

January 16, 2026

MISSISSIPPI COMMUNITY COLLEGE BOARD MEETING MINUTES

The regular meeting of the Mississippi Community College Board was held at 9:00 a.m. on Friday, January 16, 2026 in Room 507 of the Paul B. Johnson Jr. Building, located in the Education and Research Complex at 3825 Ridgewood Road, Jackson.

Members present: Mr. John Pigott, Chairman; Mrs. Cheryl Thurmond, Vice-Chair; Mr. Videt Carmichael, Mr. Donnie Caughman; Mr. Bubba Hudspeth; Ms. Dolly Marascalco; Mr. Johnny McRight (via telephone, Greenville, MS); Mr. Luke Montgomery; Mr. Will Symmes (via telephone, Gulfport, MS); and Dr. Dianne Watson. There was a quorum of ten.

MCCB Staff in attendance: Kell Smith, Jason Carter, Dr. Rachel DeVaughan, Cynthia Jiles, Dr. Krista LeBrun, and Missy Saxton.

Guests in attendance: Jonathan Dennis, Office of the Attorney General; Patrick Sullivan, SWIB; Dr. Courtney Taylor, Accelerate MS; and Dr. Jim Haffey (via telephone, Goodman, MS), Chair of MACC and President of Holmes CC.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Pigott called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. and read the meeting notice for the February 20, 2026, meeting.

MEETING NOTICE

The regular monthly meeting of the Mississippi Community College Board will be held on Friday, February 20, 2026, in Room 507 of the Paul B. Johnson Jr. Building located in the Education and Research Complex at 3825 Ridgewood Road, Jackson. This meeting may be conducted as a teleconference meeting.

PRELIMINARIES

Chairman Pigott welcomed all to the meeting, Mr. Hudspeth provided the invocation, and Missy Aldridge Saxton took roll.

Approval of November 21, 2025, Meeting Minutes

In a motion made by Mr. Hudspeth and seconded by Mr. Montgomery, the **MCCB voted unanimously** to approve the minutes of the November 21, 2025 meeting.

Approval of the January 16, 2026 Agenda

In a motion made by Mr. Caughman and seconded by Dr. Watson, the **MCCB voted unanimously** to approve the January 16, 2026 agenda.

REPORTS/ACTIONS

Chairman's Report

Chairman Pigott thanked all for being at the meeting. He yielded to Mr. Kell Smith for the Executive Director's report.

Executive Director's Report

Mr. Smith welcomed all to the meeting. He introduced Partick Sullivan, Chair of the State Workforce Investment Board (SWIB) and CEO of the MS Energy Institute, who provided an update about workforce efforts in the state. Mr. Smith also introduced Dr. Courtney Taylor, Executive Director of Accelerate MS. Both Mr. Sullivan and Dr. Taylor discussed important topics about workforce training program costs and higher paying wage job paths being offered in the state.

Mr. Smith reported the 2026 session began on January 6 and is scheduled to adjourn on April 5. Wednesday, January 14 was the first deadline which was for legislators to request drafting of General Bills. To date, there have been 723 bills introduced in the House and 284 bills introduced in the Senate.

Our Senate appropriation hearing was held on Wednesday, January 14 and Mr. Smith shared system priorities with the committee to include: Salaries- \$28 million, Basic Operations- \$28.5 million, CTE Advantage- \$5 million, Facilities- \$150 million, AE- \$2 million, all of which seemed to be well received. House appropriation hearing is Wednesday at 1:00. The Joint Legislative Budget Committee recommendation was released in December with a General Fund cut of \$1.3 million for the colleges and for the agency, a General Fund cut of \$310,000.

The post-secondary student organizations are looking for judges for its statewide competitions in February in Hattiesburg. Looking for judges in the areas of: Corporate Finance, Fashion Merchandising and Marketing, Retail Management, Restaurant and Food Service Management, Hospitality Management Case Competition, State of the Chapter Presentation, Entrepreneurship Pitch Competition, Public Speaking, Business Presentation, Emerging Business Issues, Impromptu Speaking, Future Business Facilitator, and Business Competition. Mr. Smith will send this information to Members so they can share it with others.

Mr. Smith reported that MCCB offices will be closed on Monday, January 19 for observance of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday. The next MACC meeting will be held Tuesday, January 27 at MCCB. He concluded his report.

MACC Report

Dr. Jim Haffey shared comments about the update provided by Mr. Patrick Sullivan and expressed his appreciation for Accelerate MS and the work they do. He commented that balancing the salaries of instructors and the number of students in a particular program is always a challenge. Dr. Haffey reported that Holmes CC

would be opening a flight school in hopes of attracting agricultural pilots in the nine counties in the Holmes district. They will be partnering with Northwest MS CC who is also looking into a similar program. Dr. Haffey concluded his report.

Finance and Administration Report

Mr. Jason Carter presented the Finance agenda. He requested en bloc approval for the first three approval requests to which Chairman Pigott agreed.

Attachment 1 is a request for approval of General Fund 2298 Disbursements for February 2026 in the total amount of **\$16,271,603.00**. \$14,771,603.00 comes from the Funding Formula and \$1,500,000.00 from Dropout Recovery funds.

Attachment 2 is a request for approval of Education Enhancement Fund Disbursements for January 2026 in the total amount of **\$4,323,746.00**. For Fund 4080, the amount of the disbursement will be \$4,241,634.00 with the rest coming from Fund 4110 in the amount of \$82,122.00.

