

Illinois Eastern Community Colleges
Strategic Engagement Planning Council (SEPC) Minutes
May 6, 2026 | 9:00 - 11:30 a.m. | TLB West Richland Center

Attendees: Ryan Gower, Sheryl Childers, Tona Ambrose, Matt Fowler, Sharmila Kakac, Amber Malone, Andrea McDowell, Chris Simpson, Paul Tait, Brandon Weger

Absent: Ryan Hawkins, Jessica McDonald, Cathy Robb

Guests: None

Welcome & Opening Remarks

Dr. Gower called the meeting to order and provided an overview of the agenda.

Reports

Chris Simpson- Gave a report on the OCC third floor construction. The council discussed various construction projects happening throughout the District.

Matt Fowler- Reported on a recent theater performance showcasing the end-of-year accomplishments for WVC Arts students. He expressed his appreciation for the continued growth within the Performing Arts program.

Ryan Gower – Dr. Gower asked for responses and concerns regarding recent communications that addressed FY27 budget and projected shortfalls. Divisional leadership offered several suggestions for areas in which savings might be realized. Dr. Gower asked that they go back to their budget books and address those areas paying special attention to travel, supplies, and contracts which had all spiked from FY26 budget requests. Dr. Gower reminded the leadership team of the purpose of the reorganization and the work that still remains to begin working as a unified system delivering services out of four campuses.

Institutional Effectiveness- Brandon Weger reported on student applications. To date 1,413 have been received for AY27. This is a slight decline from AY26.

Consent Agenda

Approved items included:

- **April 2026 SEPC minute and Divisional Minutes**
- **Policy 100.44 BOT Onboarding & Orientation (Gower)-** The newly developed policy provides a structured onboarding program that

familiarizes Trustees with the IECC mission, governance framework, and the role of the Board in advancing student success, academic excellence, and community service. The Policy will return to the Board on May 19 for a second reading and possible approval.

- **Procedure 100.44 BOT Onboarding & Orientation (Gower)**- The newly developed procedure outlines the onboarding schedule for newly elected Trustees.
- **Procedure 100.24 Emergency Management (Gower)**- The newly developed procedure maintains a coordinated emergency management framework designed to protect the health, safety, and welfare of students, employees, and visitors.
- **Procedure 300.17 Facilities Usage (Simpson)**- The procedure was revised to include language to keep facility use revenue local with the campus that generated the revenue.
- **Affiliation Agreements (Robb)**-
 - **Alton Physical Therapy**
 - **InLine Physical Therapy**
 - **Union Hospital, Inc.**
- **Grant Update (Hawkins)**

Consent Agenda approved unanimously.

Policies & Procedures

Reviewed for administrative action:

- **Policy 200.4 IT Remote Access (Tait)**- The revised policy establishes a secure and standardized process for granting, using, and monitoring remote access for faculty, staff, and all other authorized users.
- **Procedure 200.4 IT Remote Access (Tait)**- The revised procedure outlines the steps for requesting remote access to IECC's information technology systems and resources and provides additional guidelines and responsibilities.
- **Policy 800.14 Guided Pathways (Robb)**- The newly developed policy establishes administrative responsibilities for establishing, implementing, and enforcing procedures governing the review, approval, documentation, and oversight of guided pathways. The development of procedures will ensure consistency, transparency, and alignment with institutional standards and accrediting expectations.
- **Policy 500.46 Terms Honors (Malone)**- The newly developed policy recognizes student academic achievement for the fall and spring terms through honors designations.

- **Procedure 500.46 Terms Honors (Malone)**- The newly developed procedure establishes guidelines for processing term honors in accordance with policy 500.46 and ensures compliance with FERPA and institutional data governance standards.

All policies and procedures were approved as presented.

