



MIRACOSTA COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT BOARD OF TRUSTEES

MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING / WORKSHOP

NOVEMBER 7, 2024
(Approved December 19, 2024)

I. CALL TO ORDER

The Board of Trustees of the MiraCosta Community College District met in a regular meeting/workshop on Thursday, November 7, 2024, in the Community Room at the Community Learning Center. Vice President Clendening called the meeting to order at 4:05 p.m.

II. FLAG SALUTE / ROLL CALL

Board members present:

Raye Clendening
Heather Conklin
George McNeil

Frank Merchat
Anna Pedroza
Jacqueline Simon

Board members absent:
Rick Cassar

Administrators present:

Superintendent/President Sunny Cooke
Assistant Superintendent/Vice President Denée Pescarmona
Assistant Superintendent/Vice President Alketa Wojcik

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

Superintendent/President Cooke thanked the many folks who made it possible for MiraCosta's Oceanside Campus to be a polling place last week. She commended the welcoming and helpful nature of the polling workers who worked tirelessly to accommodate the record number of voters.

Dean John Makevich warmly welcomed the board to the CLC.

IV. CHANGES IN AGENDA ORDER

None.

V. WORKSHOP

A. Career Education Update: Focus on Healthcare Pathways

Dean Danielle Lauria, Associate Dean Ben Gamboa, and faculty members from the Medical Administrative Professional and Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) programs—Rich Dicker, Emily Mercuri, and Michelle Odum—shared insights into the evolving

landscape of healthcare education, focusing on the growing demand for skilled professionals, challenges in the sector, and new opportunities for career advancement. As California grapples with a significant shortage in its healthcare workforce, it is becoming increasingly difficult to meet the demand for trained professionals. The San Diego region alone is expected to see a 30 percent increase in healthcare job openings over the next decade. In response to this demand, MiraCosta College is dedicated to preparing students for entry-level positions in the healthcare field, equipping them with the skills necessary to thrive in a rapidly evolving industry.

Rich Dicker provided a detailed overview of the Medical Administrative Professional program, highlighting six certificates of achievement available to students. He proudly shared the impressive exam pass rates of MiraCosta's programs, which exceed national averages. For example, MiraCosta's Certified Clinical Medical Assistant (CCMA) cohorts boast a 93 percent pass rate, well above the national average of 76 percent. Similarly, the college's pass rate for the Certified Billing and Coding Specialist exam is 84 percent, compared to the national average of 77 percent. Additionally, 80 percent of Medical Assistant students are employed within 90 days of completing the program, showcasing the high demand for graduates in this field.

To address the need for more healthcare workers, MiraCosta has also established a dual enrollment pathway with Oceanside Unified School District (OUSD), allowing high school students to access medical assistant training and get a head start on their careers. Currently, 38 students are dual enrolled in these courses, which further expands access to high-quality healthcare education.

Emily Mercuri presented an overview of the Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) and Home Health Aide (HHA) programs. MiraCosta offers five CNA cohorts annually, with each cohort completing an eight-week program, leading to approximately 90 completions each year. Notably, MiraCosta students have achieved a perfect 100 percent pass rate on both the written and skills exams for CNA certification. This remarkable achievement is supported by grant funding that covers testing fees and other financial assistance to ensure students can complete their programs without additional financial barriers.

Michelle Odum, Program Director for the CNA and HHA programs, discussed employment trends in healthcare, highlighting the projected 25-50 percent growth in jobs over the next decade. This growth creates significant opportunities for career advancement, including the ability to "stack" credentials—acquiring multiple certifications to enhance employability and earnings potential. MiraCosta's strong reputation within the healthcare industry and with community partners further strengthens the value of its programs, providing students with valuable connections and a competitive edge in the job market.

Two former students shared their positive experiences with MiraCosta's programs. One student, who completed the CNA program, secured employment within one week of finishing the course and is now pursuing her RN (Registered Nurse) degree at MiraCosta. Both students highlighted the exceptional quality and reputation of MiraCosta's Nursing Program, emphasizing how the education and support they received were instrumental in their success.

As the demand for healthcare professionals continues to rise, MiraCosta College remains a vital resource for training the next generation of workers, offering students not only the technical skills they need but also the career pathways to grow and succeed in

the healthcare industry. Through innovative programs like dual enrollment, strong community partnerships, and a focus on career ladders, MiraCosta is positioning its graduates to thrive in one of the fastest-growing sectors of the economy.

B. Dual Enrollment Update

Dean Zhenya Lindstrom provided a comprehensive update on MiraCosta College's Dual Enrollment Program, highlighting key developments in state policy, program success, strategic planning, and the evolving opportunities for high school students. The presentation encompassed a broad range of topics, including recent state policy changes, access and success data, ongoing improvements, and the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead for the program's future.

A central feature of MiraCosta's dual enrollment offering is the Career and College Acceleration Pathway (CCAP), which provides structured pathways for high school students in the Oceanside Unified School District (OUSD). This pathway enables students to earn college credit while still in high school, offering a clear and supportive transition into higher education. MiraCosta also maintains dual enrollment agreements with Carlsbad Unified School District and San Dieguito Union High School District, further expanding access to college courses for local students.

The CCAP program has seen impressive growth in recent years. Participation has surged from 463 students in the 2021/22 academic year to 639 students in 2023/24. Notably, the program shows no signs of slowing down, with 458 students already enrolled for fall 2024. One of the exciting new initiatives is the development of a four-year biomanufacturing pathway with OUSD, which is set to launch in fall 2025. This pathway will provide students with specialized training and hands-on learning opportunities in a high-demand field. Additionally, Measure X grant funding from the City of Oceanside has enabled the launch of paid internships that offer both work experience and college credit, developed in collaboration with OUSD, MiraCosta faculty, the Career Center, Financial Aid Office, and local employers.

Lindstrom emphasized that dual enrollment serves as an excellent alternative to traditional Advanced Placement (AP) classes, which do not guarantee college credit and come with the added expense of AP exam fees. With dual enrollment, high school students can earn college credit at MiraCosta without paying enrollment fees. Furthermore, these dual enrollment courses have demonstrated even higher success rates than similar non-CCAP courses, thanks to the comprehensive support systems embedded in the program, including dedicated faculty and robust student services.

In addition to these updates, Lindstrom provided an overview of SB-1244, recent legislation that expands the scope of CCAP partnerships. The bill now allows existing CCAP agreements to be amended or new agreements to be established with a community college district outside of the primary community college's service area, provided certain criteria are met. This development opens new possibilities for cross-district collaboration and further extends access to higher education opportunities for high school students across a wider geographic area.

The growth and evolution of MiraCosta's dual enrollment program underscore the institution's commitment to increasing college access, supporting student success, and fostering workforce readiness. As the program continues to expand, it offers even more promising opportunities for high school students to engage in meaningful educational experiences that prepare them for both college and careers.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 6:10 p.m.

MINUTES APPROVAL:

Raye Clendening
Vice President

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