

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING DEL MAR COLLEGE DISTRICT

November 11, 2025

The Regular Meeting of the Board of Regents of the Del Mar College District convened on Tuesday, November 11, 2025, at 1:14 p.m., at the Center for Economic Development, 3209 S. Staples, Room 106, Corpus Christi, Texas.

Chair Scott began the meeting in honor of Veterans' Day and stated the College is a designated military friendly campus and a Purple Heart school. The College is one of thirty-three colleges in Texas to have received the Veterans Education Excellence Recognition Award by the Governor. She recognized all Veterans in attendance by asking them to stand and be honored for their service.

From the Board:

Present:

Chair Carol Scott, Ms. Libby Averyt, Dr. Nicholas Adame, Dr. Anantha Babbili, Mr. Carl Crull, Mr. Rudy Garza, Jr., Mr. Bill Kelly, and Mr. David Loeb.

Not present:

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; Mr. Augustin Rivera, Jr., General Counsel; Mr. Matthew Busby, Vice President of Development and Donor Advising; Mr. Jeff Olsen, Chief of Staff and Vice President of Communication and Marketing; Ms. Delia Perez, Director of CEO Office and Board Relations, Mr. Conrado Garcia, Superintendent in Residence, 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).

Mr. Jim Klein, Professor of History at Del Mar College, provided words of gratitude to Dr. Mark Escamilla for continuing to support and provide lunch for middle school student field trips on the Heritage campus. He also thanked Ms. Gracie Martinez and her team in the Outreach and Recruitment Office for guiding the students around campus.

Ms. Amy Koenning, Board Member with the Education Service Center, Region 2, presented a check to Del Mar College for their participation in the Goodbuy Purchasing Cooperative. The College received a 1% return on their spending through the Goodbuy program. The program assists the College in purchasing goods and services in an efficient and cost-effective manner.

RECOGNITIONS:

National Council of Marketing and Public Relations Awards.....Mr. Jeff Olsen
(III: Cultivate, Goal 2: Optimize the Viking Student Experience)

Mr. Olsen provided introductory remarks and introduced Mr. Jason Houlihan, Executive Director of Marketing and Events. Mr. Houlihan recognized Tania Shumaker and Stephany Guzman for winning two gold and one bronze awards for their work creating different ways to market the College. Chair Scott congratulated Ms. Shumaker and Ms. Guzman.

COLLEGE PRESIDENT'S REPORT..... Dr. Mark Escamilla

- October 29, 2025: TACC Quarterly Meeting (Virtual)

(I: Communicate, Goal 2: Connect beyond the College)

Dr. Escamilla attended the Texas Association of Community Colleges' quarterly meeting virtually.

- October 30, 2025: Scholarship Banquet

(II: Elevate, Goal 1: Increase completion for all students and Goal 2: Maximize resources entrusted to the College)

Dr. Escamilla attended the College's Scholarship Banquet which was attended by over 600 people. The students and scholarship donors were able to meet and celebrate the students' accomplishments. Dr. Escamilla thanked Matthew Busby and his team for their hard work and announced that the Foundation gave \$3 million in direct scholarships.

- Interviews for Executive Vice President Chief Operating Officer (EVP-COO)

(I: Communicate, Goal 1: Collaborate across the College and Goal 2: Connect beyond the College)

Dr. Escamilla provided an update regarding interviews for the Executive Vice President Chief Operating Officer and thanked the Committee for their due diligence in the search process.

- October 24, 2025: Turkey Bowl 2025 Celebration

(III: Cultivate, Goal 1: Nurture our faculty and staff to achieve their full potential and Goal 2: Optimize the Viking Student Experience)

Dr. Escamilla announced the success of the 2025 Turkey Bowl and how the College community enjoyed the event and is looking forward to next year's event. A video of the Turkey bowl highlights was shown.

- October 28, 2025: F2D Student Lunch
(III: Cultivate, Goal 2: Optimize the Viking Student Experience)

Dr. Escamilla attended the Freedom to Dream student lunch and thanked everyone involved for their participation. He also stated he had a remarkable time speaking with the students about how Del Mar College is impacting their lives.

REGENT’S REPORTS:

- ACCT Leadership Congress, New Orleans, LA October 22-25, 2025, including ACCT Board of Directors and Board Committees, October 20-21, 2025
.....Regents Scott, Babbili, Garza, and Turner
(I: Communicate, Goal 2: Connect beyond the College)

Chair Scott stated that four Regents attended the Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT) National Leadership Congress. The new Board Chair of ACCT is Carol DeCarlo from Reno, Nevada. Regents Babbili and Garza provided commentary on their attendance at the conference.

