

Sisseton Wahpeton College
Board of Trustees Regular Meeting Minutes
6/23/2026 - 5:00 PM (4:30 PM meal)

Roll Call:

Big Coulee	Mary Jo Keeble	Present
Buffalo Lake	Heather Larsen	Present
Enemy Swim	Janell Williams	Present
Lake Traverse	Jessica Redthunder	Present
Long Hollow	Fran Quinn	Present
Old Agency	Travis Renville	Present
Heipa	Marie Renville	Present
Tribal Council Ex. Officio	Francis Crawford	Absent (Excused)

Others Present: Interim President Dr. Julie Buckman, Vice President of Academic Services Gretta Lavergne, William Laroque, Etta Jo Marks, Vine T. Marks, HR Director Crystal Renville, Nursing Director Melissa Marx, Lorraine Rousseau, SPO Lisa Jackson, Dean of Education Kelsey Stadtler, Extension Director Erica Fischer, Facilities Director David Redthunder, SWC Recorder Kenyon Budack Jr

-If you attended and your name is not documented, your name was not legible on the sign-in sheet.

Chairwoman Williams called the meeting to order at 5:08 PM. Roll call was taken, and a quorum was established.

Call to Order

Chairwoman Janell Williams called the meeting to order at 5:08 p.m. Roll call was taken, and a quorum was established. The agenda was approved before moving into public comments.

Public Comments

William Laroque asked for an update on the forensic audit and was informed that it remains in progress. He also questioned why he received payment for officiating a volleyball game when he had attended only as a spectator, and Interim President Dr. Julie Buckman agreed to look into the issue.

William Laroque encouraged the College to continue exploring partnerships with IHS to establish a health clinic that could serve students, employees, and the community. He also shared an example of another tribal nation investing casino revenue into higher education

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scholarships and encouraged the College and Tribe to continue working together to expand educational opportunities for students.

Discussion Items

Academic Calendar

Interim President Dr. Julie Buckman presented the revised 2027–2028 Academic Calendar, explaining that only scheduling dates had been adjusted since the Board's previous work session. After a brief discussion, the Board approved the updated calendar for the upcoming academic year.

Bids

Dr. Buckman presented bids for electrical, plumbing, and foundation work for the faculty housing renovation project funded through BIE. Facilities Director David Redthunder explained that remaining project funds would also be used for additional site improvements, including sidewalks, parking areas, and work around the Food Preservation Building.

SWC Board members discussed the timeline for completing the homes before the school year begins, how the housing would help recruit faculty, and the importance of following federal procurement requirements and TERO regulations. The Board approved all three bids.

Consent Agenda:

President's Report / Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs

Dr. Buckman reported that 110 students were enrolled for the summer semester, with early fall enrollment already underway. She also provided updates on Founders Day planning, the new Associate's Plumbing program, internship policy revisions, faculty recruitment, Smart Evals, and continued HLC preparation.

The SWC Board also received updates on USDA grant purchases, including new maintenance equipment and vehicles. Facilities Director David Redthunder explained how the remaining grant funds would be used before they expire and discussed future maintenance needs around campus.

Additional discussion focused on the rodeo grounds and horse facilities. Trustees emphasized the need for formal facility use agreements and liability waivers before community members are allowed to use College property to better protect the institution from future liability concerns.

Vice President of Administrative Services Report

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Vice President of Administrative Services Gretta Lavergne reported on attending the Jenzabar Conference in Dallas, where staff received additional training on the J1 platform and its capabilities for student records, financial management, advising, and reporting. She explained that the College continues working to fully implement the system while correcting data issues and improving reporting accuracy.

Gretta also updated the Board on the status of the 2023–2024 Single Audit. She reported that credit card transactions have been entered into and reconciled, but the auditors continue requesting additional documentation before the audit can be finalized. Staff continue working with consultants to locate missing documentation and organize financial records for the audit.

Trustee Quinn asked several questions regarding the College's financial reports, operating losses, grant expenditures, and budgeting process. She questioned why operating expenses continue to exceed revenues and expressed concern that the Board was not receiving enough detailed financial information to properly monitor the College's financial condition. She also questioned the accuracy of several financial reports and asked for more detailed department budgets, grant balances, and supporting documentation so the Board could better understand where College funds are being spent.

Discussion continued regarding internal controls, purchasing procedures, and credit card usage. Trustee Quinn recommended reducing reliance on credit cards whenever possible and returning to Purchase Orders for routine purchases to strengthen accountability. Trustees also discussed developing standardized department budgets, improving grant tracking, and providing quarterly financial reports so the Board can better monitor revenues, expenditures, and grant activity throughout the fiscal year.

