

NORTHERN New Mexico College



BOARD OF REGENTS SPECIAL MEETING

MINUTES

MAY 9, 2025

A Special Meeting of the Board of Regents of Northern New Mexico College was held on Friday, May 9, 2025, In Person and Via Zoom in the Board Room of Northern New Mexico College, Española. Campus. Regents Present in person and Viz Zoom: Michael A. Martin, Erica Velarde, Ruben Archuleta, Ron Lovato and Dolores Gurule.

Northern New Mexico College Staff Present: President Hector Balderas, JD, CFE, Theresa Storey, Chief Financial Officer/Compliance Officer, Matthew Baca, General Counsel, Scott Stokes, Chief Information Officer, Juan Gallegos, Windows System/Information Security Administrator, Vince Lithgow, Accountant III, Christian Gomez, Technical Trades Academic Advisor, Arin McKenna, Staff Writer/Reporter, Sondra Adams, Director, Financial Aid, Martin Shupla, Director of Library, Frank Loera, Director, Career Technical Education, Emma Hashman, Director, Admissions, Joseph Padilla, Instructor/Chair, Technical Trades, Evette Abeyta, Budget Director, Farjahan Shawon, Director of Teaching and Learning Center, Mandy Montoya, Women's Head Basketball Coach, Pátrice Trujillo, Health & Safety Manager and Amy Peña, Executive Office Director/Board Secretary.

Faculty Present: Margaret Zak, Melanie Colgan, Ellen Trabka, Sandra Rodriguez, Scott Braley

Others Present: Nicholas Atencio, John Ussery, Tim Crone, Jake Arnold, Barbara Campbell, Bruce Smith, Leo Valdez, Jasie Green, Student Senate President, Dolores Gurule, Roberta Orona Cordova.

Board President Balderas introduced Coach Mandy Montoya, Women's Head Basketball Coach to the Board of Regents and meeting attendees. She is a local, a superstar, one of our grow our own leaders. Coach Montoya stated this is a full circle moment. She left Peñasco being head coach, principal, whatever they needed her to do to come here and is excited to be back at Northern and to get the community involved as much as possible. Coach Montoya stated having her and Mike Dominguez will help to push the community involvement. They are pretty well known in the sports world and the community. She is excited to be back and will be in offices and around campus. President Balderas thanked Coach Montoya for joining Northern New Mexico College.

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Martin Called the meeting to order at 2:08PM

II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chair Martin entertained a motion to approve the agenda.

Regent Lovato moved to approve the agenda. Second – Regent Gurule. A roll call vote was taken. Chair Martin – yes, Regent Velarde – yes, Regent Archuleta – yes, Regent Lovato – yes, Regent Gurule – yes. Motion passed unanimously.

III. STAFF REPORTS

A. Provost & Vice President

1. Child Development Certificate

Matt Baca, General Counsel stated there are two certificate items from the Education Department that up for consideration today. They are in the packet under a single memo. The NNMC Teacher Education Program is seeking approval of two certificates one in child development and one in early childhood professional. The purpose of this program is to fulfill, to develop in an effort to address the importance of certifying students in a bilingual capacity and assisting childhood educators and therapeutic intervention to address folks who are either facing housing issues, or if their children are students who graduate with this certificate. You know students who graduate with this are our normal Northern students. They count towards our funding formula and so you know as the memo and the information in the packet indicates, the Education Department is hoping for approval on both. Dr. Rodriguez is here to answer questions for the Board of Regents. The recommendation is to approve both certificates. Mr. Baca stated Dr. Rodriguez is here to answer any substantive questions but the recommendation from the Faculty Senate, the Provost and the President is to approve both of these certificates.

Chair Martin asked Dr. Rodriguez to join the Board and add her expertise.

