

Illinois Eastern Community Colleges
Strategic Engagement Planning Council (SEPC) Minutes
October 7, 2026 | 9:00 - 11:30 a.m. | TLB West Richland Center

Attendees: Tim Taylor, Sheryl Childers, Tona Ambrose, Andrea McDowell, Matt Fowler, Cassandra Goldman, Ryan Hawkins, Sharmila Kakac, Amber Malone, Jessica McDonald, Cathy Robb, Chris Simpson, Paul Tait, Brandon Weger.

Absent: None.

Guests: None.

Call to Order & Welcome

Dr. Taylor called the meeting to order at 9:02 a.m. and provided an overview of the agenda.

Recognition of Visitors and Guests

None

Reports

Chancellor- Dr. Taylor gave an overview of the areas he has been focusing on during his initial weeks at IECC. He discussed the items that he plans to address in his upcoming Chancellor's Report. He expressed appreciation for the interactions he has shared with stakeholders and discussed recurring themes. He expressed his appreciation for the good work that is being done throughout the District and encouraged the council to continue reviewing Division Minutes. He provided the council with his expectations for how agenda items would be considered in today's meeting.

Approval of Consent Agenda

Approved items included:

- **September 2026 SEPC Meeting Minutes (Taylor)**
- **Divisional Meeting Minutes (Taylor)**
- **IECC Student Athlete Handbook (Goldman)-** The handbook provides the goals and objectives, regulations, policies, and procedures of IECC Athletic Departments, while also providing student athletes with available resources.
- **Affiliation Agreements (Robb)**
 - Acorn Estates

- Oakview Nursing & Rehab
- **Grant Update (Hawkins)**

Disposition: The Consent Agenda was approved as presented.

Action on Items Removed from Consent Agenda

None.

Policy Review & Recommendation

The following proposed Board policy revisions were reviewed for recommendation to the Board:

- **Policy 100.38 General Gift (Taylor)-** The policy has been revised to reflect concise and principle-based guidelines for gift acceptance, stewardship, donor recognition, and naming. It establishes the Board's expectations concerning philanthropy, stewardship, donor recognition, institutional independence, and public trust.

Disposition: Recommend the proposed revisions to Policy 100.38 for consideration and approval by the Board.

- **Policy 100.3 Meeting Minutes / Deletion of Policy 100.13 Appearance Before the Board (Taylor) -** Proposed revisions to Policy 100.3, retitled *Board Meetings and Proceedings*, were presented to consolidate provisions governing public comments at Board meetings. The proposal also included deletion of Policy 100.13, *Appearance Before the Board*, to maintain these provisions within a single Board policy.

Disposition: Recommend the proposed revisions to Policy 100.3 and deletion of Policy 100.13 for consideration and approval by the Board.

Procedure Review & Approval

- **Procedure 100.38 Donor Recognition and Naming (Taylor) –** The new procedure translates the expectations of Policy 100.38 into practice. It establishes definitions, review requirements, approval authorities, valuation considerations, due-diligence expectations, naming durations, agreement requirements, and processes for modifying or terminating recognition.

Disposition: Approved the proposed administrative procedure, contingent upon Board approval of the corresponding revisions to Policy 100.38.

- **Procedure 500.15 Residency Determination & Verification (Malone)** – Ms. Malone presented revisions to the residency determination and verification procedure addressing applicable legal requirements and documentation used in determining student residency.

Disposition: Approved the revised procedure for implementation.

Staff Recommendations for Approval

None.

Informational Items

- **Health & Dental Insurance Renewal (Hawkins/McDowell)**- Mr. Hawkins gave an update on the expected rise in insurance premiums, the driving factors behind the increases, and the effects those increases are having on the IECC budget. Mrs. McDowell gave a timeline for the upcoming open enrollment and provided information regarding how enrollment information would be communicated to employees. Open enrollment begins soon and will remain open for 2 weeks. Human Resources will be communicating precise dates to all IECC employees via email.

Disposition: Received the renewal update and associated financial information in advance of Board consideration.

- **UE Guaranteed Admission Agreement (Robb)**- Dr. Robb presented the proposed Guaranteed Admission Agreement between Illinois Eastern Community Colleges and the University of Evansville. The agreement provides guaranteed admission to eligible IECC students and identifies associated scholarship opportunities.

Dr. Robb also reported that additional program-specific articulation agreements are under development. Discussion addressed opportunities to establish articulation agreements in significant academic program areas, and SEPC encouraged Dr. Robb to continue pursuing these opportunities.

Disposition: The Guaranteed Admission Agreement was reviewed and approved for signature by the Chancellor. Dr. Robb will continue developing program-specific articulation agreements for future consideration, as appropriate.

