



**Board of Regents of the Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute  
2025 Quarter 3 Meeting Agenda  
Minutes**

A. Call the Meeting to Order

The meeting was called to order at 10:28 AM MDT by Chairperson Begaye.

B. Welcome and Invocation

Chairperson Begaye gave the welcome, followed by Regent Gachupin giving the invocation.

C. Roll Call

Present

Mr. Adam J. Begaye, Chair, Navajo Nation-New Mexico  
Ms. Esther Peterson, Secretary/Treasurer, Navajo Nation-Arizona  
Ms. Pablita Chavez SGA President (or designee)  
Mr. Raymond Gachupin, Southern Pueblos Council  
Mr. Hershel Gorham, Oklahoma Tribes  
Mr. Timothy Harjo, SIPI Alumni  
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  
Dr. John Bush, Member, Inter-Tribal Council of Arizona-South  
Mr. Clyde Davis Jr., Mescalero Apache Tribe  
Ms. Donna Montoya, Jicarilla Apache Nation

D. Special Guests

1. Ms. Stephanie Conduff, Bureau of Indian Education.
2. Mr. Doyle Anderson, Facilitators of Innovative Education, Leadership Development & Sustainability (FIELDS).

Mr. Anderson indicated FIELDS operates in a complementary role to indigenous higher education. They design programs and support services to address tribal needs in STEM disciplines, health-based professions, and skills trade education. They also offer college transition programs. A power point and video presentation provided additional details about FIELDS.

Handouts shared and accompanying the presentation were entitled: (1) Who we are, (2) A Bridge to Self-Reliance, (3) Community Revitalization through Education for the Workforce (Crew) Project, (4) Talking Points Document: FIELDS-SIPI Collaboration, and, (5) Draft Memorandum of Understanding Between the Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute (SIPI) and the Facilitators of Innovative Education, Leadership Development, and Sustainability (FIELDS).

Chairperson Begaye observed that FIELDS offers valuable mentorship opportunities for our students.

President Pfeiffer asked about FIELDS' tribal college experiences and funding opportunities they bring to SIPI. Mr. Anderson indicated that they have worked with Navajo Tech to help them develop a one year certificate in energy technology program, in addition to working with the Navajo Council, local communities, industry, and San Juan College, School of Energy. He indicated that funding is supported by industries, tribes, and state and federal funding. He further indicated that FIELDS would support SIPI at no cost or obligation in needs assessments and strategic planning to determine potential funding partnerships.

Mr. Monte Monteith asked if FIELDS has any MOAs or MOUs with federal entities. Mr. Anderson said that there is a MOA between the Department of Interior and the Department of Education that provides a vehicle for investing in their work. Mr. Anderson will share a copy of the MOA with Chairperson Begaye.

Regent Gachupin asked what SIPI's fiscal commitment in this partnership is, stating it would need to be externally funded. Mr. Anderson indicated that national laboratories are proximal to SIPI and they would be a potential funding partner.

Regent Harjo expressed his support for a partnership, noting that there should be a media component to the partnership.

Chairperson spoke to the importance of external, federal, and tribal funding to advancing SIPI.

#### E. Approval of the Agenda

Chairperson Begaye asked for three agenda changes:

1. Moving the FIELDS Partnership Resolution to New Business.
2. Tabling the Resolution on Western Maricopa Education Center (West-MEC) Partnership Exploration. Dr. Scott Spurgeon, Superintendent of West-MEC, was not available today but will be at the Board's Work Session tomorrow.
3. Removing the presentation from Ms. Kimberly Yee, Arizona State Treasurer, from the agenda. She was not available for today's meeting.

**Motion to make the recommended changes to the agenda made by Regent Harjo, with a second by Regent Gachupin. The changes to agenda unanimously passed.**

F. Approval of the Meeting Minutes

Regent Peterson Reviewed the April 17, 2025 (Q2) Minutes and the June 16, 2025, Special Meeting Minutes.

**Motion to approve the two sets of Minutes made by Regent Harjo, second by Regent Gorham: 6 yes, 0 no, and 1 abstain. Regent Gachupin abstained from voting. He was not at the last meeting. The April 17, 2025, and the June 16, 2025, Minutes were approved.**

G. Virtual Introduction of New Employees

President Pfeiffer introduced Dr. Lesky who is the Acting Vice President of College Affairs and has been detailed to SIPI for 120 days. President Pfeiffer indicated there are no other new employees because SIPI is in a federal hiring freeze.

H. Action Items for Approval/Concurrence:

1. 2025-2026 Budget

Mr. Monte Monteith overviewed SIPI's Budget's process. Regents Gorham and Harjo and Dr Rives asked for additional budget details above the one-page summary provided in the Board Book. Regent Harjo noted that additional budget detail identifies fundraising needs. Representative Gachupin noted we asked the same question for additional budget detail last year. The College agreed to provide the Board with additional budget details.