Dr. Rodriguez stated on both programs they are both subsets of the programs that we already have here at Northern that are accredited by State and by our national accrediting agency. They are both part of the AA for Early Childhood. The first 12 credits for the CDC the courses are sequential the first one 12 credits and the second one 29 credits. If students take them, they also apply them towards their AA and BA. It is a step program. The need for this program is at family centers and public schools. People now have to have these certificates. What we have had is requests from either the public schools or the county centers to have these certificates. All courses are approved, there is nothing different. We are offering an English and Spanish strand. We are also building a Spanish strand. We are going to do a dual language so students are getting more and more English as they move up in the program. The goal for this is they are then able to take the general ed courses so they can then get their AA or BA. To her knowledge there is no other institution doing this.

Chair Martin asked if there were any questions.

No questions from the Board of Regents.

Chair Martin asked if we should approve these separately or together. Mr. Baca stated his recommendation would be to take them one at a time.

Chair Martin entertained a motion to approve the child development certificate.

Regent Velarde moved to approve the Child Development Certificate. Second – Regent Lovato. A roll call vote was taken. Chair Martin – yes, Regent Velarde – yes, Regent Archuleta – yes, Regent Lovato – yes, Regent Gurule – yes. Motion passed unanimously.

2. Early Childhood Professional Certificate

Chair Martin entertained a motion to approve the Early Childhood Professional certificate.

Regent Velarde moved to approve the Early Childhood Professional Certificate. Second Regent Gurule. A roll call vote was taken. Chair Martin – yes, Regent Velarde – yes, Regent Archuleta – yes, Regent Lovato – yes, Regent Gurule – yes. Motion passed unanimously.

Chair Martin thanked Dr. Rodriguez and he thanked her for her patience and he knows we haven't had a meeting for two months. He really appreciates it.

3. Nursing & Health Sciences Fees

Mr. Baca stated the nursing department is asking the Board to allow the Nursing Department to increase the nursing fees by \$257.50. The department is going away from traditional hard textbooks and using ATI. The fees would allow full access to these learning.

Ms. Colgan stated she doesn't have a lot to add. We are hoping to adopt ACI to its fullest capacity. We adopted them for a couple of our classes and testing. As articulated in the justification memo, the department is going away from using AI, which is an online comprehensive learning program and so the request is that the fees would allow for full access to those learning resources to be offset by the students not having to purchase a traditional textbook. There's more detail in the justification, but that that's essentially the basis. And, as Mr. Baca understands, we should have some folks from the nursing department there to answer any, follow up questions that you all may have,

Chair Martin asked Chair Trabka to join the Board. Chair Trabka stated Melanie Colgan would be joining the Board.

Ms. Colgan stated she does not have to add a lot to add to what Mr. Baca said. We're hoping to adopt AI to its fullest capacity. We started in 2022 adopted AI for a couple of our classes, but also for our testing and we've had great success with that. That's when we started. Not that that's all because of ATI, but we do believe ATI is just a very high-quality product. It's very interactive, which the students seem to do well with. Instead of reading a traditional textbook, they now have different modules that they do, and within the modules they read a few paragraphs. They take a quiz. They read a few paragraphs. They watch a video. There's always something to engage the student as they're studying and we found that that really helps them to retain the information. It comes complete with all sorts of test times for not only students, but for faculty to build their exams, and it has all of our standardized testing that we use to ensure that our students are prepared for the NCLEX come the end of graduation so we're asking that we'd be allowed to raise our fees by that \$257.50 a semester to implement the entire package, and not just the piecemeal that we've had for the past couple of weeks. Ms. Colgan stood for questions from the Board of Regents.

Chair Martin asked if there are any questions. Regent Archuleta – no questions.

Mr. Baca stated he would like to add one thing, the major ask was for the program and the books and there is also an ask for the phlebotomy that would cover a background check and medical malpractice insurance. This is also in the ask.

Regent Lovato asked what ATI is. Ms. Colgan stated it is a learning platform. It is all online and digital and has a lot of resources in it and has information for students and has things for students who are visual learners. It also has the option of listening for students. It is just an interactive program that delivers our curriculum. It is updated on a regular basis and has current information.

