

**MINUTES OF REGULAR BOARD MEETING
DECEMBER 9, 2025**

The Board of Trustees of Community College District 509, Counties of Kane, Cook, DuPage, McHenry and DeKalb, State of Illinois, convened a regular meeting on Tuesday, December 9, 2025, in Building E, Room E100.01.

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

Chair Rakow called the regular meeting to order at 5:40 p.m., indicated that a quorum was present, and asked the recorder to call roll.

Trustees present: Ms. Rakow, Mr. Rodriguez, Dr. Redmer, Ms. Arroyo, Mr. Parks, Mr. Allen and Student Trustee Mr. Gidlund.

Trustees absent: Ms. Barbosa-Guzman.

ECC staff: Dr. Heinrich, President; Dr. Schopen, VP, Teaching, Learning and Student Development; Dr. Wagner, VP, Business & Finance; Dr. Phil Garber, VP, Planning, Institutional Effectiveness & Technology; Mr. Vazquez, General Counsel; Ms. Guengerich, Chief Human Resources Officer; and Ms. Kerruish, Recorder.

2. Recess to Closed Session

The Chair asked for a motion to recess immediately to closed session under the following exceptions to the *Illinois Open Meetings Act*:

- A. To discuss minutes of meetings lawfully closed under this Act
- B. To consider the appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees of the college....
- C. To discuss litigation, when an action...has been filed...or when the public body finds that an action is probable or imminent....
- D. To consider collective negotiation matters...for one of more classes of employees... all pursuant to Chapter 5 of the *Illinois Compiled Statutes* Sections 120/2 (c) (21, 1, 11 and 2 respectively).

Motion: Trustee Redmer moved to recess to closed session.

Second: Trustee Rodriguez seconded the motion.

Roll-Call Vote: Aye, 6: Rakow, Rodriguez, Redmer, Arroyo, Parks, and Allen; nay, 0; Student Trustee Gidlund, aye; motion carried at 5:42 p.m.

3. Reconvene Open Session

The closed-session concluded at 6:32 p.m. The board reconvened in open session at 6:40 p.m. in E125, Seigle Auditorium.

4. Preliminary Matters

A. Roll Call

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Trustees absent: Ms. Barbosa-Guzman.

ECC staff: Dr. Heinrich, President; Dr. Schopen, VP, Teaching, Learning and Student Development; Dr. Wagner, VP, Business & Finance, Dr. Phil Garber, VP, Planning, Institutional Effectiveness & Technology; Mr. Vazquez, General Counsel; and Ms. Kerruish, Recorder; ECC staff and visitors.

B. Consideration of and Possible Actions on Any Requests for a Board Member's Electronic Participation in Meeting.

No considerations necessary at this meeting.

C. Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Trustee Redmer.

D. Board Purpose

The Board Purpose was recited by Student Trustee Gidlund.

5. President's Report

- Dr. Heinrich acknowledged Anitra King, President of SSECCA and Dan Kernler, President of ECCFA, in attendance.
- We have received our draft report from the Higher Learning Commission, with all conditions met. We will share the final report after the HLC votes upon and accept it. There were no findings although helpful suggestions were made throughout that we will review carefully.
- The National Institute for Staff and Organizational Development (NISOD) and League Excellence Awards recognize outstanding contributions from faculty, staff, and administrators in community and technical colleges. This year's recipients include:
 - Brian Bohr, Instructor of Communication Studies
 - Kathleen DeMars, Assistant Professor I of Adult Basic Education
 - John Mravik, Profesesor I of English
 - Brittany Mylott, Academic Advisor
 - Justin Robertson, Dean of Communications and Behavioral Studies
 - Cathy Taylor, PhD, Dean of Sustainability, Business, and Career Technologies
- Grant Updates:
 - \$171K Received from ICCB for the Strengthening Mental Health Supports grant application. The funding is designed to be used to support our Wellness Professionals and mental health response infrastructure. We will be using the funds to partially underwrite (about 40%) of all of the wellness professionals' salaries, some advanced training for that team and their peer support specialists, plus scheduling and case management software, underwriting of comprehensive clinical assessments by external providers, and we're hiring an external consultant to review our internal mental case management infrastructure to make recommendations for how we can best serve students.
 - We received nearly \$305,000 from ICCB for the Taking Back the Trades program, which facilitates pre-apprenticeship, entry-level credentials, and internship