- **Upcoming Bond Issuance Timeline & Projects (Hawkins)-** Mr. Hawkins gave an update on planning for a potential bond issuance. He gave an overview of the projects proposed for consideration under the financing framework and provided the cost assessment for HVAC systems. He discussed athletics facility projects, including anticipated bidding in Spring 2027. He discussed future capital needs associated with career and technical education programs and provided the timeline for presenting the bond issuance to the Board of Trustees.

Disposition: Received the financing and project planning update.

- **FY27 Mental Health Competitive Grant (Goldman)-** The list of ICCB Mental Health Competitive Grant award determinations for FY27 was provided for SEPC review. IECC will be utilizing the funding to provide Timely Care services and mental health training. A portion of the grant will be allocated to assist with basic student needs. President Ambrose shared information regarding the Timely Care application and asked the council to share the information with staff. Staff members are encouraged to download the application to become familiar with the mental health support resources available through TimelyCare.

Disposition: Received Information.

- **Emergency Preparedness & Safety (Taylor)-** Dr. Taylor provided SEPC with an update regarding the current work being performed by the IECC Director of Emergency Preparedness. The update included consideration of a more coordinated approach to districtwide safety standards and campus-level emergency management responsibilities. Discussion was held regarding the Great American Shake Out. President Simpson will follow up with the Director of Emergency Preparedness to communicate information to stakeholders.

Follow-Up: President Simpson will coordinate with the Director of Emergency Preparedness regarding communication of the Great American ShakeOut information.

Discussion Items

- **Timeline for BOT Submission (Taylor)-** Dr. Taylor briefly discussed suggested revisions to the current timeline for Board of Trustees meeting materials. The revised timeline is intended to provide additional time for review. The timeline will be shared following today's meeting and return for discussion at the November SEPC.

Disposition: Discussion deferred to the November SEPC meeting because the accompanying memorandum was inadvertently omitted from the meeting materials. No substantive discussion or action occurred.

Follow-up: The memorandum and proposed timeline will be distributed in advance of the November meeting.

- **Governance Discussion (Taylor)-** Dr. Taylor facilitated a discussion using practical scenarios to explore principles of effective institutional governance. The discussion addressed distinctions between stakeholder participation and decision authority, the importance of meaningful and appropriately timed participation, and the need to align governance processes with the significance of institutional decisions.

The discussion also identified questions requiring further consideration, including SEPC's distinctive role relative to divisional and other governance structures, advisory versus approval responsibilities, and accountability for implementation and assessment.

Disposition: Exploratory discussion. No changes to SEPC's role, authority, or IECC's governance structure were approved. Further discussion and refinement are anticipated.

- **eTeams Sponsors (Hawkins/Presidents)-** Mr. Hawkins discussed the utilization of eTeams for athletics fundraising and presented a proposed districtwide agreement intended to serve the Colleges. Discussion addressed the potential benefits of a coordinated districtwide arrangement and the readiness of IECC to enter into such an agreement.

Disposition: The consensus of the discussion was that IECC should not pursue a districtwide eTeams agreement at this time. Colleges currently working with eTeams may continue those arrangements in coordination with Mr. Hawkins and his team.

- **HLC Assurance Review Dates (Robb)-** Dr. Robb shared a request from the HLC to complete a survey aimed at determining the dates for mid-cycle assurance reviews. She asked that SEPC members review the dates that are being offered and alert her to any dates that might be problematic. Dr. Robb will select three dates to offer the HLC and report back with more information.

Follow-up: Dr. Robb will select three potential review dates and inform the team of HLC's decision.

- **Advising Capacity Analysis (Weger)-** An analysis was provided, reflecting the academic advising capacity for the Spring 2027 registration period. The information was provided for planning purposes only, and no staffing or resource allocations were considered. Dr. Taylor asked Dr. Robb and Dean Goldman to collaborate to further evaluate advising capacity and develop recommendations as appropriate.

Disposition: Reviewed for planning purposes. No staffing or resource allocation decisions were made.

Follow-up: Dr. Robb and Dean Goldman will collaborate on further analysis and potential recommendations.

Capital Projects:

None.

District Finance:

None.

Personnel Items for Consideration

- **Change in Status LTC Administrative Assistant (McDowell/Ambrose)-** Mrs. McDowell informed the council of an anticipated change in status for the LTC Administrative Assistant to the President and Dean.

Disposition: Recommend the proposed change in status for the LTC Administrative Assistant be sent to the Board for consideration and approval.

Other Business-

None.

Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at 12:13

Next Meeting: November 4, 2026 @ 9:00 am