Regent Lovato asked what a typical textbook cost. Ms. Colgan stated currently our students spend roughly \$700.00 for textbooks for an entire semester. This would get rid of that cost all together. Mr. Lovato stated he would like to make a comment and he supports this. As we make this easier and easier, and when students enter the workforce, there is a lack of work ethic. This is just something to keep in mind for the future. Ms. Colgan stated this came after a lot of debate among the faculty. They have learned over the years that they have to meet the students where they are. Everything is in just small bites for the students but it is not after a lot of discussion after these exact comments.

Regent Gurule – no questions.

Chair Martin stated on the handout for the new fees effective fall 2025. The different classes have \$971 is that for each class or all classes. Ms. Colgan stated that is a semester of nursing courses. The semester would be \$3,884 for the entire program which is a four-

semester program. Ms. Trabka stated it also covers one week of NCLEX preparation and they are able to practice through the summer. It is per semester. (inaudible). Ms. Colgan stated per semester, this is a three-year contract that would have to be signed.

Chair Martin asked what the students do regarding textbooks when they don't have them and how do they refer back. Ms. Colgan stated this program is available to them as they are in our program. Let's say they have an OB program this semester but tested a year later, they can go back and use all this information to study. Chair Martin thanked Ms. Colgan for answering all the questions.

Chair Martin entertained a motion to approve increasing Nursing and Health Science Fees.

Regent Gurule moved to approve increasing Nursing and Health Sciences Fees. Second – Regent Velarde. A roll call vote was taken. Chair Martin – yes, Regent Velarde – yes, Regent Archuleta – yes, Regent Lovato – yes, Regent Gurule – yes. Motion passed unanimously.

Chair Martin commended Nursing and Health Sciences for the 100% pass rate. Second year in a row – 24 students. (inaudible). Chair Martin congratulated the Nursing and Health Sciences Department.

4. Posthumous and "In Memoriam" Recognition Degrees

Mr. Baca stated the last item is a request the Board of Regents approve updates to the Course Catalog to align our institutional practices for awarding a posthumous degree or granting a student an in-memoriam degree when they pass away when they are in the course of study. The request under the posthumous degree is they've completed 75% of the credits toward a degree and are in good academic standing, meaning, they have a cumulative GPA of 2.0 or above that, a member of their family, or a friend or a classmate can petition the registrar and ask that a posthumous degree be awarded to the student. The registrar will verify that the student meets those criteria I mentioned and if that's the case, then the school will award a posthumous degree, and they'll be recognized as a graduate at the next commencement thereafter. The second item is that in the event that the student isn't quite that essentially isn't quite that far along in their course of study that they be eligible for an In Memoriam recognition and so they must essentially be registered for and attended classes within the previous 12 months. You know, the college has been in the practice of doing these types of things in the past, and I believe we'll have a similar thing coming up in our next commencement hearing. So, the request is really to update the catalog to bring the college in line with our institutional practices.

Chair Martin asked if there were questions from the Board. No questions from the Board.

Chair Martin entertained a motion to approve the Posthumous and "In Memoriam" Recognition Degrees.

Regent Lovato moved to approve the Posthumous and “In Memoriam” Recognition Degrees. Second – Regent Gurule. A roll call vote was taken. Chair Martin – yes, Regent Velarde – yes, Regent Archuleta – yes, Regent Lovato – yes, Regent Gurule – yes. Motion passed unanimously.

B. Vice President for Finance & Administration

1. FY26 Proposed Operating Budget

Theresa Storey, CFO presented the FY26 Operating Budget (attached) for the Board of Regents. Ms. Storey would like to give special recognition to Ms. Abeyta and Ms. Lovato who are online to answer questions and without them we would be lost.

Chair Martin asked how we are spending SB275, Section 39. Ms. Storey stated those are primarily last year’s capital outlay appropriations. Renovation of portables, match for renovation of BCES labs, renovations in El Rito. Chair Martin asked if they are all last year. Ms. Storey stated yes. HB450 represents current year.

