



San Carlos Apache College
Board of Regents

Regular Meeting Minutes
December 23, 2025 | 1:00pm
 San Carlos Apache College, San Carlos, AZ

1. CALL TO ORDER

1.A. The meeting was called to order at 1:00pm

1.B. Roll Call:

Board of Regents	Present	Absence		Attendance Time
		Excused	Unexcused	
Durena Thompson, Chair	x			1:00pm
Philip Stevens, Vice Chair	x			1:00pm
Loreal Jones, Secretary	x			1:00pm
Isaiah Belknap, Regent	x			1:00pm
Shirley Boni, Regent	x			1:00pm
Jessica Natsyn, Regent	x			1:00pm
Kerri Sangster, Regent	x			1:00pm
SCAC Staff				
Dr. Linda Warner, President	x			1:00pm
Dr. Lisa Eutsey, Provost	x			1:00pm
Tia Early, Interim VP of Finance / Director of the Apache Institute	x			1:00pm
Shelley McPherson, Interim VP of Operations	x			1:00pm
Thomas Worcester, Special Projects Manager (Provost)	x			1:00pm
Sierra Lemke (Executive Assistant)	x			1:00pm

A quorum was established.

1.C. Invocation by Isiah Belknap

1.D. Announcements

There were no announcements.

1.E. Public Comments Section

There were no public comments.

1.F. Approval of Agenda

Vice Chair Stevens asked to add item 3D, "Discussion and possible action on subcommittees to align with ACCJC standards" to the agenda. The board also decided to add an executive session to their agenda causing all Section 5 items to be changed to Section 6 items.

Regent Belknap moved to approve the agenda.

Item: Approval of agenda.
Motion: Made by Regent Belknap
Seconded by: Vice Chair Stevens
Vote: 7 yes/0 no

MOTION APPROVED

1.G. Approval of Meeting Minutes

Minutes for the Special Board Meeting on December 4, 2025 were discussed. There were changes to the minutes that needed to be made.

Vice Chair Stevens moved to approve the December 4, 2025 minutes with corrections to be made.

Item: Approval of December 4, 2025 minutes with corrections to be made.
Motion: Made by Vice Chair Stevens
Seconded by: Regent Belknap
Vote: 7 yes/0 no

MOTION APPROVED

There were no minutes attached for October 30, 2025 and November 25, 2025.

Regent Belknap moved to table the minutes from October 30, 2025 and November 25, 2025

Item: Approval to table minutes for October 30, 2025 and November 25, 2025

Motion: Made by Regent Belknap

Seconded by: Regent Natsyn

Vote: 7 yes/0 no

MOTION APPROVED

2. REPORTS

2.A. Executive Team

Dr. Warner introduced Sierra Lemke as her new Executive Assistant. Dr. Warner explained that board materials should be provided in advance through the President's Office to allow members time to review and avoid reading reports aloud during meetings. Board members were given time to review recent financial information and ask questions.

Dr. Warner reported ongoing challenges within the Finance Department, particularly related to incomplete and inaccurate financial records. QuickBooks accounts were not properly maintained, with expenses and invoices not consistently tagged to correct accounts or grants. The college is working to reconstruct and reconcile financial data to ensure accuracy. The goal is to be audit-ready by early spring and complete an audit at the end of the fiscal year. The college is still actively searching for a new Finance Manager. Dr. Warner noted local housing shortages as a barrier to recruiting senior leadership and faculty.

Board members asked about the accuracy of prior financial reports. Dr. Warner stated there is no evidence of fraud or misappropriation, though an audit will confirm findings. Issues were attributed to system misuse and lack of expertise, not intentional misconduct. The board emphasized the need for reliable, accurate financial reporting going forward.

Dr. Warner reported potential impacts to spring enrollment due to TOCC transcript policy changes affecting student eligibility. Administration and staff reported ongoing efforts to assist affected students and emphasized the importance of achieving independent accreditation to avoid similar issues in the future.

Dr. Warner confirmed that legal counsel Chase Velasquez is working with the college pursuant to prior Board direction.

2.B. Approval of Reports

Vice Chair Stevens moved to approve the reports.

Item: Approve the reports.
Motion: Made by Vice Chair Stevens
Seconded by: Kerri Sangster
Vote: 7 yes/0 no

MOTION APPROVED

3. NEW AND ONGOING BUSINESS

Regent Belknap expressed that he needed to leave the meeting early. He asked if the rules could be suspended so that everyone in the room could introduce themselves before his exit.

Regent Belknap moved to suspend the rules.

Item: Approve the suspension of rules.
Motion: Made by Regent Belknap.
Seconded by: Vice Chair Stevens
Vote: 7 yes/0 no

MOTION APPROVED

All San Carlos Apache College Staff then introduced themselves and Regent Belknap left the meeting.

3.A. Subcommittee Reports

3.A.1.1. Board Subcommittees

- **Accreditation**

Vice Chair Stevens reported that the Subcommittee on Accreditation met on December 15, 2025. The subcommittee discussed the upcoming ACCJC accreditation report due in May 2026. The report will be approximately 30 pages and address all ACCJC standards and sub-standards. A site visit is anticipated in fall 2026, with potential outcomes including candidate status or rejection.