President Pfeiffer indicated that with SIPI receiving flat funding, the College needs the Board to bring in funding to support new initiatives. Mr. Monteith noted that there is 90% reduction to Tribal Colleges and Universities.

**Motion to approve the 2025-2026 Budget was made by Regent Tafoya, with a second by Regent Peterson. The 2025-2026 Budget unanimously passed.**

I. College Status Reports on BOR Resolution Implementation

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

President Pfeiffer indicated KPIs will be provided soon.

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

President Pfeiffer indicated KPI Goals will be provided soon

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

The College is following up on addendum provided by NAU.

4. Partnership Exploration with the Canoncito Band of Navajos (Resolution #1 10-2024)

President Pfeiffer indicated that the Solicitors determined that it was too great of a risk for SIPI to enter into agreement. The Canoncito Band of Navajos wanted more than

requested in the original MOU, (i.e., more space and staffing). Chairperson Begaye also indicated that Canoncito has a new Board and Acting CEO. The partnership explorations are on hold.

## J. New Business

### 1. SIPI-BOR MOU

President Pfeiffer said the Board Book contains the current copy of the SIPI-BOR MOU that was tabled at the Q1 meeting due to a weather-induced lack of a quorum. She offered training for what it means to be a Trustee. Regents Harjo and Gorham asked about the impetus for a MOU between the parties. Mr. Monte Monteith indicated that we have historically had a MOU to clearly delineate between the Board's and the College's roles and responsibilities to internal and external parties.

**Regent Gorham motioned and Regent Harjo requested tabling a vote until they can review the document today and discuss and vote on it at tomorrow's BOR Work Session. The motion was unanimously approved.**

### 2. Resolution 25.07-1: Partnership Exploration with FIELDS

**Regent Harjo motioned to approve the Resolution for SIPI to engage in partnership exploration with FIELDS. Second by Regent Gachupin: 5 yes, 1 no. The Resolution (on the next page) passed.**



Resolution # 1 2025-7

***Partnership Exploration with the Facilitators of Innovative Education, Leadership Development & Sustainability***

Adam J. Begaye  
Chair  
Navajo Nation New Mexico

Tanya Lewis  
Vice Chair  
Inter-Tribal Council of Arizona (North)

Esther Peterson  
Secretary/Treasurer  
Navajo Nation Arizona

Dr. John Bush  
Board Member  
Inter-Tribal Council of Arizona (South)

Pablita Chavez  
President,  
SIPI Student Government Assoc.

Clyde Davis Jr  
Board Member  
Mescalero Apache Tribe

Raymond Gachupin  
Board Member  
Southern Pueblos Council

Hershel Gorham  
Board Member  
Oklahoma Tribes

Tim Harjo  
Board Member  
SIPI Alumni

Donna Montoya  
Board Member  
Jicarilla Apache Nation

Francis Tafoya  
Board Member  
Eight Northern Pueblos

Dr. Tamarah Pfeiffer  
Ex Officio Member  
President, SIPI

**Whereas**, the Board of Regents (BOR) of the Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute (SIPI) serves governance and advisory roles for SIPI (Article III, Section I, Constitution to the Board of Regents Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute); and

**Whereas**, SIPI, a national Indian community college and land grant institution authorized by Congress in partial fulfillment of treaty and trust responsibilities, opened in 1971 and offers 19 career technical training and transfer degree programs and adult and basic education services exclusively to students and descendants from the nation’s 574 federally recognized tribes; and

**Whereas**, Facilitators of Innovative Education, Leadership Development & Sustainability (FIELDS), a First Nations-owned and managed company, has delivered education and career services to Indigenous learners in Canada and the United States since 2013, with their work including the Utah Four Corners Workforce and Skills Development Project, Mentoring Program for At-Risk students in Farmington, New Mexico, and the Trades and Technology Education Programs for students at the Shoshone-Bannock School located on the Fort Hall Indian Reservation in Idaho; and

**Whereas**, SIPI and FIELDS serve similar populations of students, have complimentary missions, and share commitments to placing a strong emphasis on preserving and celebrating Native American cultures and traditions by embedding cultural awareness and sensitivity into the curriculum and activities to create an inclusive and supportive learning environment; and

**Whereas**, SIPI prepares culturally diverse Native American students as life-long learners through partnerships with tribes, employers, and other organizations; and

**Whereas**, The SIPI and SIPI Board of Regents Memorandum of Understanding indicates that the BOR shall act as an advocate for SIPI, promote SIPI within Indian Country, and provide information about the programs and opportunities SIPI provides; and

**Whereas**, The BOR Chairperson has convened advocacy meetings with institutional representatives from FIELDS; and

**Whereas**, The SIPI and SIPI Board of Regents Memorandum of Understanding indicates the duties and responsibilities of the SIPI President include consulting with the SIPI-Board of Regents to recommend policies and develop processes for SIPI to provide an effective and exemplary program.