Trustee Quinn also questioned whether the College was utilizing all available Jenzabar financial functions and expressed concern that multiple outside systems and consultants were being used instead of fully utilizing the College's existing software. Trustees discussed continuing staff training, improving financial reporting procedures, and ensuring the Board receives more complete financial information moving forward.

Sponsored Programs Report

Sponsored Programs Officer Lisa Jackson shared information from the HLC conference, including discussions on responsible use of artificial intelligence in higher education and upcoming compliance expectations.

Senior Business Office Specialist Richelle Solorio also discussed improving quarterly grant reporting, financial documentation, and budget modifications so both granting agencies and the Board receive consistent and complete financial information.

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Facilities Report

Facilities Director David Redthunder provided updates on faculty housing renovations, USDA-funded equipment purchases, and continued maintenance planning across campus. He also discussed concerns regarding unauthorized use of the rodeo grounds and explained that future users would be required to complete facility use agreements and liability waivers before using College property.

He also shared his recommendation to rely more heavily on Purchase Orders instead of credit cards to improve accountability and simplify purchasing procedures.

Nursing Report

Nursing Director Melissa Marx reported that six LPN students are completing their final clinical preceptorships and remain on track to graduate in August. She explained that additional NCLEX preparation has now been built directly into the nursing curriculum to improve licensure pass rates.

She also updated the SWC Board on the NACTEP grant, explaining that a possible extension and carryover opportunity had recently become available. She emphasized the importance of completing grant drawdowns on time to remain eligible for continued funding.

Additional Discussion

The Board then discussed long-term financial planning and recommended implementing zero-based budgeting, multi-year financial forecasting, and regular budget monitoring throughout the fiscal year. Members stressed the importance of understanding department budgets, grant expenditures, and overall financial performance before future budgets are approved.

The SWC Board also requested updates during the upcoming retreat on internal controls, credit card procedures, HLC accreditation preparation, completed audits, consultant contracts, and quarterly financial reporting to improve oversight and accountability.

Action Items

Motion #1 to Approve the 6/23/2026 Agenda by Trustee Redthunder, seconded by Trustee Quinn, Questioned by Trustee Travis Renville. 6/0/0. MVP. **Motion passed.**

Motion #2 to approve the 2027-2028 Academic Calendar by Trustee Quinn, seconded by Trustee Redthunder, Questioned by Trustee Marie Renville. 7/0. **Motion Passed.**

Motion #3 to approve the bids in the three categories with BIE as a funding source by Trustee Renville. Seconded by Trustee Quinn, Questioned by Trustee Redthunder. MVP. **Motion Passed** 5/0/0.

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Motion #4 to approve the Regular Board of Trustees meeting minutes on May 19, 2026. By Trustee Redthunder, seconded by Trustee Larsen , questioned by Trustee Marie Renville. 7/0/0. **Motion passed.** 7/0 MVP.

Motion #5 to go into closed executive session by Trustee Redthunder, Seconded by Trustee Quinn, Question by Trustee Larsen. MVP. **Motion Passed.** 7/0/0

District Concerns

Big Coulee

- Trustee Keeble reported that only a brief district meeting had been held and that another meeting is planned later in the month.

Buffalo Lake

- Trustee Larsen reported no new district concerns following the recent community meeting.

Enemy Swim

- Chairwoman Williams reported no concerns or questions from the district.

Heipa:

- No district meeting was held.

Lake Traverse:

- Trustee Redthunder reported that no June district meeting had taken place.

Long Hollow

- Trustee Quinn asked for updates regarding FEMA assistance for the ceremonial drums and the Coca-Cola Scholarship. The administration reported that both remain pending.

Old Agency

- Trustee Travis Renville shared community questions regarding the presidential search, drum repairs, and concerns about removing the unused windmill.

Post-District Concerns Public Comments

William Laroque requested an update on the presidential search. HR Director Crystal Renville reported that background checks are nearly complete for the 3 remaining applicants before the hiring process moves forward.

Mr. Laroque also asked about improvements to the nursing program and future grant funding. Nursing Director Melissa Marx explained that additional NCLEX preparation has been incorporated into the program and discussed the possibility of receiving an extension for NACTEP funding.

Mr. Laroque concluded by encouraging the College to maintain housing opportunities for both student-athletes and non-athlete students as enrollment continues to grow.

Executive Session

The board then went into closed executive session for the remainder of the meeting.

Respectfully Submitted,

SWC Recorder: Kenyon Budack Jr.