



**MIRACOSTA COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT
BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

One Barnard Drive, Oceanside, CA

MINUTES OF REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING

**JULY 17, 2025
(APPROVED AUGUST 21, 2025)**

I. CALL TO ORDER

The Board of Trustees of the MiraCosta Community College District met in open session on Thursday, July 17, 2025, in the Boardroom on the Oceanside Campus. President Rick Cassar called the meeting to order at 4:05 p.m.

II. FLAG SALUTE / ROLL CALL

Board members present:

Rick Cassar	Frank Merchat
Raye Clendening	Anna Pedroza
Heather Conklin	Federico Caion Demaestri (student trustee)
Ann Crosbie	

Trustees Absent: Jacqueline Simon

Administrators present:

Superintendent/President Sunny Cooke
Assistant Superintendent/Vice Presidents:
Elba Gomez
Denée Pescarmona
Hayley Schwartzkopf
Alketa Wojcik

III. APPROVE MEETING MINUTES

A. Special/Closed Meeting of June 12, 2025

By motion of Trustee Merchat, seconded by Trustee Conklin, the board approved the minutes of the special/closed session meeting of June 12, 2025.

Vote: 6/0/0
Aye: Cassar, Clendening, Conklin, Crosbie, Merchat, Pedroza
Abstentions: None
Absent: Simon

B. Workshop of June 12, 2025

By motion of Trustee Clendening, seconded by Trustee Merchat, the board approved the minutes of the workshop of June 12, 2025.

Vote: 6/0/0
Aye: Cassar, Clendening, Conklin, Crosbie, Merchat, Pedroza
Abstentions: None
Absent: Simon

C. Special/Closed Meeting of June 26, 2025

D. Regular Business Meeting of June 26, 2025

By motion of Trustee Conklin, seconded by Trustee Merchat, the board approved the minutes of the special/closed session meeting and the regular business meeting of June 26, 2025.

Vote: 6/0/0

Aye: Cassar, Clendening, Conklin, Crosbie, Merchat, Pedroza

Abstentions: None

Absent: Simon

IV. PUBLIC COMMENT ON ITEMS ON AND NOT ON THE AGENDA

A community member and alum voiced their concern about ICE activities in the community and MiraCosta's support for Latinx students.

V. CHANGES IN AGENDA ORDER

None.

VI. PRESENTATIONS

A. Grants Update

Assistant Superintendents/Vice Presidents Wojcik and Pescarmona, joined by grant project directors (Maria-Isabel Rocha, Tom Tubon, Molly Ash), provided a status update on past and current awards from selected grants. The college pursues grants that align with our strategic goals, and they help to fuel and sustain innovation.

MiraCosta College has secured over \$40 million in state and federal grants in recent years to support student success, completion, and workforce development. These include funding for the BioScience Hub, two Title V (DHHS) awards, two sequential GEAR UP for College awards, a Department of Energy grant, and multiple California Apprenticeship Initiative awards.

The GEAR UP grant partnership with OUSD focuses on creating a college-going culture. Providing preparation for postsecondary education to GEAR UP students has already made a difference for our community by increasing the high school graduation rate, college attendance, and access to financial aid. Many partnerships have been created, students have visited multiple industries for career exploration and universities for academic exposure, and faculty have accessed additional professional development. This GEAR UP grant has also increased the rate of access to financial aid and the tools that lead to increased success in their post-secondary experience.

Because we have been able to demonstrate positive results with the past two GEAR UP grants, with approximately 3,000 students in our community who have benefitted from these grants and partnerships, we are hopeful that a third grant will be awarded.

The strategies of the Title V grant benefit Latinx and low-income students, enhancing and emphasizing career exploration, improving persistence, and creating cultural competence at the college. A second Title V grant started last year and is focused on enhancing our STEM and Bioscience pipeline.

A Title V dashboard was created by RPIE, enabling us to monitor key metrics, student outcomes, and identify areas needing improvement. A Sense of Belonging survey, last conducted two years ago, will be administered this year to hear directly from Latinx students about their needs so the District can plan to support them.

A number of Workforce Development grants were awarded to the college, including \$1M from the Department of Education and \$2,066,387 from the Department of Energy. Aerospace and energy storage partnerships are being developed to allow us to better serve our 7,500 TCI students each year. Our reliance on grants is imperative to fund these opportunities for students.

