



**Board of Regents of the Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute
2025 Quarter 1 Meeting Minutes
January 27, 2025**

- A. The meeting was called to order at 9:14 AM MST.
- B. The welcome and invocation were given by Chairperson Begaye and Regent Peterson, respectively.
- C. Roll Call

Present

Mr. Adam J. Begaye, Chair, Navajo Nation-New Mexico
Ms. Esther Peterson, Secretary/Treasurer, Navajo Nation-Arizona
Dr. John Bush, Member, Inter-Tribal Council of Arizona-South
Ms. Dehlah Washie, SGA Vice President
Mr. Raymond Gachupin, Southern Pueblos Council
Ms. Donna Montoya, Jicarilla Apache Nation
Mr. Francis Tafoya, Eight Northern Pueblos
Dr. Tamarah Pfeiffer, President, SIPI (Ex-Officio, non-voting member)

Absent

Ms. Tanya Lewis, Vice Chair, Inter-Tribal Council of Arizona-North
Mr. Timothy Harjo, SIPI Alumni
Mr. Alfred LaPaz, Mescalero Apache Tribe

Vacant

Oklahoma Tribes

- D. Special Guest: Associate Deputy Director, Bureau of Indian Education, Ms. Stephanie Conduff

Ms. Conduff provided her educational and occupational background. Her position will provide more Bureau of Indian Education focus to SIPI, Haskell Indian Nations University, and the Tribal Colleges and Universities. She indicated that she will provide an Organizational Chart in relation to her position when it is developed by Human Resources.

Regent Gachupin asked if she could share perceptions of changes with the new administration. Ms. Conduff said as a federal employee, she is here to introduce herself. However, she has not seen any Executive Orders effecting the Bureau of Indian Education as of this time, noting she should have more information at the next SIPI BOR meeting. President Pfeiffer will share Ms. Conduff's contact information with Board members.

Ms. Conduff will be attending AIHEC meetings. Chairperson Begaye looked forward to enhanced communication structures with the BIE to advance SIPI's needs. Regent Peterson encouraged Ms. Conduff to attend a SIPI BOR meeting in person.

E. Approval of the Agenda

President Pfeiffer pulled Item H3, Cross-Cultural Belonging Policy from the agenda. **Motion to approve the amended agenda by Regent Gachupin, with second by Regent Tafoya: 6 yes; 0 no. The amended agenda passed.**

F. Approval of the Meeting Minutes

Regent Peterson reviewed the November 4, 2024 (Quarter 4) Meeting Minutes, **Motion to approve the Minutes by Regent Tafoya, with second by Regent Bush: 6 yes; 0 no. The 2024, Quarter 4 minutes were approved.**

J. Introduction of New Employees

New employees introduced at the meeting were:

- Mr. Jeremy Scno, Educational Technicism
- Dr. Paul Polechla, Educational Technicism
- Mr. Quinn Porath-Yeager, Business/Liberal Arts
- Mr. Jay Carter, Accounting

K. Action Items

1. Resolution #1 1-25: Policy Statement of Native American Education Goals and Objectives

There was no discussion on the Resolution. **Motion to approve the Resolution by Regent Tafoya, with second by Regent Peterson: 6 yes; 0 no. The Policy Statement on Native American Education Goals and Objectives agenda passed.**

Resolution #1 2025-1

Policy Statement on Native American Education Goals and Objectives

Whereas, the Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute (SIPI), a national Indian community college and land grant institution authorized by Congress in partial fulfillment of treaty and trust responsibilities, offers 19 career technical training and transfer degree programs and adult and basic education services to students from the nation's 574 federally recognized tribes; and

Whereas, SIPI is a part of the United States Department of Interior, Bureau of Indian Education (BIE); and

Whereas, the Mission of SIPI is to provide quality educational opportunities by preparing culturally diverse Native American students as life-long learners through partnerships with tribes, employers and other organizations; and

Whereas, the SIPI Board of Regents (BOR) was incorporated in 1975 to serve as the College's governing and advisory board, with responsibilities for:

1. Reflecting the opinion and needs of tribal governments;
2. Promoting and advocating for the mission, vision and goals of SIPI and its student body;
3. Ensuring the availability and quality of education programs offered to students;
4. Operating as a center of education for Tribal Nation citizen;
5. Providing an environment that meets the need of students in the development as wholesome individuals;
6. Supporting the traditional language, culture, and values of tribal nations; and
7. Awarding degrees or certificates within the designated purpose of SIPI.

Whereas, the American Indian/Alaska Native populations are among the most economically disadvantaged and educationally underserved populations in the United States.