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the SIPI Board of Regents charges the President of the Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute to work with colleagues to explore potential SIPI-FIELDS enrollment partnerships, including but not necessarily limited to dual

enrollment in SIPI courses and guaranteed admission to SIPI for high school graduates of a FIELDS program, with contact information provided by the SIPI BOR Chairperson.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the BOR requests quarterly updates on partnership exploration and implementation until agreement(s) with FIELDS have been enacted, if appropriate.

#### **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 in 6 favor and 1 opposed, on this 7<sup>th</sup> day of July 2025.

Motion: Regent Harjo  
Second: Regent Gachupin

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Adam J. Begaye, Chair  
SIPI Board of Regents

## K. Reports

### 1. Office of Analytics and Outcomes

Mr. Edward Hummingbird reported that SIPI since opening has served approximately 33,300 students from 41 states, with an overwhelming majority of students originating from Arizona and New Mexico. Mr. Hummingbird also said that SIPI has served students from 247 of the 574 federally recognized tribes, with the vast majority coming from Navajo Nation and the Southern Pueblos.

Mr. Hummingbird indicated summer 2025 enrollment is up 7%. Summer 2025 enrollment by academic programs were reviewed. All of SIPI's academic programs are approved up to 49% online. Business Administration and Early Childhood Education programs are the only two fully online programs. SIPI has 19 programs.

Regent Harjo asked about enrollment requirements for online students. Mr. Hummingbird noted that only Native American Students and descendants are eligible to enroll at SIPI, per the College Catalog.

Dr. Rives noted Google AI indicates: "The Snyder Act, passed in 1921, does not limit enrollment in college. Instead, it authorizes the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) to provide education and assistance to Native Americans and Alaska Natives." Mr. Monteith indicated that this is a relevant discussion that we need to bring to the Solicitors.

A review of occupational outcomes was tabled due to lack of student responses.

### 2. SIPI Quarterly Reports

#### i. College Overview

President Pfeiffer highlighted the following key takeaways:

- There was a water breakage on campus today. Preventative measures are being taken.
- The cooling system went down a couple of weeks ago. A new chiller is being installed this month.
- Renovations to SIPI's residential facilities have not been completed for five years. President Pfeifer has sent concern up the chain of command.
- From the HINU Hearing:
  - Completing Board Background Checks and having a Code of Conduct is important.
  - Having a Development Officer is key to seeking private funding.
  - It is important that we emphasize cultural competency throughout our curriculum.

#### ii. Appropriated Funds

Ms. Bella Cata reviewed the status of 2024-2025 funds remaining and that SIPI received 2025-2026 funding totaling \$12,130,000. Ms. Cata also reviewed the status of facilities funding and collection of student fees. In response to

questions, Ms. Cata indicated that the \$12.1 million SIPI received was a lump sum and funding for facilities is based on quarterly distributions.

iii. Grant Funds

Dr. Servin indicated the office is back at full staffing. They are working on submitting two Title III grants. There is a \$200,000 budget item for the BOR Development Office.

3. Board of Regents Development Office

i. Development Office Updates

Mr. Bobby Wallace indicated that the Board needs to focus on increased fundraising to decrease SIPI's reliance on federal funding. He reported that he is managing eight grants and working with Regents to receive Tribal letters of Support for a funding request to Marathon Petroleum.

ii. Fiscal Year 2024 Audit

Mr. Wallace indicated that the audit is approximately half-way completed and will be presented at the 2025 Q4 meeting.

4. Student Government Association

A written report will be added to the meeting minutes.

L. Old Business

1. Tribal College Meetings, Outcomes, and Schedule

Chairperson Begaye expressed his gratitude for being SIPI's BOR Chairperson. He is presenting to the Five Civilized Tribes in Tulsa on Thursday. He also has a trip to Washington, DC in two weeks to advocate for SIPI and the advancement of Career and Technical Education within Indian Country. His Washington itinerary also includes partnership meetings with the Department of the Interior, Indian Health Service, and the Department of Education.

2. Board Correspondence

Chair Begaye indicated the BOR's response to the Bureau of Indian Affairs with regard to Executive Order 14210 is included in the packet.

3. Letters of Support

- i. Chairperson Begaye indicated that SIPI provided and he signed a letter of support for Diné College
- ii. Chairperson Begaye indicated that SIPI did not provide a support letter for him to sign with regard to a six-lane track and inside turf.

4. Accomplishments and Next Steps in HLC Monitoring Report

The College's Report will be shared with the BOR.

M. Public Comment

There were no public comments.

N. Announcements

The remaining regularly scheduled BOR meetings for calendar year 2025 are a Work Session on July 8<sup>th</sup> and the Quarter 4 Meeting on October 6<sup>th</sup>.

O. Adjourn

A motion to adjourn was made by Regent Gorham, with a second by Regent Tafoya. The motion unanimously passed and the meeting adjourned at 2:20 PM MDT.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Joseph Rives, Ph.D.  
Recording Secretary