

MEETING MINUTES
Arizona Western College
District Governing Board Meeting
Regular Meeting with Executive Session 2:00 p.m.
Yuma Campus
October 15, 2026

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

Board Member present by phone, Zoom: None

Board Member Absent: Dr. Kenneth MacFarland

Others Present within Meeting room: (19)

Dr. Reetika Dhawan, President

Bryan Doak, EVP of Learning and Student Services

Katheline Ocampo, Vice President and CHRO

Scott Estes, Chief Information Officer

Lorraine Stofft, Vice President of Advancement and Executive Director of AWC Foundation

Czarina Gallegos, Vice President of Finance and Administrative Services

Susanna Zambrano, Dean of Regional Centers and Adult Education

Dr. Cris Gordon, Professor of Psychology

Dr. Joann Chang, Dean of Liberal Arts

Marlie Meza, Professor of Biology

Stuart Gibson, Dean of Business, Education, Social and Behavioral Sciences

Dr. Nikki Hage, Dean of Students

Jennifer Freedman, Executive Assistant

Johanna Megui, Office Coordinator

Dr. Michelle Sims, Professor of Economics

Dr. Sharla Rosenbaum, Professor of English

Onyeka Udodi, SGA President

Melanie Ruiz Lopez, SGA Vice President

Tamyia Coney, AWC Student of the Month

Others present via Zoom (2): Dr. Shadi Kilani, EVP of Entrepreneurial College; Lisa Anne Smith, College Counsel

Community Members Present in Room: (1) Family Member of Student of the Month

Call to Order: Board Chair Dennis Booth called the Regular Meeting to order at 2:01 p.m.

Adoption of Agenda: The Agenda for the October 15, 2026 meeting was presented for approval.

Motion by Maria Chavoya, seconded by Olivia Zepeda

Final Resolution: Motion Carries

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

Nay: None

Abstain: None

Approval of Minutes: The Meeting Minutes for the September 14, 2026 Regular Meeting were presented for approval.

Motion by Brad Sale, seconded by Olivia Zepeda

Final Resolution: Motion Carries

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

Nay: None

Abstain: None

Selection of Voting Delegate for Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT) October 2026 Leadership Congress:

Olivia Zepeda nominated Dr. Kenneth MacFarland as the Voting Delegate and Maria Chavoya as the alternate Voting Delegate. No other nominations were made.

Motion by Maria Chavoya, seconded by Dennis Booth

Final Resolution: Approved

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

Nay: None

Abstain: None

Call to the Audience:

N/A

College Reports:

Student Government Association: SGA President Onyeka Udodi and Vice President Melanie Ruiz Lopez provided an update on student engagement initiatives. The student belonging survey launched on October 14, with a goal of 1,000 responses and more than 250 responses received on the first day. Students who participate are entered into a drawing for a \$500 tuition award.

SGA reported ongoing collaboration with district leadership, including regular meetings with Dr. Reetika Dhawan. The organization also noted the proposal of new student clubs and the re-chartering of existing clubs.

Additional updates included successful completion of election logic and accuracy testing at the Yuma campus, participation in reviewing Innovation Fund proposals with Professor Snyder, and plans for SGA to assist with implementation of approved projects.

SGA expressed appreciation for the opportunity to provide monthly updates and remain engaged in supporting student success initiatives.

Faculty Senate Association: Dr. Michelle Sims, Faculty Senate Representative to the District Governing Board, provided an update on faculty and student achievements across the district. Highlights included presentations by Dr. Monica Ketchum-Cárdenas at the HSI Summit and student participation in the NSF BUZZ Project. Faculty and student accomplishments were also recognized in the arts, healthcare, nursing, and career and technical education programs.

Additional accomplishments included community mural projects led by Galen Smith, media recognition of Professor Giovanni Ferreira's theater program, Arizona Transfer initiatives facilitated by Scott Donnelly, and workshops led by faculty members Yeomans, Sims, Andaverde, and Budak. Updates were also shared on the Parker Welding Lab, healthcare program open house events, and entrepreneurial pitches presented by faculty at the recent SBDC Pitch Competition.

Athletics highlights included Coach Chandler 200th career volleyball victory, Women's Soccer achieving a No. 1 ranking, and Men's Soccer earning a No. 5 ranking. Dr. Sims also noted the current Fine Arts Faculty Exhibit and recognized David Kern as a finalist in a poetry contest.

The report concluded with recognition of community service efforts by nursing faculty and students and highlighted Dr. Usha Pedireddi as the September Faculty Showcase honoree.

Student of the Month: Dr. Sharla Rosenbaum, Professor of English, recognized Tamyia Coney as Student of the Month. Tamyia was commended for her leadership in the classroom, preparedness, positive attitude, determination, humility, and willingness to ask thoughtful questions that encourage learning and discussion among her peers.