The subcommittee recommended aligning Board subcommittees with the four ACCJC standards to support accreditation efforts. Each subcommittee would contribute to drafting sections of the accreditation report.

Provost Eutsey shared that ACCJC provided positive feedback on the application and identified financial documentation as an area for continued improvement.

- **Student Success**

Regent Natsyn reported that the Subcommittee on Student Success met on December 16, 2025, at 2:30 p.m. Mike Kim provided an overview of Student Success and Student Affairs, outlining the departments that support student success at the college.

The committee discussed the development of a student governance committee, formally establishing student governance within the college. The Student Handbook was also discussed, with plans to present a draft or work in progress for Board review at a later date.

- **Finance**

Regent Boni reported that the Finance Committee attempted to meet in mid-November but was unable to do so due to communication issues and scheduling conflicts. The meeting was canceled and will be rescheduled. Regent Boni stated that follow-up would occur to coordinate a new meeting date.

3.B. Board Handbook

Dr. Warner presented a draft Board Handbook for review, adapted in part from the TOCC handbook. The draft is intended as a procedural guide for the Board to support their processes. Personnel and student sections were excluded to avoid duplication with existing manuals. Board members clarified that the draft is an initial framework for review and feedback. Vice Chair Stevens noted the need to distinguish between bylaws and procedures.

Provost Eutsey explained that while ACCJC does not require a specific board handbook, accreditation standards require evidence of governing board policies and procedures, which a handbook can help document.

Regent Boni suggested adding language regarding tribal member preference in board classifications; this comment was noted for subcommittee consideration.

The Board agreed to continue discussion of the handbook at future meetings. No action was taken as the item was noted as a discussion item.

3.C. AIHEC Legislative Summit (February 3-6, 2026)

Dr. Warner provided an overview of the upcoming AIHEC Legislative Summit in Washington, D.C. Travel days are scheduled for the 2nd and 7th. The delegation will include two students, one member of the Elder Council, and Chairperson Thompson. Other Regents were invited to attend as well. The summit will include briefings on advocacy guidelines followed by visits to congressional offices to advocate for tribal colleges, in coordination with other Arizona TCUs.

3.D. Discussion and possible action on subcommittees to align with ACCJC Standards.

The Board discussed aligning SCAC subcommittees with the four ACCJC accreditation standards to better demonstrate compliance. It was noted that accreditation spans all standards and should not exist as a standalone subcommittee.

The four proposed subcommittees aligned with ACCJC standards were detailed as:

1. **Institutional Mission and Effectiveness** chaired by Regent Sangster
2. **Student Success** chaired by Regent Natsyn
3. **Infrastructure and Resources** (*formerly Finance*) chaired by Regent Boni
4. **Governance and Decision-Making** chaired by Vice Chair Stevens

Vice Chair Stevens moved to create the four new subcommittees as discussed.

Item: Approve the creation of the four new subcommittees as discussed.
Motion: Made by Vice Chair Stevens
Seconded by: Secretary Jones
Vote: 6 yes/0 no

MOTION APPROVED

4. ACTION ITEMS

4.A. Strategic Plan Update

Dr. Warner reported that the Strategic Plan was included in the board packet with minimal updates, including a revised date and the addition of core value references referred to as ARROW (Accountability, Respect, Resilience, Openness, and Wisdom).. The updates were made to document an annual review for accreditation purposes and to maintain alignment with existing institutional documents.

Vice Chair Stevens moved to accept the addition of the ARROW model to the college's goals and objectives within the Strategic Plan.

Item: Approve the addition of the ARROW model to the college's goals and objectives within the Strategic Plan
Motion: Made by Vice Chair Stevens
Seconded by: Secretary Jones
Vote: 6 yes/0 no

MOTION APPROVED

4.B. BIA Building Update

Dr. Warner reported on Attorney Velasquez’s written response regarding the BIA building transfer, included in the board packet. It was explained that prior communication from former administration indicated acceptance of the building “as is,” with asbestos abatement as the only agreed-upon remediation. However, this action could possibly be classified as a ‘Bad Faith’ decision because of the impending President’s departure from the college. As a result, responsibility for additional repairs transferred to the college.

The Board discussed the possibility of challenging the transfer based on condition of the building and potential federal requirements. Dr. Warner advised that pursuing the matter would require further legal research, could be costly, and would likely be an uphill legal process. Estimated repairs had additional issues identified related to plumbing, electrical systems, and subflooring.

Attorney Velasquez has requested and is awaiting an approximate 100-page transfer document from the tribe for further review. Dr. Warner recommended waiting for that review before determining next steps. It was noted that some funding may be available, including restricted COVID-related funds. There was no action taken, as the Board will wait for Attorney Velasquez to review documents.

5. Executive Session

Secretary Jones moved to approve transition into an Executive Session.

Item: Approve the transition into an Executive Session.

Motion: Made by Secretary Jones

Seconded by: Regent Natsyn

Vote: 6 yes/0 no

MOTION APPROVED

5.A. Discussion and clarification on board compensation

6. NEXT MEETINGS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

6.A. Next Regular Tribal Council Meeting - January 6, 2026

6.B. Next SCAC Regular Meeting of the Board of Regents - January 20, 2026

6.C. Graduation - Friday, May 15, 2026 at 1:00pm, San Carlos High School

7. ADJOURNMENT

The regular meeting adjourned at 3:13pm.