



PLANNING AND BUDGETING COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, March 4, 2026

In-Person and Via Zoom

Regular Meeting: 2:10 – 4:30 p.m.

Members present: Maria Huning, Lisa Palmer, Nick Carr, Alicia Aguirre, Julie Luu, Denise Erickson, Jose Zelaya, Alex Kramer, Megan Rodriguez Antone, Lizette Bricker, Ludmila Prisecar, Kim Lopez, Olivia Cortez-Figueroa, Roz Young, Rosie Mendoza Morrison, Diana Tedone-Goldstone, Chanel Meanor, Julian Taylor, Chialin Hsieh, Kassie Alexander, Christopher Wardell, Chantal Sosa

Members absent: Shanda DeRosans, Karen Engel

Guests and others present: Peter Fitzsimmons, Peter Tam, Wissem Bennani, Liliana Garcia-Arteaga, Brianna Chavez, Michiko Kealoha, Mwanaisa Sims

AGENDA ITEM	CONTENT
<p>Welcome, Introductions and Approval of Consent Agenda</p>	<p>The PBC meeting began with a welcome and introductions after quorum was established. Maria Huning, the Classified Senate President, introduced herself and her co-chair, Diana Tedone- Goldstone, the Co-Academic Senate President. The council then moved to the consent agenda, which included the February 18, 2026 meeting minutes and the February 25 staffing update, both of which had been previously distributed and were available on the PBC website.</p> <p>The PBC consent agenda included the following items:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • February 18, 2026 Meeting Minutes • Board-approved staffing updates: February 25, 2026 <p>Motion: A motion to approve the Consent Agenda was made by Lisa Palmer and seconded by Chialin Hsieh Discussion: none Abstentions: none Approval: all present members voted in favor of the motion; motion passed</p>
<p>REGULAR AGENDA</p>	
<p>District Mid-Year Budget Update presented by Peter Fitzsimmons, Chief Financial Officer</p>	<p>District Mid-Year Budget Update Presentation</p> <p>The council next received a district mid-year budget update from Chief Financial Officer Peter Fitzsimmons. He explained that the presentation summarized the</p>

2025–2026 Mid-Year Budget Report that had been provided to the board alongside a detailed 70-page report and reflected the district’s financial status as of December 31. Peter began by reviewing the district’s six budget principles and then discussed the governor’s January budget proposal for 2026–2027, noting that it was only an initial proposal and would later be revised through the May revision and legislative negotiations before taking effect July 1. The proposal included an overall state budget increase of 8.7% but came with significant uncertainty due to optimistic revenue projections tied to capital gains taxes and potential federal policy impacts. For community colleges, the proposal included a \$1.2 billion year-over-year increase, largely driven by Proposition 98 funding, with about one-third ongoing and two-thirds one-time funding. Ongoing funding included a proposed 2.41% cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) for certain categorical programs such as DSPS, EOPS, Apprenticeship, CalWORKS, CARE, and the Mandated Cost Block Grant, though some programs, including the Student Equity and Achievement Program, would not receive a COLA.

Peter also outlined several one-time funding proposals, including funds to pay off state deferrals tied to the student-centered funding formula, additional money for scheduled maintenance projects, and \$100 million for a Student Support Block Grant aimed primarily at addressing students’ basic needs. Turning to the district’s financial position, he reported that the unrestricted general fund (Fund 1) had an adopted revenue budget of \$278 million, with nearly \$150 million—about 54%—already received by December 31, slightly ahead of the previous year’s pace. On the expenditure side, the district had budgeted about \$256 million and had spent approximately \$115 million, or 45%, indicating spending below the midpoint of the fiscal year. He noted that these figures were somewhat artificially low because recently approved COLA increases had not yet been reflected in the data and would be applied retroactively. Additional slides summarized revenues and expenditures across other district funds, showing 41% of projected revenues received and 30% of expenditures spent, which Peter said was typical given seasonal spending patterns. He also explained that the board was asked to ratify budget transfers made between July and December, which increased expenditure budgets across funds by about \$13 million to match increased revenues.