STAFF REPORTS:

- SACSCOC Fifth-Year Interim Report Update Dr. Sydney Saumby
(II: Elevate, Goal 1: Increase completion for all students)

Dr. Saumby reviewed the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges’ (SACSCOC) role as the College's accrediting body and the significance of accreditation. The College has been accredited since 1946 and was among the first institutions to undergo a self-study and site visit in 1958-1960. The last fifth-year interim review was in 2016, and the last reaffirmation was in 2021.

Dr. Saumby stated the report is due every five years and focuses on 22 standards of operation, covering various aspects of the College, including administration, facilities, academic programs, and student support. She also reviewed upcoming dates which include August 31, 2026 – onsite preparation materials due; September 8, 2026 – fifth-year report due; October 12-24, 2026 – onsite visit; November 5-6, 2026 – offsite review of the report; and December – official decision made.

Due to the significant expansion of off-campus instructional sites, a two-person committee will conduct an onsite visit. The focus is on the off-campus sites, including the Oso Creek campus and dual credit partner high schools, ensuring they offer comparable experiences to the main campus. The team will visit around eight sites for 90 minutes each.

Dr. Saumby reviewed their strategy for success and how they are actively preparing for the report. She is communicating with faculty and staff, encouraging policy and procedure updates, and drafting the required narratives. An internal review team is in place to ensure accuracy and clarity of the report. The goal is to submit the report ahead of the September 8th deadline, aiming for August 15th, to account for potential delays.

Dr. Saumby reported that Dr. Stephen Pruitt has replaced Dr. Belle Wheelan as the president of SACSCOC. Dr. Pruitt is communicative and focused on serving all R1 institutions, from universities to small private colleges. He also plans to incorporate recognition and awards for institutions that maintain compliance in an exemplary manner. He is clarifying SACSCOC's commitment to all institutions, reviewing and changing processes, creating new services to encourage innovation, and incorporating both rewards and accountability into the accreditation process. While changes are coming to SACSCOC under Dr. Pruitt's leadership, the upcoming fifth-year interim report will proceed under the existing standards and procedures.

Dr. Saumby and Dr. Escamilla responded to questions from the Board of Regents.

- 2024-2029 Strategic Plan Update: Charting the Viking Way Dr. Natalie Villarreal (*I: Communicate; II: Elevate; and III: Cultivate*)

Dr. Villarreal stated the College's Strategic Plan 2024-2029 "Charting the Viking Way" has been in place for a year. The Viking Way focuses on three guiding stars: Communicate, Elevate, and Cultivate. She acknowledged that many details and numbers have been previously presented to the Board regarding great collaborations and recommendations by the College.

Guiding Star 1 – Communicate: Collaborative plans and shared governance across the college, and improved communication with students, faculty, and staff, and external community. Strengthen shared governance and improve communication channels, increase brand awareness, and community engagement. Collaboration across the College includes an initial plan to utilize faculty/staff survey data, and CCSSE data. Connecting beyond the College includes enrollment marketing, brand awareness, recruitment, including the community on campus. There has been an increase in student use of on-campus resources like counseling, food pantry, and the Advocacy Center as well as community events. The brand health survey revealed 36% positive community awareness of Del Mar College, which will be used as a baseline.

Guiding Star 2 Elevate: The focus is on higher education landscapes and changes happening in the region particularly the outcomes-based funding model (HB8), and prioritizing student success. New strategies discussed include implementing new programs that improve the transition from high school to college, aligning with HB8 funding, and maintaining physical resources. There have been significant increases in student dual enrollment completion by 35% who have completed 15 semester credit

hours. In terms of e-learning and training, College faculty have really pushed and worked hard to start getting trained in some of the areas that really make their online and hybrid classrooms more successful and that number is significant. The goal for ICLC completion was 25 and 268 students completed.

Guiding Star 3 – Cultivate: The main purpose is to foster a strong college culture and connectivity, with emphasis on professional development and a "culture of care." The College will enhance professional development, establish a "culture of care" through the Viking Way initiative, and optimize the student Viking experience. To continue to succeed, the College will focus on faculty retention which has remained strong at 71-72% which is slightly below target due to retirements. Significant new initiatives and trainings are in place or being developed, including mandatory advising training for faculty.

Dr. Villarreal reviewed major achievements by the College with Freedom to Dream initiatives and various departments like Communications, Marketing, Recruitment and IT planning and preparing new initiatives. Dr. Villarreal reviewed some recommendations to address new opportunities for students and prioritize professional development for faculty and staff. Dr. Villarreal emphasized the collaborative efforts of faculty and staff in achieving the goals of “Charting the Viking Way” and their ongoing commitment to student success and the College's mission.