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- opportunities for juniors and seniors in high school. It strengthens our partnership with local educational partners while helping us introduce the ECC experience to hundreds of prospective students.
- We received two separate grants totaling \$120,000 to support our nursing program - \$90,000 of this came through a Perkins Leadership Grant and will be used to provide academic readiness opportunities and cost reduction, addressing two critical needs of that program, and \$10,000 was received for each of three faculty in our nursing program through a fellowship grant from the Illinois Board of Higher Education. We were one of 18 colleges selected to receive a Perkins Leadership Grant.
 - We submitted a \$2.1 million request to the US Dept of Education to support Workforce Pell readiness and help expand three CTE programs: Truck Driving, Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning, and Automation, Robotics and Maintenance Technology. This is the first federal grant that reflects the policy direction of the new administration. It is highly competitive.
 - We are working on applications due in early 2026 totaling up to a million dollars to support expansion of our workforce development, dual credit, and advanced manufacturing programming.
 - Athletic Updates:
 - Seven ECC soccer student-athletes earned All-Region honors.
 - Men's Basketball has received votes in the national rankings twice this season, and standout player Davee Flowers currently leads Division II in steals and ranks in the top 10 nationally in several performance categories.
 - Women's Basketball continues to build momentum, with Abby Esparza ranked 4th nationally in Division II three-pointers.
 - Both basketball teams are above .500 as they enter winter competition, and each continues to compete against strong regional and out-of-state opponents.
 - Feed the Need competition: A huge congratulations to the Police Department, this year's winner! We want to extend a heartfelt thank you to every department and individual who participated in providing donations to our student-run Spartan Food Pantry. Workforce Development came in 2nd, and the President's office 3rd, but so many donations were received across campus. This is part of a statewide competition. In any case, this effort went a long way in fighting food insecurity for our students. I wanted to mention that we had 100% participation from the board and thank you for your generosity. We had 34,000 donations and almost doubled last year's total.
 - Finally, we're looking forward to the many wonderful celebrations throughout the coming week and thank the board in advance for their presence and support as we celebrate our students' accomplishments and our outgoing employees who are retiring from ECC.

6. Resolutions of Appreciation

B. Board Action No. 103-A-26, Ms. Linda Conniff, Professor II of Business

Motion: Trustee Allen moved to accept the resolution as presented.
Second: Trustee Redmer seconded the motion.

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The resolution for Ms. Linda Conniff was read by Trustee Allen.

Roll-Call Vote: Aye, 6; Rakow, Rodriguez, Redmer, Arroyo, Parks, and Allen;
nay, 0; Student Trustee Gidlund, aye; motion carried.

F. Board Action No. 107-A-26, Ms. Pamela Singleton, Managing Director of Business Services

Motion: Trustee Arroyo moved to accept the consent agenda as presented.
Second: Trustee Rodriguez seconded the motion.

The resolution for Ms. Pamela Singleton was read by Trustee Rodriguez.

Roll-Call Vote: Aye, 6; Rakow, Rodriguez, Redmer, Arroyo, Parks, and Allen;
nay, 0; Student Trustee Gidlund, aye; motion carried.

- A. Board Action No. 102-A-26, Dr. Sharon Baker, Professor II of Psychology**
- C. Board Action No. 104-A-26, Ms. Peggy Gundrum, Career Development Specialist and former Associate Dean of Student Services**
- D. Board Action No. 105-A-26, Ms. Mary Lloyd, Director of ABEC Operations**
- E. Board Action No. 106-A-26, Mr. Efrain Matias, Print Shop Specialist I**
- G. Board Action No. 108-A-26, Ms. Marta Walz, Professor II of Communication Studies**

Motion: Trustee Parks moved to accept the resolutions as presented.
Second: Trustee Arroyo seconded the motion.