During the discussion, council members asked about the application of COLA increases, and Peter clarified that the facilities union had already received its COLA, the classified and non-represented groups would receive theirs in April following board approval, and negotiations with the faculty union were still ongoing. Questions were also raised about how the governor’s final term might affect the budget and whether scheduled maintenance funds could support ADA-related building upgrades; Peter explained that Governor Gavin Newsom’s proposal would likely carry through the current budget cycle, while facilities staff would determine priorities for any maintenance funding received. In response to questions about the district’s financial outlook, he stated that overall, the district’s budget was performing as planned, though one campus, College of San Mateo, was spending above the midpoint of its budget and working to address its deficit, while other campuses were performing more favorably. He

	<p>concluded that the district’s biggest financial risk was fluctuations in property tax revenue, which is the primary funding source for a basic-aid district and closely tied to real estate market conditions. The council thanked Peter for the update and noted that additional questions could be directed to him by email.</p>
<p>Enrollment Update presented by Chialin Hsieh, Vice President of Instruction</p>	<p><u>Enrollment Update Presentation</u></p> <p>Chialin Hsieh presented a routine update on course enrollment and instructional modality following the Spring 2026 census date, noting that the report had also been shared previously with the Institutional Planning Council. She explained that the data supports institutional planning goals, including improving the course schedule, expanding modality options, and providing evidence for accreditation standards. Using comparative data from the past three spring semesters, Chialin reviewed key metrics such as enrollment, headcount, number of sections, faculty load (FTEF), and course load efficiency. She reported that overall enrollment had increased slightly—about 0.5% compared with Spring 2025—reaching more than 12,000 enrollments, and that the college’s headcount was the highest recorded since records began in the 1990s. However, there were small declines in both first-time student enrollment and international student enrollment. The number of course sections offered had decreased by about 4%, which correspondingly reduced the FTEF. Despite that reduction, the college achieved its highest load in four years, increasing from 423 to 451, which represented roughly a 6% improvement in efficiency. Chialin explained that load measures instructional efficiency by comparing student contact hours to faculty workload and is essentially a measure of how fully seats in classes are filled. While the state benchmark is around 525 for a typical three-unit class with 35 students, the college had not yet reached that level but was moving closer.</p> <p>Chialin then reviewed fill rates and modality distribution for Spring 2026 courses. The college’s overall goal is an 80% fill rate, and the data showed notable differences by modality. Online asynchronous courses had the highest fill rate at 87% and the highest load, exceeding 500, while synchronous online, hybrid, and face-to-face courses had lower fill rates of 66%, 74%, and 73% respectively. She noted that asynchronous online courses were effectively raising the overall institutional load. The scheduling breakdown showed that administrators had built the schedule with 52% of sections offered face-to-face, 28% asynchronous online, 7% synchronous online, and 13% hybrid. However, student enrollment patterns differed: 40% of students enrolled in asynchronous courses even though only 28% of sections were scheduled that way, while only 42% of enrollments were in face-to-face classes despite more than half the schedule being in that modality. Ideally, Chialin explained, the proportion of scheduled sections and student enrollment would be more closely aligned. She also described trends across recent semesters, noting that although the college had intentionally increased face-to-face offerings as students returned to campus, the growth in face-to-face enrollment had slowed, rising only about 1% from Spring 2025 to Spring 2026.</p>

