ITEMS

INFORMATION

3.01 Communications

- There were no new communications for the September board meeting.

3.02 Nursing and Allied Health Report

Dr. Beth Hill, Dean of Nursing and Allied Health, provided a Nursing and Allied Health Division update; highlights include:

Nursing, Director of Nursing, Dr. Melesa Ashline:

- Completions in 2024-2025:
 - CNA: 78 students (up from 21 in 2023-2024); 89.9% State Pass Rate; Retention – 89.7%
 - LPN: 12 graduates; 100% NCLEX pass rate; Retention – 70.6%
 - RN: 32 graduates; 100% NCLEX Rate; Retention – 37.9%
- Current Enrollments:
 - CNA: 32
 - LPN: 19
 - RN: 68 First Year Students and 69 Second Year Students

Allied Health: Director, Nickie Dannels:

- Medical Professions Completions in 2024-2025:
 - Medical Assistant (MA): 29 completed; 100% passed National Exam; Retention- 100%
 - Phlebotomy Technician: 21 completed; 95.2% passed NHA Exam; Retention – 90.5%
 - LEO Phlebotomy Technician: 11 completed; 100% passed
 - EKG Technician: 5 completed; 80% passed NHA Exam; Retention – 100%
 - Medical Billing and Coding: 13 completed; 100% passed NHA Exam; Retention – 91.6%
- Behavioral Health: 12 BHSB; 18 BHSA
- Medical Professions Current Enrollment:

- Medical Assistant (MA): 61 (4 are Dual-enrollment (DE) students)
- Medical Billing and Coding: 20
- EKG Technician: 12 traditional; 32 DE High School Students (second eight weeks)
- Phlebotomy Technician: 27; added additional section

Emergency Medical Services: Paramedic and EMT Programs

- Eric Bailey, AAS-PMD, CEP, Coordinator and Lead Instructor
- Dr. Jessica Fontes began in July as the new Medical Director
- Gus Cantu, AAS-PMD, CEP, full-time faculty
- 2024-2025 Outcomes:
 - EMT: 54 students; 65% retention; 90% passed National Registry
 - Paramedic: 8 passed; 72% retention; 88% passed National Registry
- Current Cohorts
 - EMT: 42
 - Paramedic: 14; largest cohort since pandemic

RN to BSN: Dr. Janet Neil, Coordinator

- Fall 2024 Cohort
 - 15 Full-time students
 - 4 part-time students
 - 76% retention rate
 - First 13 on track to be the first cohort to graduate in December
- Fall 2025
 - 8 full-time students
 - 3 part-time students
- Successes: Great student engagement; drops related to employment or personal reasons
- Areas to improve: Recruitment

Dental Assistant Program: Cherly Salcido-Engols

- Fall 2024
 - 8 students began, 7 completed (87.5% Retention Rate)
- Spring 2025
 - 12 students began, 7 completed (58.3% Retention Rate)
- 78.9% of those who completed (11 of 14) are employed in the dental field
- Current Enrollment
 - 12 new students and 4 students from Cohort 2 returning, 16 total
- Continuous Improvement Initiatives
 - Curriculum re-designed to place Infection Control before Clinical Procedures
 - Hired Lab Aids to assist in skill training

3.03 Technology Service Report

Dr. Brian Stover, Chief Information Officer, provided a Technology Service update; highlights include:

Accomplishment:

- Electronic Transcripts
 - Live August 1, 2025
 - 1,049 as of August 29, 2025
- Microsoft 365
 - Go-Live – all completed

- What's Next
 - Training sessions
 - Brown bag sessions for faculty and staff
 - Decommissioning of G-Suite to take place on January 5, 2026

Projects:

- Windows 11
 - Key Benefits
 - Enhanced Security
 - Smarter Productivity Tool
 - Optimized Performance
- Anthology
 - Go-Live
 - Finance, HR, Payroll (October 2025)
 - Student/Research CRM (June 2026)
 - Student & Faculty Portal
 - Build & configuration (ongoing)

Office of Technology Services:

- Chief Information Officer
 - User Support Services
 - Information Security
 - Project Management
 - ERP Systems
 - Infrastructure & Network Services

4. COMMENTS FROM GOVERNING BOARD MEMBERS

Mr. Hudgins turned the time over to Governing Board members to provide comments/share information.

- Mr. Hudgins
 - Thanked everyone for the great work they do for the college.

5. EXECUTIVE SESSION – Information Technology Security

- A. The Governing Board may choose to enter into executive session pursuant to A.R.S. §38-431-.03 (A) (9) - Discussions or consultations with designated representatives of the public body in order to discuss security plans, procedures, assessments, measures or systems relating to, or having an impact on, the security or safety of buildings, facilities, operations, critical infrastructure information, and information technology maintained by the public body. Records, documentation, notes, or other materials made by, or provided to, the representatives pursuant to this paragraph are confidential and exempt from public disclosure under this chapter and title 39, chapter 1.

5.01 Executive Session – Information Security Technology

ACTION

Robert Gibbs, Chief Information Security Officer, provided an update to the Governing Board on Cochise College Information Security.

Mr. Farr moved, and Mr. DiPeso seconded a motion to move into Executive Session for discussion regarding Information Technology Security. There was no further discussion. The Governing Board

unanimously approved, with David DiPeso, Don Hudgins, Steve Leeder, Mark Farr, and Stephanie Money all voting aye. **MOTION CARRIED.**

Mr. Hudgins recessed the regular meeting at 6:57 p.m., and the board moved into Executive Session at 7:02 p.m.

Mr. DiPeso moved, and Mr. Farr seconded a motion to close the Executive Session and resume the Regular Session. The Governing Board approved, with Mark Farr, David DiPeso, Don Hudgins, Steve Leeder, and Stephanie Money all voting aye. **MOTION CARRIED.**

Mr. Hudgins adjourned the Executive Session at 7:33 p.m. and reconvened the regular meeting at 7:36 p.m.

6. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Hudgins adjourned the meeting at 7:36 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

Crystal Wheeler, Executive Assistant, Office of the President

Mr. David DiPeso, Secretary of the Governing Board