Chair Martin asked where the Amphitheater Area would be. President Balderas explained there will be an outdoor classroom outside the front of the Montoya Administration Building. The way he got the money for this, there is a family lost their son in a shooting and the Governor was interested in some anti-programming and as we were designing and developing that programming, we came up with the concept that we would create an outdoor classroom safe space and the architects really like that kind of bare hill. So, we're hoping to go out to bid, and that'll be part of a redesign all the way from the outward building here all the way to the gate and the Governor gave us a million dollars to do that outdoor classroom. I'm hoping it'll be beautiful lighting, and it'll be very a lot. I think I think even faculty, they're going to want to teach classes out there. So, we don't have anything in Rio Arriba that is actually like anywhere you could put 200 or 300 people outdoors.

Chair Martin asked what we are doing at the Sportsplex. Ms. Storey stated there are roofing needs, bleacher needs and ADA compliance.

Ms. Storey stated what is awaiting approval is on page 214 and 215 (attached) Ms. Storey reviewed the BR&R (attached) for the Board of Regents.

Ms. Storey stated there is also the 4% increase for eligible employees. The budget has about 9.95% increase for benefits. It does institutionalize is the CHESS budget. Up until now we experienced a project budget. The FY26 will include the recurring operating budget for CHESS. We did institutionalize five positions.

Chair Martin asked if there were questions from the Board. Regent Velarde – no, Regent Archuleta – no, Regent Lovato – no, Regent Gurule – no.

Chair Martin stated we are always under a lot of pressure not to increase tuition because of the opportunity scholarship. He believes the funding for it was increased by 2 1/2% this year and recurring was increased by 2.3%. Is that going to cover our unfunded mandates? Or, how are we looking at covering stuff like, because we had to pay the half of the increase in the medical insurance right? We had to pay our half and how much would that be? Ms. Storey stated just to back up a little bit the 4% increase compensation increase, we do get funded about 80% for the benefit increase we received, we received about 4% in dollars about \$43,000. There is an unfunded portion of that. It is dependent upon what our employees elect for benefits and what type of vacancies we have throughout the years. In order to answer the question, in order to balance the budget, there is always some reliance on some fund balance the budget this year has just under \$1M reliance on fund balance and that is essentially where we kind of balance that funding.

Chair Martin asked if this is sustainable over the next four years. Because if we don't, tuition increase is about the only way we can increase our revenues and we haven't increased tuition since December of 2021 so and Chair Martin knows Santa Fe Community College increased their tuition this year. But are we going to be penalized if we have to raise tuition to meet our budgets. Ms. Storey stated there is a plan to look at tuition and modeling and options for the future. As to whether the demand out of fund balance is sustainable. The budget is a guide. There are a lot of projections, and there are a lot of assumptions. And so, what we typically experience is that we don't need that amount from the fund balance, right? That we it's not typical for us to spend 100% of our budget. So, to add to answer, if it's sustainable, it's not generally what we actually realize. But there is a plan to look at tuition for the future, so do we have to use fund balances. Chair Martin asked if we always have to use fund balance. Ms. Storey stated last year to sir, every year since she has been here, and Ms. Abeyta is online Ms. Storey think that's the standard practice and not just that. Chair Martin asked Ms. Abeyta if we have done that for the last how many years. Ms. Abeyta stated we have done that, so we have projected every year to balance the budget by fund balance use. It has never gone over a \$1.6M but actual year to date fund balance use, it has not been a large amount. She does not recall the figures but usually we have left some money on the table. That has actually been the stall in tuition increase because the net effect has not been over usage of budget. We have managed the budget controls very well. Chair Martin would like to discuss this at the retreat. Ms. Storey stated we have also seen our budget grow not decline so that is not an indicator.