	<p>Chialin also addressed course cancellations and scheduling efficiency. According to district policy, face-to-face, hybrid, and synchronous courses with fewer than 15 students by the start date must be canceled, while asynchronous courses require at least 20 students. During Spring 2026, 19 classes were canceled due to low enrollment, including six in Business, Design, and Workforce; six in Humanities and Social Sciences; and seven in Science and Technology. She explained that this suggested the college may have scheduled slightly more sections than enrollment could support. Administrators closely monitor enrollment daily leading up to census and make cancellation decisions carefully to avoid overscheduling while still ensuring students have course access. Chialin also emphasized the importance of program completion planning. Using a program completability dashboard developed with institutional research staff, the college monitors whether students can complete degree requirements within two years. Of the college’s 74 associate degrees and certificates, 67 could currently be completed within a two-year course rotation, while seven programs—including ethnic studies, geography, marketing, music, studio arts, theatre costuming, and theatre arts —had at least one required course that was not offered frequently enough due to low enrollment. As of the time of the presentation, Lisa Palmer and Anna Budd had worked diligently to ensure Theatre Arts had one core course offered, which was a recent development. Deans and faculty were actively working on recruitment and scheduling strategies to ensure those core courses were offered regularly enough for timely completion.</p> <p>Lastly, Chialin reviewed enrollment trend graphs showing registration patterns leading up to the start of the semester. Registration for Spring 2026 began about 60 days before the term—later than in previous years, when it started roughly 80 days before—which affected the shape of the enrollment curve, though overall enrollment remained similar to Spring 2025 levels. She also presented division-level metrics, highlighting that the Science and Technology division had the strongest instructional load at approximately 544, significantly above the college average of about 450 and helping strengthen overall institutional efficiency. Chialin concluded that the administration continued to monitor scheduling, enrollment trends, and program completion data closely to ensure course offerings balanced efficiency, student demand, and program requirements.</p>
<p>EMP 2.6 Update: Improve Faculty and Staff Hiring Practices to Ensure a Diverse Pool of Applicants presented by Mwanaisha Sims, Director of Civil Rights and Compliance and Michiko Kealoha, Director of Equity</p>	<p><u>EMP 2.6 Update Presentation: Improve Faculty and Staff Hiring Practices to Ensure a Diverse Pool of Applicants</u></p> <p>Michiko Kealoha began by reviewing EMP Goal 2.6, which focuses on revising and improving faculty and staff hiring practices to recognize both traditional and non-traditional experiences and qualifications in order to ensure a diverse pool of applicants. She explained that this initiative is a priority for the year and highlighted several related efforts. These included ensuring representation from the college on the district-wide Equal Employment Opportunity Advisory Committee (EEOAC), which meets twice a month in both full-group and subgroup formats. She thanked members who participate in the committee and emphasized the importance of data-informed work. Michiko also described</p>

learning from other institutions, including a presentation from Gavilan College about their use of an independent equity advocate during hiring deliberations to help maintain an equity lens. Additionally, she noted that the Equity and Anti-Racism Planning Council reviewed the district's Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) certification and plan, discussed demographic data trends, and explored ideas such as potentially reviving a faculty diversity internship program. The college also recently received updated employee demographic data from Human Resources and plans to analyze long-term trends over five to ten years to assess whether current diversity initiatives are producing measurable change. Michiko added that discussions about hiring and retention were informed by results from the campus climate survey, particularly regarding whether employees would feel encouraged to work at or remain with the institution.

Mwanaisha Sims then provided a broader overview of the district's Equal Employment Opportunity Advisory Committee and its responsibilities. She explained that the committee includes representatives from each campus and multiple employee classifications, and that its work is guided by the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office and the district's Equal Employment Opportunity Plan, which must be recertified annually and updated every three years. The committee examines hiring practices across the entire employment lifecycle, including pre-hiring, hiring, and post-hiring stages, and is now required by the state to conduct deeper analysis of hiring data and underrepresentation. Mwanaisa emphasized that diversifying applicant pools requires collaboration across the entire institution and noted that previous initiatives, such as the pre-pandemic Diversity Mentoring Internship Program for faculty recruitment, were part of the district's broader efforts. She also described strategies used to address underrepresentation, including reviewing job announcements and minimum qualifications, evaluating recruitment sources, analyzing bias in hiring practices, reviewing exit survey data from departing employees, and implementing action plans informed by workforce data.

Mwanaisha further discussed efforts to strengthen hiring strategies and reduce bias. These included training EEOAC members on job analysis and position description development, participation in equity-focused hiring trainings offered by universities such as the University of Southern California and Oregon State University, and revisions to job description language to ensure it attracts a more diverse applicant pool. Recruitment efforts include outreach at job fairs, conferences, and events that engage underrepresented professional communities. The district also tracks recruitment and hiring data through platforms such as LinkedIn and JobElephant to analyze where applicants drop off during the hiring process and to better understand patterns from application submission through interview stages. She noted that the state now requires districts to report this type of data, though the district is still in the process of finalizing its tracking methods. Mwanaisa added that evaluating demographic change can be challenging for tenured faculty positions due to relatively low turnover rates, meaning long-term data analysis may be necessary to observe meaningful trends.

