

MEETING MINUTES
Arizona Western College
District Governing Board Meeting
Regular Meeting with Executive Session at 1:30 pm
Yuma Campus and Virtually
January 14, 2026

Board Members Present: Board President Dennis Booth and Board Secretary Olivia Zepeda, Maria Chavoya

Board Member present by phone, Zoom: Dr. Kenneth MacFarland and Brad Sale

Board Member Absent: None

Others Present within Meeting room: (21)

Dr. Daniel P. Corr, President

Ashley Herrington, Chief of Staff

Bryan Doak, Executive Vice President for Learning and Student Services

Dr. Reetika Dhawan, CEO of Entrepreneurial College

Czarina Gallegos, Vice President of Finance and Administrative Services

Kathy Ocampo, Vice President and CHRO

Lori Stofft, Vice President of Advancement

Jennifer Freedman, Executive Administrative Assistant

Johanna Megui, Workforce Assistant

Jonathon Whitley, Student of the Month

Dr. Emily Kerr, Faculty Senate Representative, Communications Faculty

Mandy Heil, Dean of Communications and Marketing

Noemi Barraza, Executive Admin Assistant

Onyeka Udodi, SGA President

2 SGA Officers

Scott Estes, Chief Information Officer

Stuart Gibson, Dean of Business

Dr. Nikki Hage, Dean of Students

Cindy Zavala, Director of Campus Life

Arminda Cordero, Administrative Assistant

Others Present virtually: (7)

Julia Howe, Karen Davila, Kimberly Trujillo, Michelle Struck, Nancy Ney, Sandra Rodriguez

Angel Madrigal

Community Members Present by Zoom: (1) LisaAnne Smith, Legal Counsel for the College

Community Members Present in Room: (5) Wellton Police Department Chief David Rodriguez, and four officers in support of LETA Cadet, Jonathon Whitley- Student of the Month

Call to Order: Board Chair Dennis Booth called the Regular Meeting to order at 1:35 am.

Adoption of Agenda: The agenda for January 14, 2026, meeting presented for approval.

Motion by Maria Chavoya, seconded by Olivia Zepeda

Final Resolution: Motion Carries

Yea: Dr. MacFarland, Brad Sale, Maria Chavoya, Olivia Zepeda, and Dennis Booth

Nay: None

Approval of Minutes: The Meeting Minutes for December 11, 2025, presented for approval.

Motion by Maria Chavoya, seconded by Olivia Zepeda

Final Resolution: Motion Carries

Yea: Dr. MacFarland, Brad Sale, Maria Chavoya, Olivia Zepeda, and Dennis Booth

Nay: None

District Governing Board Action Items

Election of Board Officers: 2026-2027 Board Officers.

Maria Chavoya nominated Dennis Booth for the role of Board Chair.

Maria Chavoya nominated Olivia Zepeda for the role of Board Secretary.

Maria Chavoya nominated Olivia Zepeda for the role of ACCT Representative.

Motion by Maria Chavoya for the nominated leadership slate. Seconded by Olivia Zepeda.

Final Resolution: Motion Carries

Yea: Dr. Kenneth MacFarland, Brad Sale, Maria Chavoya, Olivia Zepeda and Dennis Booth

Nay: None

Abstain: None

Olivia Zepeda nominated Maria Chavoya for the role of Arizona Association of Community College Trustees (AACCT) Board representative.

Motion by Olivia Zepeda for the nominated leadership slate. Seconded by Brad Sale.

Final Resolution: Motion Carries

Yea: Dr. Kenneth MacFarland, Brad Sale, Maria Chavoya, Olivia Zepeda and Dennis Booth

Nay: None

Abstain: None

Summary –

The District Governing Board is the publicly elected Governing Body of the five Districts representing La Paz and Yuma counties. The District Governing Board Leadership slate for 2026-2027 is:

Dennis Booth - Board Chair.

Olivia Zepeda - Board Secretary.

Maria Chavoya - Arizona Association of Community College Trustees (AACCT) Board representative.

Olivia Zepeda – Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT) Delegate

Call to the Audience: No one requested to speak or approached the call to the audience.

Action Items

Action Item #1 – Consideration to Accept Candidates for Exempt Positions, presented by Katheline Ocampo

Motion by Maria Chavoya seconded by Olivia Zepeda

Final Resolution: Motion Carries

Yea: Brad Sale, Dr. Kenneth MacFarland, Maria Chavoya, Olivia Zepeda, and Dennis Booth

Nay: None

Abstain: None

The **Board Approved** the Action Item as Presented.