Attachment 3 is a request for approval of the CTE Advantage Disbursements from Fund 4080 for January 2026 in the amount of **\$833,333.00**.

In a motion made by Mr. Hudspeth and seconded by Ms. Marascalco, the **MCCB voted unanimously** to approve the following:

1. **Attachment 1**, the General Fund 2298 Disbursement for February 2026 in the amount of **\$16,271,603.00**,
2. **Attachment 2**, the Education Enhancement Fund Disbursements for January 2026 in total amount of **\$4,323,746.00**,
3. **Attachment 3**, the CTE Advantage Disbursement request for January 2026 in the amount of **\$833,333.00**.

Attachments 4a-4c are the financial statements for Funds 2291, 4111 and Special Funds as of December 31, 2025, and are for informational purposes only.

Contract/Purchasing Approvals:

Attachment 5a is a request for approval of payment in the amount of \$54,000 to support the renewal of Mississippi's participation in the state level administration of the State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (SARA). Payment is supported by the MSVCC Assessment Fee and is based on the previous year's Full-Time Equivalent (FTE).

In a motion made by Mr. Montgomery and seconded by Mr. Carmichael, the **MCCB voted unanimously** to approve the request for payment of \$54,000 for the renewal of state level administration of SARA.

Attachment 5b is a request for approval of payment in the amount of \$59,000 to support the renewal of Mississippi's participation in national reciprocity agreement NC-SARA which oversees the interstate delivery of distance education at the national level. Payment is supported by the MSVCC Assessment Fee and is based on the previous year's Full-Time Equivalent (FTE).

In a motion made by Vice Chair Thurmond and seconded by Mr. Caughman, the **MCCB voted unanimously** to approve the payment of \$59,000 for renewal of Mississippi's participation in national reciprocity through NC-SARA.

Attachment 5c is a request for approval of payment for the Brainfuse contract revision in the amount of \$138,000.00. The reason for this revision request is due to an increase in hours for online student tutoring assistance and based on current utilization trends, the consortium is expected to exhaust the current number of contract hours in early spring 2026. Amendment #1 will add 6,000 hours at a rate of \$23/hour for a total amount not to exceed \$138,000.00.

In a motion made by Mr. Caughman and seconded by Ms. Marascalco, the **MCCB voted unanimously** to approve the contract revision for Brainfuse in the amount not to exceed \$138,000.00. Mr. Carter concluded his report.

Accountability Report

Mr. Smith presented **Exhibit A**, the CPSCR Summary Report from December 16, 2025, CPSCR meeting. This does not require approval and is for informational purposes only.

Programs

Mr. Kell Smith presented **Exhibit B** on behalf of Dr. De Vaughan-Partrick. Staff is requesting final approval of Exhibit B, which is a curricula revision request, to be submitted to the MS Secretary of State's office for final APA review. Initial approval request was presented to the Board in August 2025 and approved. Curriculum frameworks include the Agriculture Business and Management Technology Cluster, Diagnostic Medical Sonography, Diesel Equipment Technology, Massage Therapy, Media Technology, Occupational Therapy Assistant, Pharmacy Technology, System Based Automation, and Welding.

In a motion made by Ms. Marascalco and seconded by Mr. Caughman, the **MCCB voted unanimously** to approve the curricula revisions to be submitted for final review as presented by Mr. Smith to the MS Secretary of State's Office for the APA process.

TRAVEL AUTHORIZATIONS

Chairman Pigott called for travel reimbursement authorizations. Ms. Marascalco requested approval for attending the Business Alliance meeting held on Wednesday, January 14 in Jackson. Dr. Watson attended the December 11, 2025, Senate Universities and College committee meeting as well as attending the Post-Secondary Financial aid meeting on Thursday, January 15, 2026.

In a motion made by Mr. Hudspeth and seconded by Dr. Watson, the **MCCB voted unanimously** to approve the travel request for Ms. Marascalco on January 14, 2026, and also for Dr. Watson on December 11, 2025, and January 15, 2026.

OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Smith presented a birthday cake to Mr. Hudspeth on the occasion of his 89th birthday on January 15.

Chairman Pigott announced that Mr. Smith had requested an Executive Session for the purpose of discussing an investigation and he asked a Board Member to make a motion for a closed session.

Dr. Watson made a motion to go into closed session to determine the need for executive session. Ms. Marascalco seconded the motion and the MCCB unanimously voted to go into closed session for the determination of the need to enter executive session.

The meeting was closed at 10:23 a.m.

Following a closed determination of the need to go into executive session, Mr. Hudspeth made the motion to go into executive session to discuss an ongoing investigation, which was seconded by Ms. Marascalco.

The meeting went into Executive Session at 10:24 a.m. where upon the Board took a 10 minute recess. The Executive Session reconvened at 10:35 a.m.

The meeting was reopened to the public at 11:04 a.m.

Chairman Pigott reported there was no action taken by the Board.

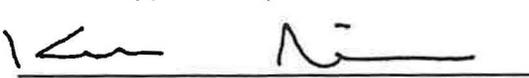
Having no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:05 a.m. in a motion made by Mr. Hudspeth and seconded by Dr. Watson. **All voted unanimously.**

Recorded by:



Missy Saxton, Director of External Affairs

Approved by:



Kell Smith, Executive Director

Approved by:



John Pigott, Chairman

January 16, 2026 Exhibits

Finance Agenda
CPSCR Report
Final Approval Curricula Request

Separate Agenda
Exhibit A
Exhibit B