Chair Martin asked about adjunct salary increase. Ms. Storey stated those are discussed through CBA negotiations. Chair Martin asked if we could have a raise for them at some point. President Balderas stated we are in union negotiations. We are going to find money to treat all faculty, staff and adjuncts on the same level. It will, we won't allow them to be grumpy, they will be happy. Chair Martin stated for Regent Lovato's clarification, we had not given the adjuncts a raise until President Balderas came along. President Balderas stated the Board gave them 10% last year and he did warn them not to expect 10% but we will do our best. Chair Martin stated about half of our instruction is through adjuncts.

Chair Martin asked if the 4% applies to those working out of a grant. Ms. Storey stated it does not. Chair Martin asked if it is common for those who write the grant to write in a crease. Ms. Storey stated for some of the grants they plan for an increase and for some they do not and some do budget adjustments or make it up with carry over. Unfortunately, some are not able to give the 4%. As noted in the Branch Budget, the Mill Levy supports the 4%.

Chair Martin asked what percent of our workforce is funded by grants or just a general percentage, it doesn't have to be exact. Ms. Abeyta stated she does not have it but she will try to find it.

President Balderas stated what might be helpful is the federal grants to state funds proportion. Ms. Storey stated as a proportion of our total budget, 25% of our budget is grants and contracts. That wouldn't solely represent personnel but roughly. Ms. Evette stated on Exhibit 1 are the total by restricted and unrestricted. In unrestricted it is a total of 220.066 FTE and the grant FTE is 31.01 FTE.

Chair Martin asked if there were some employees under a grant that do not get a raise. Ms. Storey yes. Chair Martin asked if we could adjust their salaries. Ms. Storey stated that would be at the discretion of the respective grant. We don't match that. Chair Martin asked if it could be written into the grant. President Balderas stated we do advocate for that when applying for the grants.

Chair Martin entertained a motion to approve the FY26 Proposed Operating Budget.

Regent Gurule moved to approve the FY26 Proposed Operating Budget. Second – Regent Lovato. A roll call vote was taken. Chair Martin – yes, Regent Velarde – yes, Regent Archuleta – yes, Regent Lovato – yes, Regent Gurule – yes. Motion passed unanimously.

2. FY25 Final Budget Adjustment Requests

Ms. Storey reviewed the FY25 Budget Adjustment Request (attached). These are in draft format and we did submit to HED pending board approval. This is not untypical in a 60-day session. The final BARs give us full budget authority to utilize the full budget. The forms in the packet mirror Exhibit 1 of the proposed budget. It has the current approved budget and the revised budget. The revised budget represents our estimated actuals. We ask for the ceiling so all state funding and grants we take the approach that if we can use it, we want to. These adjustments for unrestricted and restricted align.

Chair Martin asked if there were questions from the Board. Regent Velarde – no questions, Archuleta – no questions, Regent Lovato asked if the college runs on a 6/30 period. Ms. Storey stated this is correct. Regent Gurule – no questions.

Chair Martin entertained a motion to approve the FY25 Final Budget Adjustment Requests. A roll call vote was taken. Chair Martin – yes, Regent Velarde – yes, Regent Archuleta – yes, Regent Lovato – yes, Regent Gurule – yes. Motion passed unanimously.

IV. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Martin entertained a motion to adjourn.

Regent Lovato moved to adjourn. Second – Regent Gurule. A roll call vote was taken. Chair Martin – yes, Regent Velarde – yes, Regent Archuleta – yes, Regent Lovato – yes, Regent Gurule – yes. Motion passed unanimously.

The Board of Regents adjourned at 2:54PM.

Approved:



Michael A. Martin
Chair



Erica Rita Velarde (Jun 12, 2025 10:34 MDT)

Erica Velarde
Vice Chair












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Final Audit Report

2025-06-12

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2025-06-12 - 4:34:38 PM GMT- IP address: 73.228.0.132
-  Document e-signed by Erica Rita Velarde (erica.velarde@nnmc.edu)
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