Summary –

- Jesus Zavala Gerardo, Agriculture Laboratory Foreman (Transfer from Temporary Appointment)
- Isaac Albright, Acquisition and Collections Management Librarian
- Rebecca Cordero Torres, Professor of English

Action Item #2 –Consideration to Approve November 2025 Voucher presented by Czarina Gallegos

Motion by Olivia Zepeda, seconded by Maria Chavoya

Final Resolution: Motion Carries

Yea: Brad Sale, Dr. Kenneth MacFarland, Maria Chavoya, Olivia Zepeda, and Dennis Booth

Nay: None

Abstain: None

The **Board Approved** the Action Item as Presented.

Summary –

Executive Summary

The District maintains robust financial health, with a monthly operating cash balance of \$8,241,221 as of November 30, 2025, down 2.7% from \$9,002,101 in 2024. Revenues increased by 9%, while expenditures decreased by 8.2% compared to prior year. Dual enrollment and total credit hour enrollments have increased, positioning the District favorably for continued growth.

Fiscal Overview

Metrics	2025-2026	2024-2025	% Change
Actual Revenues	\$36,715,073	\$33,669,274	+9.0%
Actual Expenditures	\$28,483,631	\$31,023,427	-8.2%
Operating Cash Balance	\$8,241,221	\$9,002,101	-2.7%

Enrollment Trends

Enrollment Type	2025-2026	2024-2025	% Change
Total Credit Hours	90,751	78,623	+15.4%
Early College Credit Hours	18,232	14,842	+22.8%
Dual Enrollment Credit Hours	10,956	9,690	+13.1%

Closing Statement

The District's financial foundation remains strong, supported by rising revenues, disciplined spending, and growing student enrollment. Continued success will depend on strategic investments in infrastructure and student support services, sustained emphasis on dual enrollment, and prudent budgeting that keeps the District well positioned to serve both the community and its students.

Information Item #1– Informational Review – Purchases over \$50,000– Presented by Czarina Gallegos

Summary –

Since the Purchasing threshold increased from \$50,000 to \$250,000 per Procedure 337.1, the College presents purchases over \$50,000 to the next District Governing Board meeting for information. Due to storm damage, Desert Talon Contracting Inc will be doing repairs in the amount of \$51,874.00 to parking areas A & B including removal of existing asphalt, concrete curbs, and debris; installation of new concrete curbs, aggregate base course, and concrete in parking areas; construction of concrete spillway; grading of affected areas; and installation of rip rap for erosion control.

College Reports

Student Government Association, SGA President Onyeka Udodi.

The SGA President welcomed students across the District this week, distributing branded white ankle socks and engaging students to gather feedback on how SGA can continue to effectively serve the student body and the broader college community. Mr. Udodi was also recognized as one of two selected Student Speakers at the Spring 2026 College Town Hall welcome.

>> 1:55 pm Maria Chavoya stepped out of the meeting (Quorum retained with four Board Members in attendance)

Student of the Month, Jonathon Whitley

Jonathan Whitley was nominated by Alfonso Zavala, Director of the Law Enforcement Training Academy. In his remarks, Mr. Zavala shared that Jonathan exemplifies “exceptional academic achievement, professional dedication, and commitment to community service.” The nomination highlighted Jonathan’s commitment to education, having completed his Associate’s Degree while concurrently participating in the full-time police academy during the Fall semester—an accomplishment demonstrating remarkable discipline, resilience, and leadership.

A resident of Wellton and current recruit with the Wellton Police Department, Jonathan reflects AWC’s mission of transforming lives through education and partnerships, and serves as a strong example of the positive impact higher education has on individuals and the communities they serve. Wellton Chief of Police David Rodriguez attended the meeting and shared that the Wellton Police Department “won the lottery” in the kind of officer candidate Jonathan is, noting the consistently strong reports received throughout his training. Chief Rodriguez concluded by stating that Jonathan “will be a great officer in support of our town.”

Jonathan thanked the Board for their support and, when asked why he chose to join the Police Department, shared, “I see that as having the best way I can have a big impact within MY community.”

Faculty Senate Association, Dr. Emily Kerr, Faculty Senate Representative to the District Governing Board, presented the December and early January Faculty Senate update highlighting continued academic innovation, faculty scholarship, and community engagement.