The college has secured several apprenticeship grants and has applied for many more. Apprenticeship awards are an attractive option for students, as they provide paid, on-the-job training, so that students can earn while they learn.

VII. CONSENT ITEMS

- A. Ratify Recommendations of Superintendent/President in Approving Personnel Actions**
- B. Approve Apprentice Salary Schedule**
- C. Ratify Memorandum of Understanding 25-06 with the Faculty Assembly (Reassigned Time)**
- D. Approve Employment Contract for Professional Expert**
- E. Approve Updated Course Agreement with Carlsbad Unified School District for the Fall 2025 Dual Enrollment Program**
- F. Fall 2025 Program Components for the Oceanside Unified School District CCAP Dual Enrollment Program**
- G. Approve Updated Course Agreement with San Dieguito Union High School District for the Fall 2025 Dual Enrollment Program**
- H. Approve Updated Course Agreement with Cathedral Catholic High School for the Fall 2025/Spring 2026 Dual Enrollment Program**
- I. Approval of Travel to Paris, France, August 1 – December 20, 2025, for Sabbatical Project**
- J. Approve Military Equipment Report**
- K. Approve Annual Apple Computer Replacement Purchases**
- L. Approve Annual Dell Computer Replacement Purchases**
- M. Approve Network and Telecommunications Hardware and Software Maintenance and Technical Support Services Agreement**
- N. Approve Purchase of Adobe Enterprise Term License Agreement (ETLA)**
- O. Ratify and Approve Contracts and Purchase Orders**

By motion of Trustee Merchat, seconded by Trustee Clendening, consent items A through O were approved.

Vote: 6/0/0

Aye: Cassar, Clendening, Conklin, Crosbie, Merchat, Pedroza

Abstentions: None

Absent: Simon

VIII. ACTION

- A. Adopt Resolution No. 01-25/26 Grant Easement to Dish Wireless, LLC (DISH) to Allow Installation of Electrical and Telecommunications Facilities for Adjacent City Property**

By motion of Trustee Merchat, seconded by Trustee Conklin the board adopted Resolution No. 01-25/26 Grant Easement to Dish Wireless, LLC (DISH) to allow installation of electrical and telecommunications facilities for adjacent city property as stated.

Vote: 6/0/0

Aye: Cassar, Clendening, Conklin, Crosbie, Merchat, Pedroza

Abstentions: None

Absent: Simon

B. Ratify the MiraCosta Community College District Confidential Employee Working Conditions Manual

By motion of Trustee Merchat, seconded by Trustee Conklin the board ratified the MiraCosta Community College District Confidential Employee Working Conditions Manual as stated.

Vote: 6/0/0

Aye: Cassar, Clendening, Conklin, Crosbie, Merchat, Pedroza

Abstentions: None

Absent: Simon

C. Approve Salary Schedule and Employment Contract Superintendent/President

By motion of Trustee Pedroza, seconded by Trustee Merchat the board approved the salary schedule and employment contract for the superintendent/president as presented.

Vote: 6/0/0

Aye: Cassar, Clendening, Conklin, Crosbie, Merchat, Pedroza

Abstentions: None

Absent: Simon

D. Approve Salary Schedule and Employment Contract for Assistant Superintendents/Vice Presidents, Vice President, Associate Vice President, and Chief Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, Accessibility Officer

By motion of Trustee Crosbie, seconded by Trustee Clendening the board approved the salary schedule and employment contract for the assistant superintendents/vice presidents, vice president, associate vice president, and chief inclusion, diversity, equity, accessibility officer as presented.

Vote: 6/0/0

Aye: Cassar, Clendening, Conklin, Crosbie, Merchat, Pedroza

Abstentions: None

Absent: Simon

IX. SECOND READING – BOARD POLICIES (ACTION REQUIRED)

A. Board Policy 4230 – Grading and Academic Record Symbols

By motion of Trustee Clendening, seconded by Trustee Pedroza, the board adopted Board Policy 4230 as presented.

Vote: 6/0/0

Aye: Cassar, Clendening, Conklin, Crosbie, Merchat, Pedroza

Abstentions: None

Absent: Simon

X. INFORMATION

A. Public Hearing: At or After 4:00 p.m. – Grant Easement to Dish Wireless, LLC (DISH) to Allow Installation of Electrical and Telecommunications Facilities for Adjacent City Property

A public hearing was opened at 4:52 pm, and no public comments were provided. The public hearing closed at 4:53 pm.