Roll-Call Vote: Aye, 6; Rakow, Rodriguez, Redmer, Arroyo, Parks, and Allen; nay, 0;
Student Trustee Gidlund, aye; motion carried

7. Audience Wishing to Address the Board

- Dan Kernler commented on ECCFA negotiations, currently in process.
- Anitra King spoke about SSECCA's part-time employee holiday time off.
- Sean Jester shared his thoughts on having a work from home policy as well as thoughts on holiday time off for part-time SSECCA members.

8. Board Reports

A. Finance Committee

Trustee Parks provided an overview of the Finance Committee meeting held Monday, December 8, 2025. Items presented and discussed included: Internal Audit Update; Fiscal Year 2026 Financial Update; Fiscal Year 2027 Budget Timeline; Capital Projects Priority and Cost Update; Property Tax Levy – Tax Year 2025; Investment Policy Review; and

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Status of Insurance Broker RFP Process. Minutes of the Finance Committee meeting will be available on the website once they are approved.

B. Committee of the Whole

Trustee Arroyo provided an overview of the Committee of the Whole meeting held Monday, December 8, 2025. The presentations were: Auditor's Presentation by Sikich, LLP; Building S (MTC) Programming Update by Dr. Schopen and Dr. Taylor; and ECC's HSI Strategic Plan: Process Overview and What's Ahead by Dr. Garcia and Ms. Santana. No questions were raised regarding Board Actions and items on the December 9, 2025 agenda. Minutes of the Committee of the Whole meeting will be available on the website once they are approved.

C. Illinois Community College Trustee Association (ICCTA)

Trustee Allen shared the following:

- November 14-15 Board of Representatives Meeting Summary
- Trustee Roundtable Key Topics
- Committee Reports and Actions from the various committees.
- Key Takeaways and Action Items for ECC

D. Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT)

Trustee Arroyo provided a recap of the 2025 ACCT Leadership Congress in New Orleans. Additional ACCT information is available online monthly and local meet and greets have begun with our local representatives, in lieu of Trustees attending NLS in February.

E. Legislative

Trustee Rodriguez shared the following:

- In early November, U.S. Representative Delia Ramirez and Metropolitan Water Reclamation District Commissioner Eira Corral-Sepulveda made a brief but meaningful visit to our Education and Work Center (EWC) in Hanover Park. EWC Director, Monika Gadek-Stephan, along with our CELA team, joined the conversation. Representative Ramirez expressed deep appreciation for EWC's services and offered support and resources for families who may be impacted.
- Also in November, our Center for Civic Engagement hosted a lively "Running for Office" event. Oswego School Board Member and ECC Assistant Dean Heather Martin, and Elgin City Council Member Dustin Good shared what it's really like to navigate an election, from campaign basics to lessons learned along the way.
- Chair Rakow welcomed House Minority Leader Tony McCombie to campus last week. During this visit, President Heinrich provided a college overview, and VP of Finance & Business Dr. Kim Wagner, along with Dr. Cathy Taylor and Mr. Juan Fernandez, shared an update on the construction of Building S (MTC).
- We will continue welcoming legislators to campus, creating opportunities to showcase our programs, and keeping them connected to students and community needs.

F. ECC Foundation

Trustee Allen highlighted the following items from the written report:

- The Foundation Board reviewed and approved the FY25 Audit Report. The audit reflects the Foundation's strong financial stewardship and compliance with all applicable standards.