Staff Recommendations for Approval

- **Dual Credit Home School Proposal (Ambrose)**- The draft proposal presented a model through which IECC could offer dual credit classes to homeschooled students at a reduced tuition rate and expands access to college-level coursework, promotes educational equity, and strengthens partnerships between IECC and the homeschool community. Feedback was given and direction regarding faculty qualifications, mutual transcription, and assessment were raised. The leadership team acknowledged positive elements in the proposal. President Ambrose will incorporate SEPC directives and return a proposal in June.
- **MOU Craford Co. Development Assoc./IECC & LTC “618 Project” (Ambrose)**- The MOU establishes a partnership between IECC, LTC, and the CCDA for the use of office space within the Activity Annex on LTC's north campus in support of the USDA grant-funded 618 Project, a small business incubator. President Ambrose and President Kakac are discussing ways the Business & Industry division can play a role in this work and the goal is to bring a similar service unit to each of the four campuses. Approval was given.
- **IECC Athletic Standardization (Ambrose/Gower)**- Dr. Gower shared an athletics staffing model that had been developed by the four campus Presidents. The model aligns staffing models across campus. For full-time position, each campus will transition to the new structure as vacancies arise. Part-time coaching positions will have a phased transition beginning in AY27 and continuing through AY28.

Informational & Discussion Items

- **Lightcast (Hawkins)**- To ensure that the contracted services are being utilized to the fullest extent, a committee consisting of one representative from each division and financial aid, will be formed to review and incorporate these services into the operational plans for FY '27.
- **Budget Conditions (Hawkins)**- No further discussion from Dr. Gower's introductory comments.
- **Dual Credit Quality Act Updates (Ambrose)**- President Ambrose gave an update on Dual Credit and provided a copy of the revisions to the DCQA.
- **DOJ WCAG 2.0 Update (Ambrose)**- President Ambrose gave an update on a change to the deadline for compliance.

- **Athletic Roster Tracking SGASPR (Malone/Fowler)**- OAR presented a formal process for tracking student athletes, both scholarship recipients and walk-ons, who are members of an IECC NJCAA team. A formal procedure will be developed to address athletes who have been removed from team rosters based on eligibility or disciplinary action.
- **Emergency Management – Common Signage, Regroup Template, Building Maps (Fowler)**- Dr. Fowler inquired about the completion of the formalized templates. The recently appointed Director of Emergency Management will assist in the development of the finalized templates, and the items will be returned for SEPC acceptance.
- **Ellucian Renewal (Hawkins/Tait)**- IECC will renew the Banner contract on a one-year basis. The one-year contract will allow for adjustments in the future, if it is determined that the contracted services can be negotiated more efficiently.
- **Updated Hazard Response & Quick Guide (Gower/Forde)**- Dr. Gower will have Mr. Forde email documents to SEPC members for review.
- **IECC Facility & Technology Survey Report / Survey Transition Plan (Weger)**- Mr. Weger provided a copy of the recent survey results for review. IECC will be moving to a new software platform that will improve the implementation of surveys and assist in gathering more detailed and program specific information.

Capital Projects: None.

District Finance: None.

Approval of Personnel Items

- **WVC PT Softball Coach & PT IECC Enrollment Management Coordinator (Ambrose/McDowell)**- Approval for the position was given, with a start date of July 6, 2026.
- **Change of Status Coordinator of Marketing & Graphic Design CETL (Ambrose/McDowell)**- As set forth by policy, the item will be revisited during the annual review of employee compensation in August. The item was tabled and Dr. Gower reminded the leadership team of the timeline and the importance of reviewing anticipated staffing changes and working proactively to build talent pipelines within the organization.
- **Interim Admin. Asst. to LTC President and Dean of Instruction (Ambrose/McDowell)**- President Ambrose sought approval for the Administrative Assistant to the Dean of Students to temporarily serve in the role, for a period not exceeding 12 months. The interim period will allow for the evaluation of job duties within the position. Approval was given.

Other Business- None.

Adjournment: 12:52 p.m.

Next Meeting: June 3, 2026 @ 9 am