Whereas, the American Council on Higher Education documented data showing that only 7% of all American Indian/Alaska Native takers met college readiness benchmarks across all four subject-matter of English, mathematics, reading, and science; and

Whereas, data from the National Postsecondary Policy Institute indicates that 19% of 18–24-year-old Native American population is enrolled in college compared to 41% of the overall U.S. population. and

Whereas the Educational Trust demonstrates that 47% of White adults compared to only 24% of Native American, Alaskan Natives, and Native Hawaiian adults have earned an associate's degree or higher; and

Whereas, similar historical educational disparities to those mentioned above have been documented by the United States Department of Education, National Center for Educational Statistics annually; and

Whereas, all colleges and universities have a social responsibility to support all students to the best of their abilities; and

Whereas the American Council of Education advises that institutions who serve Native American students “contribute to the upward income mobility of the students they enroll, propelling their lowest income students up the income ladder at higher rates.”

Therefore, be it resolved that the SIPI BOR adopts the following:

Board of Regents of the Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute
Policy Statement on Native American Goals and Objectives.
January 2025

The lasting social and economic impacts of adverse policies continue to be manifested in the low certificate and degree attainment rates of Native American students, resulting in high

rates of unemployment, poverty, and the lack of health care for American Indian and Alaskan Native students and communities.

Therefore, the Board of Regents of the Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute, which provides community college access to students from all of the 574 federally recognized tribes calls upon all municipal, county, state and federal governmental officials and policy makers, granting agencies, corporations, foundations, and all other members of the public and private sector to fulfil the goal of providing increased funding for Native American education across all grade levels.

Increased funding for Native American federally funded education overseen by the Bureau of Education under the Department of the Interior supports the objective of increasing college readiness, expanding academic programs in high need areas, and delivering high impact student support services to increase the postsecondary enrollment, persistence, and completion rates and the corresponding economic and social well-being of American Indian and Alaskan Native students across the nation.

Additionally, the SIPI Board of Regents (BOR) specifically calls upon the United States Department of Interior and Congress to increase congressional funding for Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute (without decreasing Haskell Indian Nations University's annual appropriation to achieve parity in federal funding between the two postsecondary institutions located in the Bureau of Indian Education.

The SIPI BOR further calls upon the United States Department of Interior and Congress to approve forward funding for campus construction projects to streamline processes, increase efficiencies, and decrease duplication of efforts. Such practice follows public higher education capital appropriations processes used in states across the nation.

CERTIFICATION

I, hereby, certify that the foregoing resolution was duly considered by the SIPI Board of Regents at a duly called meeting, at which a quorum was present and was passed by a vote of 6 in favor and 0 opposed, on this 27th day of January 2025.

Motion: Regent Tafoya

Second: Regent Peterson

Adam J. Begaye, Chair
SIPI Board of Regents

2. Update to SIPI Organizational Chart - Concurrence

President Pfeiffer indicated a Grants Program Manager was added and that position was already on the Organizational Chart.

Motion to approve by Regent Gachupin, with second by Regent Tafoya: 6 yes; 0 no. Concurrence to the updated Organizational Chart was given.

I. College Status Reports on BOR Resolution Implementation

1. Addition of a Key Performance Indicator (KPI) for Adult and Basic Education (ABE) (Resolution # 1 2024-7)

President Pfeiffer reported that there are meetings on student success framework to determine KPI(s) for ABE. She added Student Affairs embedded an ABE tutor. And there has been hiring in ABE for writing, English, Math instructors, with tutors in the department.

2. Key Performance Indicator Goal Setting and Reporting (Resolution #2 2024-7)

President Pfeiffer reported that the Office of Analytics and Outcomes is gathering data to support KPI development.

3. Northern Arizona University Partnership Exploration (Resolution # 3 2024-7)

President Pfeiffer said the MOU has been signed by both presidents. An addendum provided by the Solicitors is waiting on NAU signatures. The issue is that federal employees cannot be paid from two sources.

4. Partnership Exploration with the Canoncito Band of Navajos (Resolution #1 10-24)

President Pfeiffer indicated that the MOU provided by the Canoncito Band of Navajos is under review by the Solicitors.

5. Substantive Change Request: Support for a Semester Calendar (Resolution #3 10-24)

President Pfeiffer indicated that this is an agenda item for the Higher Learning Commission's Institutional Action Council at their February 2025 meeting.

Note: As of 10:06 AM MST, Dr. Bush was no longer online and the SGA Vice President had to leave for class. There is no longer a quorum for the meeting.

J. New Business

1. Board of Action and Accountability

- i. Executive Committee for 2025: Dr. Rives noted that the SIPI BOR Constitution indicates officers are elected by four years. The current officers will serve unit 2026, Quarter 4.