President’s Reports

Budget Status for FY26, Presented by Dr. Daniel P. Corr and Czarina Gallegos

This report provides a mid-year snapshot of the Fiscal Year 2026 budget and reflects continued financial stability and disciplined fiscal management. As of mid-year, 49% of the total budget has been expended, with college operations running smoothly despite ongoing uncertainties related to healthcare costs, utility rate increases, and grant funding variability. The College continues to closely monitor expenditure and cash flow, maintaining a strong and stable cash position.

While the budget has absorbed fiscal impacts such as the loss of CAMP funding and a San Diego utility funding shortfall, these challenges have been mitigated through sustained fiscal oversight and strategic revenue growth. Revenues have increased through enrollment gains, with Fall enrollment up 10% and Spring enrollment up 4%. Additional revenue strength is reflected in partnership funding with Onvida and newly awarded grants, most notably the \$335,427.20 BuildItAZ Apprenticeship Initiative.

Guided by the Strategic Plan and its focus on a student-centered schedule, the College achieved operational efficiencies, including an 8% reduction in course sections while supporting a 10% increase in enrollment. Online enrollment increased by 30.7%, course fill rates improved to 25%, and overall student course success

rose to 74%, up from 73%. These outcomes reflect strong academic leadership, effective scheduling, and data-informed decision-making aligned with strategic priorities.

Looking ahead, rising healthcare costs and utility expenses—now increasing at three to four times the rate of inflation—remain key considerations. However, the College’s current cash balance remains strong, and institutional needs related to facilities and maintenance, including critical infrastructure such as Facility Improvements and air conditioning unit replacements, are being thoughtfully planned and prioritized.

Overall, the FY26 budget status reflects a strong record of fiscal stewardship, foregoing any tax increase, an S&P AA+ rating, Moody’s AAA rating, and a growing cash balance. Continued alignment with the Strategic Plan and community needs, under the leadership of the Governing Board and College administration, positions the institution well for sustained financial health and continued investment in student success.

>> Maria Chavoya rejoined the meeting at 2:31 pm [Quorum of all 5 retained].

Closing Items:

Good of the Order by Dr. Daniel P. Corr

Dr. Corr concluded the meeting by briefly recognizing Mr. Brad Sale for his recent receipt of the All-Arizona Superintendent’s Award.

Motion by Olivia Zepeda, Seconded by Maria Chavoya

Yea: Dr. Kenneth MacFarland, Brad Sale, Maria Chavoya, Olivia Zepeda, and Dennis Booth

Nay: None

Abstain: None

Recess Into Executive Session; Motion to Recess into Executive Session at 2:47 pm.

Executive Session Minutes following

IV. Recess to Executive Session

Call to Order at 2:55 pm by Dennis Booth

Executive Session Meeting – Boardroom and Virtual meeting room closed to the public.

Board Members Present: Board Chair Dennis Booth, Board Secretary Olivia Zepeda, Maria Chavoya

Board Member present by phone, Zoom: Dr. Kenneth MacFarland and Brad Sale

Board Member Absent: None

Others Present within the Meeting Boardroom: (7)

Katheline Ocampo

Bryan Doak

Czarina Gallegos

Lori Stofft

Ashley Herrington

Dr. Daniel P. Corr

Jennifer Freedman

Others Present Virtually: Lisa Anne Smith

Executive Session pursuant to A.R.S. 38-431.03(A)(3) (discussion or consultation for legal advice with the attorney or attorneys of the public body): Legal advice and training regarding the Open Meeting Law.

Discussion

[REDACTED]

No Formal action taken in the session.

Adjourn from Executive Session at 3:54 pm.

>> Resume Regular Meeting at 3:55 pm <<

Motion to Resume Regular Meeting by Dr. MacFarland, Seconded by Maria Chavoya.

Next Meeting: The next meeting scheduled will be February 18, 2026, with the next Regular meeting conducted both in-person and via Zoom and at the San Luis Learning Center Campus.

Adjournment:

Motion to adjourn by Maria Chavoya, seconded by Olivia Zepeda.

Final Resolution: Motion Carries

Yea: Brad Sale, Dr. Kenneth MacFarland, Maria Chavoya, Olivia Zepeda, and Dennis Booth

Nay: None

Abstain: None

The Board **Approved** the next meeting date and final matters of the meeting.

Adjourn: The meeting matters were complete.

The meeting adjourned at 3:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ashley B. Herrington". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Ashley B Herrington, Recording Secretary