Tamyia thanked the Board, faculty, and staff for their support and shared her goal of pursuing a career in electrical engineering.

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

Motion by Maria Chavoya, seconded by Brad Sale

Final Resolution: Motion Carries

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

Nay: None

Abstain: None

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

Summary –

- Andrea Saldaña, Graphic Designer
- Diego Arciniega, Manufacturing Training Director
- Hannah Newton, Workforce Specialist
- Maya Alalou, Administrative/Grants Coordinator
- Sivasankar Kunapuli, Project Director of Manufacturing Business and Automation Accelerator

Action Item #2 – Consideration to Renew the Intergovernmental Agreement with the Yuma Education Consortium, presented by Czarina Gallegos

Motion by Maria Chavoya, seconded by Olivia Zepeda

Final Resolution: Motion Carries

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

Nay: None

Abstain: None

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

Summary –

Yuma Education Consortium is seeking renewal of the three (3) year Intergovernmental Agreement for

Educational Resources Cost Sharing. This Agreement, between Arizona Western College, Yuma Elementary School District No. 1, Yuma Union High School District No. 70 and Arizona Board of Regents for and on behalf of Northern Arizona University, aims to promote the efficient and maximal use of available educational resources through the pooling and sharing of common and complementary resources of each institution, including facilities, personnel, property, and fiscal resources. Seeking approval for this three (3) year Intergovernmental Agreement, retroactive to July 1, 2026 through June 30, 2029.

Ms. Gallegos shared that the College has two voting members in the Consortium and can withdraw at any time.

Action Item #3 – Consideration to Renew the Intergovernmental Agreement with the Yuma Education Transportation Consortium, presented by Czarina Gallegos

Motion by Olivia Zepeda, seconded by Maria Chavoya

Final Resolution: Motion Carries

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

Nay: None

Abstain: None

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

Summary -

Yuma Education Transportation Consortium is seeking renewal of the three (3) year Intergovernmental Agreement for Transportation Services. This Agreement, between Arizona Western College, Yuma Elementary School District No. 1, Yuma Union High School District No. 70 and Arizona Board of Regents for and on behalf of Northern Arizona University, aims to coordinate and provide planned transportation for students. Seeking approval for this three (3) year Intergovernmental Agreement, retroactive to July 1, 2026 through June 30, 2029.

Action Item #4 – Consideration to Approve the Ancillary Affiliation Agreement between Yuma Regional Medical Center and Arizona Western College, presented by Czarina Gallegos

Motion by Maria Chavoya, seconded by Brad Sale

Final Resolution: Motion Carries

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

Nay: None

Abstain: None

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

Summary -

Yuma Regional Medical Center is a long-standing partner. As part of our continued collaboration, we work together to advance our shared mission of expanding access to high-quality medical care by leveraging shared programmatic resources that support the education and training of healthcare students. Seeking approval for this one-year Ancillary Affiliation Agreement, retroactive to October 1, 2026 through September 30, 2027, as part of the current Affiliation Agreement effective February 22, 2022.

Action Item #5 – Consideration to Approve Voucher (September 2026), presented by Czarina Gallegos

Motion by Olivia Zepeda, seconded by Maria Chavoya

Final Resolution: Motion Carries

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

Nay: None

Abstain: None

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

Summary –

Executive Summary

The District remains in a strong financial position, with operating and investment cash balances totaling \$52.6 million as of September 30, 2026, compared with \$53.4 million at September 30, 2025. Year-over-year financial results continue to be favorable, with revenues increasing 19.4% and expenditures decreasing 2.7%. Enrollment indicators also remain positive, including continued growth in early college and dual enrollment participation, as well as overall credit hours. Collectively, these results reflect continued fiscal stability and disciplined financial management while supporting the District's ability to meet current operational needs and plan for future priorities.

Fiscal Overview

Metrics	2026-2027	2025-2026	% Change
Actual Revenues	\$12,230,051	\$10,243,665	+19.4%
Actual Expenditures	\$16,252,290	\$16,698,216	- 2.7 %
Operating Cash Balance	\$9,726,234	\$11,899,925	-18.3%

Enrollment Trends

Enrollment Type	2026-2027	2025-2026	% Change
Total Credit Hours	97,711	89,123	+9.6%
Early College Credit Hours	23,178	17,887	+29.6%
Dual Enrollment Credit Hours	13,427	10,804	+24.3%

Closing Statement

The District remains focused on aligning financial resources with its highest institutional priorities while maintaining flexibility to respond to emerging needs. Ongoing efforts to support enrollment growth, strengthen academic and student services, and advance strategic investments in facilities and technology will continue to shape the District's financial planning. With careful monitoring of revenues and expenditures and a continued focus on effective resource utilization, the District is well positioned to support its strategic priorities and provide meaningful opportunities for student success.