Additional elements of the district’s EEO efforts include compliance with Title V regulations related to discrimination, harassment, and retaliation reporting, as well as workforce data analysis to identify and address underrepresentation. The committee has worked with external consultants in the past, such as the Biddle Consulting Group, to analyze employment data. Members also participate in the Higher Education Recruitment Consortium to broaden recruitment networks. Mwanaisha explained that retention efforts are equally important, as employees who are successfully recruited often later serve on hiring committees and influence future recruitment processes. Ongoing professional development and participation in conferences such as NCORE and ACCCA help maintain awareness of equity practices. She also noted that the District Anti-Racism Council works closely with the EEOAC, with overlapping membership helping align goals related to eliminating systemic racism and improving equitable hiring practices.

During the discussion period, Michiko highlighted that the district distributes job announcements to a wide range of community organizations in order to expand outreach to diverse professional networks, noting that this was something she herself had only learned after joining the committee. A council member asked whether these announcements are automatically distributed or require requests; Mwanaisha responded that the district maintains a distribution list and generally sends announcements broadly, especially for external positions. Another participant raised concerns related to the campus climate survey, particularly that many employees reported uncertainty about whistleblower protections and concerns about favoritism. Mwanaisha explained that whistleblower complaints are now handled by a district auditor who reports directly to the Board of Trustees, though she noted she would need to confirm details regarding oversight and checks and balances within the process.

Further discussion focused on strategies to reduce bias in hiring, including the possibility of removing names from applications during early review stages. A participant referenced research showing that blind review processes increase diversity in candidate pools and expressed frustration that the idea had been discussed previously but not yet implemented. Adams acknowledged that the Equal Employment Opportunity Advisory Committee has been exploring this option but noted that the current hiring software does not easily allow for redaction of identifying information such as names and addresses. The committee has been researching alternative software solutions that could support this practice. Another participant suggested the NeoEd platform as a tool that had successfully enabled name-blind application reviews at their previous institution. Mwanaisha responded positively and said the committee would consider adding that option to its research discussions. The presenters invited participants to send additional questions to either of them, noting that they collaborate across committees and would help direct inquiries to the appropriate office.

STANDING ITEMS

<p>Associated Students of Cañada College</p>	<p>Chanel Meanor provided an update on behalf of the Associated Students, noting that many members were currently attending a conference and had only recently returned with new insights. She explained that the conference highlighted how other community colleges across California, even those with fewer resources, were implementing more robust student support programs. Examples included improved transportation options for students, particularly those commuting from areas such as East Palo Alto and North Fair Oaks, as well as initiatives aimed at addressing cost-of-living challenges. Some colleges offered services such as clothing closets, including professional attire for job interviews, to better support students' needs. Chanel emphasized that these observations suggested the need for the college's student senate to more closely examine its own structure, programs, and organizational approach. She stated that the information gathered from the conference prompted reflection on how the college could better support those overseeing student services and strengthen connections that would allow similar initiatives to be developed or expanded. Chanel concluded that the institution should conduct a thoughtful evaluation of its current efforts to identify opportunities for improvement.</p>
<p>Classified Senate of Cañada College</p>	<p>Maria Huning provided an update from the Classified Senate, sharing highlights from the most recent meeting. She reported that the Senate had a productive discussion and was pleased to announce an increase in the amount awarded to student scholarship recipients. Due to a particularly successful year of giving, the scholarship amount was raised from \$500 to \$700 per student, an increase made possible through collaboration with the college foundation and contributions from the community, including donations collected through the holiday basket initiative. Maria also shared that the Classified Senate would soon be discussing plans to reinstall and rededicate a memorial bench honoring Pat Hanada, whose previous bench had been removed due to structural issues, though the commemorative plaque had been preserved. The Senate planned to select the final design details for the new bench, including its color and shape, and hoped members of the classified community would attend the dedication to help honor colleagues who had passed away. She briefly noted that the group had also spent considerable time discussing concerns related to campus phones and planned to continue gathering questions and feedback on the issue.</p>
<p>Academic Senate of Cañada College</p>	<p>Diana Tedone-Goldstone provided an update from Academic Senate, reporting on several recent and upcoming initiatives. She explained that at the most recent Academic Senate meeting, members voted to begin drafting an Advisory Board Handbook as part of a broader effort to establish a clearer process for new program development. A faculty workgroup would be formed to prepare the initial draft of the handbook, with the goal of completing a first version by the end of the semester, though additional faculty participants were still being sought. Diana also noted that the Senate received an informative presentation from Dr. DeVon Scott regarding updates from the Disability Resource Center (DRC). Looking ahead, the Senate planned to invite Daman Grewal to a future meeting to continue discussions and address ongoing questions related to Zoom phones. Additional upcoming agenda items included updates about the Faculty</p>