B. Report Update of Emergency Declaration and Emergency Actions for Sinkhole at the San Elijo Campus Main Roadway

An update was provided for information. The investigation phase has been completed and the problem – broken water pipe – identified. Excavation has begun, and the work could be completed within 30 days.

C. Report Update of Emergency Declaration and Emergency Actions for Water Leak in Building 4800 at Oceanside Campus

An update was provided for information. The water leak has been mitigated, and the classroom where the leak took place is now available for use.

XI. COLLEGE-RELATED REPORTS

A. Trustees Activities

Trustee Crosbie shared her engagement in the community and highlighted growing interest and concern around grant funding. As the school year approaches, she encouraged support for back-to-school initiatives and local backpack drives.

Trustee Pedroza expressed deep appreciation for serving on a board that respects the role of leadership. She emphasized that the Board's job is to support—not hinder—the important work of the college.

Trustee Conklin participated in Oceanside's Fourth of July Parade and ongoing community meetings addressing the presence of ICE. She is also closely monitoring state and federal budget updates.

Trustee Clendening participated in Independence Day festivities and thanked the Black Alliance for their support during recent events, including "The House: The '90s" program, which reflected on past student experiences.

Trustee Cassar reaffirmed the Board's supportive role and its respect for faculty and staff, noting that trustees are here to uplift—not micromanage—college leadership. He also shared his summer highlights, including a visit to the farmers market at the San Elijo Campus and a recent trip to Alaska.

B. Students

Student Trustee Federico Caion Demaestri reported the Student Government met on July 11 and is fully staffed with executive leaders, with workgroups and committees already setting their schedules. As most current leaders are expected to graduate by the end of the year, mentorship and succession planning are top priorities.

Two key goals for the year include increasing student engagement on campus and strengthening collaboration with the Student Senate for California Community Colleges (SSCCC). A student government retreat is scheduled for August 8 and will focus on strategy and planning. He also highlighted recent and upcoming student events: Welcome Fest at San Elijo (July 17), Welcome Fest at Oceanside (July 19), and the Student Leadership Conference (August 11), which will include sessions on campus involvement and statewide student leadership.

On a personal note, he announced he has submitted his candidacy, with Dr. Cooke's endorsement, to serve as the student trustee on the Community College League of California (CCLC) Board of Trustees. He is one of several candidates and will find out the results by mid-August. Additionally, he will attend his first SSCCC meeting in his official role as vice president of finance and plans to participate in the CCLC Annual Conference this November.

C. Classified Employees

Classified Senate (CS) President Carl Banks explained how the CS has been focused on onboarding new senators. In addition to meeting one-on-one with officers, a strategic retreat is scheduled for Tuesday, July 22, where CS leadership will outline objectives and priorities.

The CS is revamping its online portal to make it more user-friendly by streamlining content. Following the lead of an Academic Senate colleague, a monthly newsletter will be launched to share updates across governance groups and highlight the contributions of classified professionals.

Committee assignments for the new governance cycle are being finalized. A special acknowledgment was given to Immediate Past President Omar Jimenez, who is now serving as the Caring Campus coordinator, working with HR to support 27 classified professionals. Training sessions for classified professionals were held on July 11, with additional sessions scheduled for July 25 and August 8, the latter in collaboration with faculty and administrators.

Banks expressed gratitude for MiraCosta's continued emphasis on student care and support initiatives. On a personal note, he announced his election as Director of Government Relations for the statewide classified senate organization, a two-year term that began on July 1. In this role, he will represent classified professionals across California in matters of policy and regulation

D. Faculty

Academic President Curry Mitchell shared that faculty leadership, including representatives from the Academic Senate and Office of Instruction, attended the statewide Curriculum Institute, where they engaged with stakeholders from the Chancellor's Office, UC, and CSU systems. The event provided valuable insights into curriculum challenges and opportunities for collaboration across systems. While short on concrete solutions, the institute helped clarify statewide expectations and reaffirmed MiraCosta's commitment to ensuring that courses and programs articulate effectively for students. Faculty leaders returned with ideas to streamline curriculum processes and support articulation efforts.