Dr. Villarreal and Dr. Escamilla responded to questions from the Board of Regents.

PENDING BUSINESS:

Status Report on Requested Information

CONSENT AGENDA

Notice to the Public

The following items are of a routine or administrative nature. The Board of Regents has been furnished with background and support material on each item, and/or it has been discussed at a previous meeting. All items will be acted upon by one vote without being discussed separately unless requested by a Board member or a citizen, in which event the item(s) will immediately be withdrawn for individual consideration in their normal sequence after the items not requiring separate discussion have been acted upon. The remaining items will be adopted by one vote.

CONSENT MOTIONS:

(At this point the Board will vote on all motions not removed for individual consideration.)

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION:

1. Approval of Minutes:
Regular Board Meeting, October 14, 2025

(I: Communicate, Goal 2: Connect beyond the College)

2. Acceptance of Investments for October 2025
(II: Elevate, Goal 2: Maximize resources entrusted to the College)
3. Acceptance of Financials for September 2025
(II: Elevate, Goal 2: Maximize resources entrusted to the College)

Regent Loeb made a motion to adopt the Consent Agenda. Regent Babbili 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 8-0, amongst Regents present, with Regents Scott, Adame, Averyt, Babbili, Crull, Garza, Kelly, and Loeb in favor.

REGULAR AGENDA

4. Discussion and possible action regarding administration's recommendation and the Board's authorization to proceed with the 2026-2027 Freedom to Dream CohortMs. Patricia Benavides-Dominguez and Mr. Raul Garcia
(II: Elevate, Goal 2: Maximize resources entrusted to the College)

Dr. Escamilla, Chair Scott and Regents present provided feedback and questions regarding the 2026-2027 Freedom to Dream program and its financial plan. A video titled "Freedom to Dream" was shown to those present, with students participating in the current cohort and what the program has meant to them.

The key topics of concern included student eligibility and program restrictions, more data on the program's performance needed, potential expansion or creating a separate program for students with existing college credit, leveraging the FAST program and dual credit programs to build on the success of F2D, and expansion of short-term Pell grants.

The importance of community impact is acknowledged as well as the commitment to the Freedom to Dream program. The College wants to fine-tune the program to better serve students with the highest need, optimize resource allocation, and demonstrate a clear return on investment to stakeholders.

5. Discussion and possible action related to casting votes (by Resolution) for candidate(s) in the Nueces County Appraisal District Board of Directors ElectionMr. Augustin Rivera, Jr.
(I: Communicate, Goal 2: Connect beyond the College)

Mr. Rivera advised the Board they are voting for two director positions with the Nueces County Appraisal District Board of Directors. Mr. Rivera also stated the Appraisal District is implementing new rules that apply to their Board composition and manner of election. The two candidates are Devin Bhakta and Gabrielle Hilpold. There is a total of 248 votes to cast by Del Mar College.

Regent Loeb made a motion to cast 124 votes to each candidate. Regent Kelly 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 8-0, amongst Regents present, with Regents Scott, Adame, Averyt, Babbili, Crull, Garza, Kelly, and Loeb in favor.

6. Discussion and possible action related to casting votes (by Resolution) for candidate(s) in the San Patricio County Appraisal District Board of Directors election
..... Mr. Augustin Rivera, Jr.
(I: Communicate, Goal 2: Connect beyond the College)

Mr. Rivera advised the Board they are casting 10 votes to a nominee or nominees for a position with the San Patricio County Appraisal District Board of Directors. He also stated the voting system allots a limited number of votes (10) based on property ownership within San Patricio County.

Regent Loeb made a motion to cast all the College's 10 votes in favor of Dr. Anne Matula, former Dean of Business with Del Mar College. Regent Kelly 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 8-0, amongst Regents present, with Regents Scott, Adame, Averyt, Babbili, Crull, Garza, Kelly, and Loeb in favor.

7. 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; and the seeking of legal advice from counsel on pending legal or contemplated matters or claims, with possible discussion and action in open session; and,

- b. **TEX. GOV'T CODE§ 551.074(a)(1)**: (Personnel matters), regarding the appointment, employment, evaluation, reassignment, duties, discipline, or dismissal of a public officer or employee.

The Board of Regents did not go into Closed Session a second time.

CALENDAR: Discussion and possible action related to calendaring dates.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 3:09 p.m.

MINUTES REVIEWED BY GC: /s/ARjr