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- The Foundation continues strong fundraising performance, with \$118,434 raised since the prior report as of November 30, 2025.
- Advancement is developing a new marketing piece that will include the interior floor plan of the MTC along with naming opportunities and associated giving levels for each space. This document will provide a clear visual representation of the facility and serve as both a donor-facing resource and a targeted marketing tool for area businesses, encouraging their participation in naming opportunities.
- As of November 30, 2025, the Foundation has awarded \$172,634 in scholarship support to 125 students.
- The Retiree Committee hosted Dinner and a Show on December 6 for their final event of 2025.
- The Alumni Association is working with ECC Alum Katrina Syrris and her theatre group Goodly Creatures to plan an Alumni theatre performance for summer 2026 in cooperation with the ECC Arts Center and Tommy Hensel.
- Interviews are being conducted for the Senior Director of Development position.

G. Student Report

Student Trustee Gidlund highlighted the following events from the written report:

- Native American Beadmaking Workshop held on November 12 with 45 attendees.
- International Week Events held November 17-21 such as the Opening Ceremony, “Sriracha” and International Friendsgiving.
- Building Konnections Churros y Chocolate held on October 15 with 189 attendees.

9. College Reports

Board Action No. 109-A-26, Acceptance of Written College Reports

- A. Personnel (November)
- B. Treasurer (October)
- C. Student (November)

College Reports Under Separate Cover

- D. Institutional Advancement and ECC Foundation (November)
- E. Community Engagement and Legislative Affairs (November)

Chair Rakow confirmed receipt, either attached or under separate cover, of the afore mentioned written reports.

Motion: Trustee Rodriguez moved to accept the college reports.
Second: Trustee Parks seconded the motion.

Roll-Call Vote: Aye, 6; Rakow, Rodriguez, Redmer, Arroyo, Parks, and Allen; nay, 0;
Student Trustee Gidlund, aye; motion carried.

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10. 2025 Tax Levy Hearing

The public hearing regarding the adoption of the 2025 tax levy was opened at 7:27 p.m.

Chair Rakow shared a statement acknowledging tax implications for the community and the College. She shared ECC's historical commitment to freezing the levy for three years, abating taxes and holding tuition flat for six years.

Ms. Kerruish indicated that emails received regarding the tax levy were shared with the Board. Their names were read. The following individuals stated their opposition in email format: Connee Iscaro, Jim Herlihy, Eileen Parks, Pete Finger, Mary Ann Gunderson, Laura and Fred Boehm, Jim Benoe, Katherin Kallas, Carlene Gabor, John Dahlberg, Ralph and Tricia Schultz, Fred Haas, Robert Yessa, Sr., Any Wittich, R.A. Rein, K Vosnos, Kelie Strobel, Chris Sinatra, G, Mary Hellman, Jan Bohyer, Sandy Hart, Thomas Fox, Paul Alecander, James, Strobel, Heather Hughes. Not opposed to the levy was: Bill Welch.

Chair Rakow asked if there was anyone present wishing to comment on the tax levy. Nine individuals shared their comments on the proposed levy. Comments were made by Wendy Losik, David Teas, William Werst, Guy Lum, Jane Linder, Cody Holt, Fred Haas, Shane Nowak, and Sean Jester.

With no other audience members wishing to comment on the tax levy, the public hearing was closed at 8:02 p.m.

11. Board Action No. 110-F-25, Resolution to Adopt 2025 Tax Levy

Motion: Trustee Parks moved to approve the resolution as presented.
Second: Trustee Rodriguez seconded the motion.

Roll-Call Vote: Aye, 6; Rakow, Rodriguez, Redmer, Arroyo, Parks and Allen;
nay, 0; Student Trustee Gidlund, aye; motion carried.

12. Consent Agenda

Chair Rakow removed the following item from the consent agenda per Trustee Allen's request.