The Senate also continues planning for fall, with the academic calendar vote on August 22 serving as the culmination of a two-year process. The Senate emphasized its responsibility to advise on the calendar, as part of its "10+1" purview. Other ongoing initiatives include planning Flex Week and weekly communication from our "Joyful Teacher" newsletter.

During the summer session, faculty are actively teaching and evaluating the evolving role of online education, especially in asynchronous environments. These conversations underscore both the promise and the challenge of remote learning, particularly for immigrant and mixed-status students. Reflections on experiences in hands-on classes, like printmaking, reinforced the value of tactile, analog learning, and problem solving involved in learning.

E. Assistant Superintendents/Vice Presidents

1. Instructional Services

Assistant Superintendent/Vice President Pescarmona submitted a written report. Additionally, she thanked the team that attended the Enrollment Management Academy this year. The work involves a Strategic Enrollment Management plan that will align with the upcoming Educational Futures Plan that Student Services

and Instructional Services are working on. She also thanked the team of MiraCostans that attended the Curriculum Institute.

Enrollment for fall is up about 6.5 percent in headcount and 5.5 percent in FTES. We are continuing to monitor enrollment and add sections where we know students will need them, especially in anticipation of Welcome Fest.

2. Student Services

Assistant Superintendent/Vice President Wojcik reported a total of 563 students have registered for the Welcome Fest on Saturday, July 19, on the Oceanside Campus. Designed to welcome and orient new students, the structured, full-day program will include Academic and Career Pathways (ACPs) leaders, counselors, and student service teams playing a critical role in outreach and preparation. A large, collaborative group of faculty, staff, and administrators contributed to planning this well-organized event. She expressed deep appreciation for the tremendous work behind this year's Welcome Fest efforts.

3. Administrative Services

Assistant Superintendent/Vice President Gomez reported Fiscal Services is actively preparing fiscal year-end reports in advance of the final budget presentation to the Board in September, and Purchasing has successfully closed out all FY 2024/25 purchase orders.

Summer construction remains on track, including projects such as the EV charging stations and the new building on the Oceanside Campus.

Facilities staff members are working diligently to ensure all campuses are ready for the start of the fall semester.

Information Technology Services collaborated with Human Resources to begin discussion of a new AI policy for the District.

The College Police Department will hold a swearing-in ceremony on August 7.

4. Human Resources

Assistant Superintendent/Vice President Schwartzkopf reported Human Resources received an Innovative Best Practices grant from the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office, which was used to produce a vibrant two-minute [recruitment video](#). This video reinforces the District's ongoing commitment to being a racially just campus. In addition, HR completed a refresh of an internal training video to align with updated practices.

To further support equitable hiring efforts, the department signed a contract with S360, an advertising agency that will help promote job postings online and across social media platforms, ensuring outreach to a broad and diverse audience.

On August 6, HR will welcome 11 new full-time faculty members during new hire orientation. The team also reminds all employees that open enrollment for benefits runs from August 8 through August 22.

F. Superintendent/President

Superintendent/President Cooke reported MiraCosta College continues to make significant strides in national recognition, recently being featured on the cover of the [Community College Journal](#) by the American Association of Community Colleges. The

publication cover showcased our Biotech Building alongside our accomplished graduating students. An article in the magazine highlighted our innovative bachelor's degree program and futures work.

Our institution remains committed to transparency, in this meeting that was displayed in the transparency and read out of changes in executive compensation. The Board expressed support of our executives during that discussion and overall the Board maintains unwavering support and appreciation for all employees who dedicate themselves to serving our student community.

In the current educational landscape, MiraCosta College is proactively addressing complex challenges stemming from federal and state policy shifts. We are closely monitoring potential impacts of federal budget cuts in San Diego County on the biotech and life sciences ecosystem, healthcare research funding, and educational support for diverse student populations. Despite ongoing policy challenges, we continue to defend state policies that protect educational access and maintain a strong stance supporting all students, regardless of their immigration status.

Looking ahead, we have exciting events on the horizon, including an upcoming dance performance this evening at the tennis courts and a police swearing-in ceremony in August. These events reflect our commitment to community engagement and the celebration of student and employee achievement.

XII. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

None.

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 5:52 p.m.

MINUTES APPROVAL:

Rick Cassar
President

Sunita V. Cooke, Ph.D.
Superintendent/President