Ms. Gallegos explained that the lower cash balance reflects the timing of the report. She expects next month's report to show a higher balance. Property tax revenues are expected this month.

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 at the next District Governing Board meeting for information.

Department	Vendor	Description	Cost	Fund Source
ITSS	CDW-G	Apple iMac for Graphic Design Classroom	\$ 53,063.00	General
ITSS	GovConnection	District-wide Microsoft License Renewal	193,834.00	General
ITSS	Dell Marketing LP	Employee & Student Laptops Refresh	235,086.00	General
ITSS	Softdocs	Etrieve Subscription Renewal 1-year	91,093.00	General

Ms. Gallegos briefly explained the individual expenses. There were no questions or discussion.

President's Reports

Enrollment Growth, Transfer Success, and Athletics Excellence, presented by Bryan Doak, Executive Vice President of Learning and Student Services.

Mr. Doak presented enrollment and student success data showing continued growth across the College. Total enrollment increased to 14,535 students (up 17%), while FTSE grew to 6,485 (up 12.5%). Early College enrollment increased to 4,358 students (up 11%), and Dual Credit enrollment reached 2,310 students (up 15%). AWC continues to lead Arizona community colleges in five- and ten-year FTSE and Dual Enrollment growth trends.

The College reported 2,053 unduplicated graduates (up 14%) and 3,449 credentials awarded, including 1,591 degrees and 1,858 certificates. Transfer data showed strong outcomes, with transfer students exceeding statewide averages in credit accumulation, minority representation, and graduation rates.

Institutional Research reported a 44% capture rate of local high school graduates, with San Luis High School achieving the highest rate at 69%. Growth in enrollment, credit hours, and FTSE is generating additional state funding.

Athletics reported strong academic and competitive performance, including a 3.469 overall GPA across seven teams and 30 student-athletes receiving NJCAA academic recognition. Updates were also provided on national team rankings and athletic achievements.

Closing Items:

Good of the Order by Dr. Reetika Dhawan

Dr. Dhawan provided updates on several institutional initiatives and recent accomplishments. She thanked Mr. Bryan Doak for his support of the Yuma Counselors' meetings and reported that the Schoolhouse Soirée raised approximately \$124,000 in support of students and programs.

Team 3 Workforce representatives will participate in a listening session in La Paz County to identify local workforce and program needs. Dr. Dhawan also announced upcoming presentations, including a Google webinar and presentations at the ACCT and HACU conferences alongside Governing Board members Maria Chavoya and Olivia Zepeda.

Dr. Dhawan recognized Executive Vice President Dr. Shadi Kilani for receiving NIST certification and thanked Dr. Kilani and Mr. Doak for their leadership in launching the Prison Education Program. Additional updates included the Governor's upcoming visit to the Wellton campus and Dr. Dhawan's participation in the ACCT India Lab program in December. She invited interested Governing Board members to attend using available ACCT grant funding.

Recess to Executive Session

Motion by Brad Sale, seconded by Maria Chavoya

Final Resolution: Motion Carries

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

Nay: None

Abstain: None

The Board recessed at 3:05 p.m.

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

>>*Executive Session Minutes following* <<

Executive Session called to order at 3:08 p.m. by Board Chair Dennis Booth

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

Board Member present by phone, Zoom: None

Board Member Absent: Dr. Kenneth MacFarland

Others Present within the Meeting Boardroom: (4)

Dr. Reetika Dhawan

Jennifer Freedman

Katheline Ocampo

Lorraine Stofft

Others Present Virtually (1): Lisa Anne Smith of DeConcini McDonald Yetwin & Lacy, P.C.

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): Updates on pending legal matters.

Discussion

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

No Formal action taken in the Executive Session.

Adjourn from Executive Session:

Motion made by Olivia Zepeda, seconded by Maria Chavoya

Final Resolution: Motion Carries

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

Nay: None

Abstain: None

Executive Session adjourned at 3:20 p.m.

>>Resume Regular Meeting at 3:20 p.m.<<

Action Item

Action on any items discussed in Executive Session allowable pursuant to A.R.S. 38-341.03(A)(3)

(1) Legal Matters

No action items are required at this time.

Dr. Dhawan mentioned an upcoming review of AWC Policies with the Board Members. More details to follow.

Next Meeting: The next meeting scheduled will be Monday, November 16, 2026 at 10:00 a.m. including a Regular Meeting in-person at the Yuma Campus.

Adjournment:

Motion to adjourn by Maria Chavoya, seconded by Olivia Zepeda

Final Resolution: Motion Carries

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

Nay: None

Abstain: None

The meeting adjourned at 3:22 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Jennifer Freedman

Executive Assistant to the President