K. Board Action No. 121-F-26, Tuition for Fiscal Year 2027

Chair Rakow read the following consent agenda items:

- A. Board Action No. 111-A-26, Minutes of Regular Board Meeting, November 11, 2025**
- B. Board Action No. 112-A-26, Minutes of Closed Session of Board Meeting, November 11, 2025**
- C. Board Action No. 113-A-26, Destruction of Audiotape of Closed Session Board Meeting, April 9, 2024**
- D. Board Action No. 114-F-26, Ratification of Report of Expenses**

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- E. Board Action No. 115-F-26, Ratification of Trustee Travel Expenses**
- F. Board Action No. 116-A-26, Modified Academic Calendars for 2026-2027**
- G. Board Action No. 117-A-26, Dual Credit Programs Memorandum of Understanding Between St. Edward Central Catholic High School and Elgin Community College District No. 509**
- H. Board Action No. 118-F-26, Annual Comprehensive Financial Reports, Fiscal Year 2025**
- I. Board Action No. 119-F-26, 2025 Cook County Resolution to Allocate PTELL Reduction**
- J. Board Action No. 120-F-26, Resolution Abating the Tax Heretofore Levied for the Year 2025 to Pay Debt Service on the General Obligation Bonds (Alternative Revenue Source), Series 2024, of Elgin Community College District No. 509, Counties of Kane, Cook, DuPage, McHenry and DeKalb and State of Illinois**
- L. Board Action No. 122-A-26, Application for Permanent Curriculum Approval: Basic Vocational Specialist Certificate in Eye Care Assistant**
- M. Purchases**
 - 1. Board Action No. 123-C-26, Moving and Storage Services – Building O to Building S,** authorizes the administration to contract with Beltmann Integrated Logistics (Itasca, IL) to provide moving and storage services for an amount not to exceed \$250,000.
 - 2. Board Action No. 124-T-26, Sale of Used Computer Equipment,** authorizes the administration to sell used computer equipment consisting of desktop computers with peripheral equipment to Chicago Surplus Computers (Lombard, IL), the highest responsible bidder, in the total amount of \$15,850.
 - 3. Board Action No. 125-T-26, Time and Attendance Software Renewal,** authorizes the administration to contract for software renewal services for eTime software from WorkForce Software (Livonia, MI), in an amount not to exceed \$44,369 for a period of one (1) year.
- N. Personnel**
 - 1. Board Action No. 126-P-26, New Hire, Associate Professor I of Fire Science and Safety, Dr. Brenda Farlow**
 - 2. Board Action No. 127-P-26, New Hire, Instructor of Business, Ms. Tanisha Brewer**

Motion: Trustee Redmer moved to accept the consent agenda as presented.
Second: Student Trustee Gidlund seconded the motion.

Roll-Call Vote: Aye, 6; Rakow, Rodriguez, Redmer, Arroyo, Parks, and Allen;
nay, 0; Student Trustee Gidlund, aye; motion carried.

12.K Board Action No. 121-F-26, Tuition for Fiscal Year 2027

Motion: Trustee Rodriguez moved to accept Board Action No. 121-F-26 as presented.
Second: Trustee Allen seconded the motion.

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Trustee Allen read a statement regarding the tuition increase, acknowledging that this is an additional financial pressure on students but also recognizing the necessity to maintain programs and services. He also indicated his resolve to pursue cost reductions as applicable for student affordability.

Roll-Call Vote: Aye, 6; Rakow, Rodriguez, Redmer, Arroyo, Parks, and Allen; nay, 0; Student Trustee Gidlund, aye; motion carried.

13. Old Business

Trustee Arroyo shared that she attended the presentation sponsored by MAGIC and indicated that the next one will be held in February.

14. New Business

There was no new business brought forward.

15. Adjournment

Motion: Trustee Parks moved to adjourn the meeting.

Second: Trustee Rodriguez seconded the motion.

Voice Vote: Aye, 6; Rakow, Rodriguez, Redmer, Arroyo, Parks, and Allen; nay, 0; Student Trustee Gidlund, aye: meeting adjourned at 8:13 p.m.

Patricia Arroyo, Board Secretary

Diane Kerruish, Board Recorder