Note: Regent Montoya joined the meeting at 10:16 AM MST. However, there is not a quorum.

- ii. 2024 Accomplishments Report SIPI Board of Regents and Development Office: Dr. Rives requested that all Board members send him their contributions to the 2024 Accomplishments Report, so that it may be finalized at the next BOR meeting.

K. Reports

1. SIPI Quarterly Reports

i. College Overview:

President Pfeiffer provided SIPI highlights that included:

- Engaging SIPI Leadership in setting College priorities for the BIE.
- Following the federal hiring freeze (effecting librarian, deans, security, three faculty, four residential, and financial aid position). She indicated hiring freezes are typically lifted in April.
- Expanding dual enrollment
- Signing an MOU with First Nations on mental health services.
- Completing the Science and Technology roof .
- Providing professional development to faculty teaching distance education.
- Preparing students to attend AIHEC meetings in Washington DC.

ii. Appropriated Funds:

Mr. Monte Monteith reviewed reallocations, current appropriations, and continuous resolutions, and student fees. He noted that the last Green Book had an approximately \$2 million appropriations increase for SIPI, but that was under the former administration. More information should be available in March.

Mr. Monteith noted that the BIE Finance Department is considering line item appropriations for SIPI and Haskell Indian Nations University (HINU) instead of one appropriation for both.

Regent Gachupin led a conversation concluding that we should seek increased funding from Congress. And at the same time continue to advocate with the BIE that parity in funding should not be achieved by decreasing's HINU's funding.

After citing enrollment declines, Chairperson Begaye requested a Work Session President and her Cabinet and BOR on SIPI funding needs for state, federal, and tribal advocacy. President Pfeiffer encouraged thinking out of the box with regards to what do we want this college to be?

iii. Grant Funds

President Pfeiffer indicated that Dr. Servin in training and referred Board Members to his written report.

2. Board of Regents Development Office

i. Fiscal Year 2025 Budget Approval

Mr. Bobby Wallace indicated the Executive Committee has approved the budget. **Regent Gachupin motioned that the Budget be treated as a Report and**

approved at the next meeting since there is not a quorum. Second by Regent Montoya: 5 yes, 0 no. The Budget was treated as a report for this meeting.

ii. Financial Statement through November 2024

Mr. Wallace indicated that once financials for December are completed, FY24 audit preparations will commence. He also indicated that year end financials will be presented at the Quarter 2 Meeting.

3. Student Government Association

The SGA hosted 18 activities for commuter and residential students during the last trimester.

L. Old Business

1. Accomplishments and Next Steps in HLC Monitoring Report

- i. Assessment of Student Learning
- ii. Program Review
- iii. Enrollment, Persistence, and Completion

Mr. Monte Monteith indicated that the recent hirings in ABE/GED will help with student persistence and completion rates. He noted that Direct Admissions has to work with the high schools instead of students directly. President Pfeiffer indicated that the BOR will receive updated information and report at the Quarter 2 Meeting.

2. Oklahoma Tribes Vacancy

Chairperson Begaye indicated that he and Mr. Wallace are working on getting an appointment to fill the vacancy. President Pfeiffer recommended contacting Mr. Edward Hummingbird to see which Oklahoma Tribe has the most student representation, as consideration for the next Board appointment.

3. BIE-BOR-SIPI MOU

The Solicitors completed a review of the BOR-SIPI MOU. It is in the Board Packet. Further discussion was tabled until more Board members are present.

M. Public Comment

Regent Gachupin indicated that SIPI must prepare students and employees if they are stopped for immigration. It is important they carry multiple identification cards, he noted. It was also noted that the Governor of Arizona and the Mescalero Apache Tribe have provided guidance to their residents on this matter.

Regent Gachupin asked President Pfeiffer for a SIPI briefing that he can give to the Southern Pueblos Council on the College's history, programs, enrollment, and highlights. Both Regents Montoya and Tafoya would like for SIPI to come and do a similar presentation with their tribal leaderships in March or April.

N. Announcements

- 1. The 2025 BOR Meeting Schedule is as follows::

- i. Quarter 2: April 17.
- ii. Commencement on April 18.
- iii. Quarter 3: July 7.
- iv. Quarter 4: October 6.

2. Regent Peterson expressed the importance of Board Member attendance at BOR work sessions.

O. The meeting adjourned at 11:25 AM, following the motion made by Regent Gachupin and seconded by Regent Peterson: 5 yes; 0 no.

The one-hour work session for voting BOR members on moving forward as a Board of Action in 2025 was postponed until more Board Members could be present.