

**MINUTES OF THE WORKSHOP MEETING
DEL MAR COLLEGE DISTRICT**

March 4, 2025

The Workshop Meeting of the Board of Regents of the Del Mar College District convened on Tuesday, March 4, 2025, at 10:00 a.m., at the Center for Economic Development, 3209 S. Staples, Room 106, Corpus Christi, Texas with the following present:

From the Board:

Present:

Ms. Carol Scott, Ms. Libby Averyt, Dr. Anantha Babbili, Mr. Carl Crull, Mr. Rudy Garza, Jr., and Mr. David Loeb.

Dr. Nicholas Adame joined the meeting in progress.

Not present:

Mr. Bill Kelly and Dr. Laurie Turner.

From the College:

Dr. Mark Escamilla, President and CEO; Ms. Lenora Keas, Executive Vice President and COO; Mr. Raul Garcia, Vice President and CFO; Mr. Ali Kolahdouz, Vice President and Chief Information Officer; Dr. Jonda Halcomb, Vice President and Chief Academic Officer; Ms. Tammy McDonald, Vice President of Administration and Human Resources; Dr. Patricia Benavides-Dominguez, Vice President for Student Affairs; Ms. Cheryl Sanders, Associate Vice President for Student Affairs; Mr. Augustin Rivera, Jr., General Counsel; Mr. John Strybos, Vice President and Chief Physical Facilities Officer; Mr. Matthew Busby, Vice President of Development and Donor Advising; Ms. Delia Perez, Director of CEO Office and Board Relations, and other staff and faculty.

CALL TO ORDER/QUORUM CALL

Chair Scott called the meeting to order with a quorum present. She requested a moment of silence followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and Del Mar College Vision Statement.

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENTS – The public was given the opportunity to provide public comments (both general and specific to any agenda item).

There were no public comments.

ITEMS OF BUSINESS:

Dr. Escamilla provided introductory comments regarding a tuition pilot program initiative that is possibly a historic policy shift for the Board of Regents and the College. He also thanked the entire team that worked many hours in preparing the presentation.

1. Discussion and feedback on the Tuition and Fee Waiver Pilot Program

..... Ms. Lenora Keas and Mr. Raul Garcia
(II: Elevate, Goal 2: Maximize resources entrusted to the College)

Ms. Keas reiterated that the vision for today's proposed Tuition and Fee Waiver Pilot Program was initiated by Dr. Escamilla. She introduced some of the team members and thanked them for their hard work and dedication.

The key elements discussed:

1. Introduction and Acknowledgements: The program is described as a potentially historic policy shift aimed at changing the educational attainment trajectory of the community.

2. Vision and Goals of the Pilot Program: The program's vision, initiated by Dr. Escamilla, draws inspiration from similar programs at Alamo College and Austin Community College (ACC). The goals extend beyond just financial aid and include reducing student financial barriers, accelerating student time to completion, elevating wraparound student support services to improve student success, and accelerating the College's response to regional labor market needs by quickly delivering a trained workforce.

3. Pilot Program Structure: The pilot program is a one-time cohort launching in Fall 2025, covering a three-year period. The funding will come from donations through the Del Mar College Foundation and funding generated through pathways created by House Bill 8 (HB8), a state initiative providing funding based on student credentials.

4. Target Cohort: The target cohort consists of students from the graduating class of May 2025, living in the taxing district. The program is open to adult learners and First-Time-In-College (FTIC) students. Students must have 12 credit hours or less upon entering the program. Participants must commit to attending full-time (12 credit hours) and maintain a 2.0 GPA. The program aims to transition part-time students to full-time status.

5. House Bill 8 Funding: Discussion was held regarding how different degree paths are funded under HB8. Associate of Applied Science (AAS) degrees, particularly in fields like Welding, offer opportunities for additional funding through certificates and licensures. Associate of Arts (AA) and Associate of Science (AS) degrees receive funding upon

completion of 15 credit hours and upon graduation. The College receives funding each time a student completes a milestone along their educational journey.

6. Marketing and Communications Plan: The College has developed a comprehensive marketing and communication plan to reach different market segments.

7. Advising and Student Support Program: The College offers a variety of student support services, including: personal, social, career, and academic advising; degree planning; tutoring, access and advocacy services, career development, mental health counseling, veteran services, and community resource referrals; students in the pilot program will be identified with a specific code to monitor their progress. The College utilizes a pathway-based advising model, aligning programs into eight meta-majors. Full-time faculty and embedded advisors provide advising services. Colleague and Civitas analytics software are used to support advising efforts.

