

Illinois Eastern Community Colleges
Strategic Engagement Planning Council (SEPC) Minutes
October 17, 2025 | 9:00a.m. | via TEAMS

Attendees: Ryan Gower, Sheryl Childers, Tona Ambrose, Matt Fowler, Ryan Hawkins, Amber Malone, Jessica McDonald, Andrea McDowell, Cathy Robb, Paul Tait, Brandon Weger

Absent: Chris Simpson, Sharmila Kakac, Ryan Hawkins

Guests: Tara Farleigh, Amy Tarr, Sonja Wease, Chris Forde

Welcome & Opening Remarks

Dr. Gower opened the meeting and provided an overview of the intention of the meeting: awareness, alignment, and improvement. He acknowledged that the incident that was the catalyst for this meeting could have transpired at any of our locations and that the goal of the meeting was not to cast blame, but rather to be open about what worked and what didn't so future responses, if necessary, would be better. He encouraged open conversation and participation from all meeting participants including the guests who were joining on behalf of others.

WVC Incident Summary (Fowler)- Dr. Fowler thanked Dr. Gower for calling the meeting. He gave a report on a recent incident at WVC. Dr. Gower had previously shared a written report with SEPC with details. Dr. Fowler walked through the events of the morning with SEPC and noted areas for improvement.

Members of SEPC asked more detailed questions about the student, the type of vest worn, where certain administrators were and why they were not involved earlier, communication systems, and why students or faculty did not feel empowered to call 911 directly.

Dr. Gower walked SEPC through the three primary areas where administrative response failed:

- 1) Command & Control Breakdown. Administration failed to make a "handoff" to take command of any incident – or that handoff was not well known or widely understood by front office staff.

- 2) Failure to Immediately Notify Law Enforcement. Dr. Gower noted that when a credible threat is reported, our job is to secure, report, and protect. Investigation belongs to law enforcement.
- 3) Breakdown in Unified Communication. There was no use of the District emergency alert system during or after the incident. This led to confusion and inconsistent response among faculty and staff.

Dr. Gower then provided several immediate and long-term action steps he expects administration to take. They included:

- 1) Presidents – to review the chain of command as detailed in the Emergency Response plans and to compare it to current (or desired) practices. Presidents are to bring this list and their written process used to delegate and communicate delegation of incident command to November SEPC.
- 2) Presidents – to finalize membership of Campus Emergency Management Teams (formerly Campus Safety Teams) and bring that list and the dates of upcoming meetings to November SEPC.
- 3) IT – to prepare and deliver a face-to-face training on the use of ReGroup for relevant stakeholders. Presidents are to bring a list of those authorized to use our emergency response tool to November SEPC and a training will be provided afterward.
- 4) All members of SEPC will complete the Vector Training "Emergency Management" training modules before the first day of Spring 2026 classes.
- 5) Presidents- working with MarCom & Operations and Maintenance will ensure that every classroom and office space has posted the Emergency Response Guide developed for AY25.
- 6) A subcommittee led by Sonja Wease and Chris Forde will develop a list of mandatory trainings that will take place at the Spring and Fall workshops. They will also revisit IECC's procedures, refine where necessary, and make emergency information more readily available to staff through training and access.

Policies & Procedures

- **Policy 100.24 Emergency Management (Gower)-** The policy has been revised to note the expectation that Campus Emergency Management Teams should be meeting monthly and working to keep safety and emergency preparedness in day-to-day conversations. This policy revision will go to the October Board of Trustees meeting for review.
- **Procedure 100.24 Emergency Management (Gower)-** The corresponding procedure will be updated and brought to November SEPC to allow for proper language changes and to incorporate suggestions from the Presidents and the subcommittee tasked with procedure evaluation.

Dr. Gower closed the meeting by thanking everyone for their time and reminding them again that purpose of the meeting was not to find fault, but to take the opportunity to enhance emergency response.

Adjournment: 10:25 a.m.