	<p>Teaching and Learning Center and the Virtual Lounge meeting space near the art gallery, as well as potential discussion of draft revisions to faculty selection procedures provided by Human Resources, particularly in response to questions raised by faculty currently going through the hiring process.</p>
<p>Planning Council Reports: IPC, SSPC, EAPC</p>	<p>IPC:</p> <p>Lisa Palmer provided an update from IPC, summarizing key topics discussed at the most recent meeting. She reported that the council received an update on dual enrollment and noted that Mayra Arellano had recently gone on maternity leave and had since welcomed her baby. IPC also reviewed a presentation from Chialin regarding the Strategic Enrollment Management Plan, which had been shared with other campus groups as well. Additionally, members engaged in a productive discussion about revising instructional learning outcome language, specifically focusing on how to better phrase questions so that students clearly understood prompts related to analyzing data. The council also reviewed the program review timeline for the upcoming year.</p> <p>SSPC:</p> <p>During the SSPC report, Olivia Cortez-Figueroa shared that the council continued to discuss program review and associated updates to the process. Members also participated in an interactive activity designed to help them learn more about the SEAP plan, which made the discussion more engaging and helped participants better understand the plan’s components. In addition to these agenda items, the group incorporated a community-building activity in which members shared photos from their middle school or high school years along with the music they enjoyed at that time. This activity allowed participants to learn more about one another on a personal level and helped create a more relaxed and collaborative atmosphere within the committee.</p> <p>EAPC:</p> <p>Chris Wardell provided an update from the EAPC meeting, reporting that the group had met the previous week and received an update on the SEAP plan, including discussions about efforts to centralize work opportunities on campus. The council also discussed strategies for increasing culturally relevant curriculum across courses. In addition, members reviewed the Campus Climate Survey and provided feedback on its findings. Chris encouraged others to review the survey as well, noting that it contained several noteworthy insights. He concluded by noting that the council would meet again at the end of the month.</p>

President's Update	<p>President Kim Lopez reported that the college had been working closely with its ACCJC accreditation review team, which included a chair, vice chair, liaison, and several faculty and administrators from other community colleges. The team had reviewed the college's Institutional Self-Evaluation Report (ISER) and requested additional evidence. One major request focused on demonstrating Regular and Substantive Interaction (RSI) in online courses to meet federal compliance requirements. The college submitted course shells for review and needed to show that at least 80% demonstrated consistent communication and feedback between instructors and students. Additional evidence had also been requested regarding the institution's assessment cycle and how program reviews demonstrate the impact of changes made from student learning outcomes (SLOs) and service area outcomes (SAOs). The review team specifically asked how the college measures whether implemented changes actually improve student experiences or outcomes, prompting the institution to provide examples from different disciplines showing how assessment results led to program improvements. Another focus area involved professional development, where the college needed to demonstrate how conferences, workshops, and training activities contribute to institutional goals and ultimately improve student retention and completion. Staff were compiling survey data and other examples to show how professional learning translates into improved teaching and student success. President Lopez acknowledged the significant work being done by teams supporting this process and noted that the current evidence submissions were due Monday. She also announced an upcoming virtual ACCJC Town Hall where community members could interact with the review team and discuss the college's strengths and experiences. After this phase, the accreditation team would determine key inquiry areas for their in-person visit planned for September. President Lopez concluded that while the process was demanding, the questions being asked were valuable because they encouraged the college to strengthen how it evaluates the impact of its planning, programs, and decisions.</p>
Matters of Public Interest and Upcoming Events	none
ADJOURNMENT	Meeting adjourned at 4:01pm
Next Meeting	The next meeting will be held on March 18, 2026