8. Del Mar College Foundation Support: The Del Mar College Foundation has pledged one million dollars from funds previously raised through the Viking Promise Program to support the pilot, paying out \$500,000 per year. The Foundation is considering additional support and recognizes the continued need for scholarships for students not participating in the program.

9. Timeline and Application Process: The scholarship application process opened on February 1st. The application for the pilot program will open on April 1st and remain open until August 1st. The scholarship application deadline is April 30th. Financial aid applications can be submitted throughout the year, with Pell Grant applications accepted until August 1st. The tuition waiver will be applied upfront, with other financial aid dollars going towards books and living expenses. The application process is primarily for determining eligibility (meeting the program's requirements) rather than a competitive selection process.

10. Eligibility Questions and Waivers: The flexibility regarding the 2.0 GPA requirement and changing majors is discussed. Students must maintain a 2.0 GPA to continue in the program. There is some flexibility for exceptions, handled on a case-by-case basis. Students are discouraged from changing majors, with one change allowed. The importance of adhering to the program's parameters is emphasized to accurately assess its impact and suggests caution against waiving requirements too readily. A concern is stated that enrollment could limit capacity in constrained programs, such as nursing, and would unfairly favor pilot program students.

11. Assessment Plan: An assessment plan is in place to track the progress of the pilot cohort. Data will be gathered and collected each semester, tracking completion rates and

program enrollment. The College aims to transition students from part-time to full-time status and accelerate their time to graduation.

12. Financial Parameters and Sustainability: The pilot program aims to be financially sustainable with a balanced budget for each of the four years. Funding will come from state performance dollars earned by the cohort and contributions from the Foundation. The estimated total state funding is \$3.2 million, combined with the \$1 million from the Foundation. This total of \$4.2 million will offset the cost of waiving tuition and fees (\$2.4 million), resulting in a net of \$1.8 million. The net surplus could be used towards a future cohort or to fund the College's Maintenance & Operations (M&O) budget. Enrollment estimates were made for full-time students (416) and certificate programs (170) to model earnings. The Foundation money is used up front to get the program started, and the expectation is that completion money from previous years will fund subsequent years.

13. Dual Credit Considerations: Discussion of how dual credit transfer performance funding is factored into the financial model. The \$930,000 of dual credit transfer dollars is included in the 2026 financial projection. The discussion reveals that the model initially incorporates dual credit earnings from both the pilot cohort students and other non-participating students. The budget is for one cohort only, and it will become a revolving cycle after the first year. The performance targets are set by outcomes from the 2023-2024 year.

14. Program Evaluation: Initial program outcomes include increasing student graduation rates. The outcomes were observed at both ACC and Alamo Community College. The pilot program may accelerate training for the Regional Labor Market. ACC saw a 17% increase in freshman enrollment from the pilot program.

The College will present progress reports to the Board in the spring semester.

2. Discussion and possible action related to Tuition and Fee Waiver Pilot Program
.....Ms. Lenora Keas and Mr. Raul Garcia
(II: Elevate, Goal 2: Maximize resources entrusted to the College)

A request is made to the Board of Regents to approve the Tuition and Fee Waiver Pilot Program for the first cohort and authorize Administration to proceed and administer the program as described.

Regent Loeb made a motion to approve the Tuition and Fee Waiver Pilot Program as presented. Regent Adame seconded the motion. There was no further discussion from the Board. There were no public

comments. A vote was taken by show of hands, and the motion carried unanimously 7-0, amongst Regents present, with Regents Scott, Adame, Averyt, Babbili, Crull, Garza, and Loeb, in favor.

At 11:11 a.m., the Chair announced that the Board was going into Closed Session pursuant to:

3. CLOSED SESSION pursuant to:

- A. **TEX. GOV'T CODE § 551.071**: (Consultation with legal counsel), regarding pending or contemplated litigation, or a settlement offer, with possible discussion and action in open session; the seeking of legal advice from counsel, on pending legal or contemplated matters or claims, including the possible designation of litigation counsel in a pending contract matter; and, legal update, with possible discussion and action in open session.

The Board of Regents reconvened in Open Session at 11:53 a.m. with no action taken.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 11:53 a.m.

MINUTES REVIEWED BY GC: /s/ARjr