

**Summary of Proceedings
Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees
Tuesday, August 11, 2026
5:00 p.m., Mary T. Norton Board Room and via Zoom**

Trustees Present: Edward DeFazio (Vice Chair); Lisa Dougherty; Stacy Gemma (Secretary/Treasurer); Roberta Kenny; Jeanette Peña (Chair); Joanne Rivera (Student Alumni Representative); Harold Stahl; and Frances Teabout.

Trustees Absent: Vincent Lombardo; Lissa Santiago; and Silvia Rodriguez.

Comments from the Public: There were no comments from the public.

1. Interim President's Report

Interim President Dougherty offered the following report.

Greetings, Trustees and members of the college community. I hope you're all enjoying the summer and looking forward to the start of the fall semester in just a few weeks.

As I complete my second month as Interim President, I truly want to thank the Board and the entire college community for their support and partnership. I look forward to College Service Day and our first Town Hall in September, where I will have the opportunity to share more with our faculty and staff about our priorities and plans for the coming academic year. Tonight, I will keep my remarks brief so that we can focus on the two important presentations scheduled for this evening.

Although summer is often considered a quieter time on campus, it has been quite productive and active. I have appreciated the opportunity to work closely with our Cabinet and gain a broader perspective on the many accomplishments across the College, as well as opportunities for greater collaboration. We are very much looking forward to the upcoming Board and Cabinet Retreat on August 19, where we will reflect on our shared accomplishments, discuss our challenges, and align around our goals for the coming year.

Among the summer's highlights were regular meetings with the Board Executive Committee, a hardhat tour of the Center for Student Success, the launch of a new performance review process, our men's and women's basketball teams beginning to practice, updated professional development and travel guidelines, and a strengthened focus on fiscal responsibility and transparency.

This evening, at the request of the Executive Committee, we are pleased to present updates on enrollment and athletics.

Beginning in September, we will also resume our regular reports from the President of the Student Government Association and the Chair of the All College Council.

Tonight's enrollment update will be presented by John Urgola, Associate Vice President for Institutional Research and Planning, who was recently awarded the League for Innovation's Provocateur Award in recognition of his work on the Summer Enrollment Incentive Program and Hudson Scholars.

Immediately following John's presentation, Jonathan Sisk, Director of Athletics, will provide an athletics update. He is joined this evening by our basketball coaches, whom we are excited to hear from.

Thank you, and I now welcome John Urgola to provide the enrollment presentation.

John Urgola presented [Profile of HCCC Students](#).

Thank you, Lisa.

Trustees, thank you very much for inviting me to speak today. I appreciate it.

I'm going to give you a high-level overview of enrollment, how it has trended over the last few years, and a profile of what our students look like right now. I believe Alexa also printed the slides for you, so they may be a little easier to read. In addition, there is a QR code and URL that provide access to our Tableau Public dashboard, where you can explore the data in greater detail if you wish.

All of the data we're focusing on tonight is from Academic year 2025-2026.

The first place to start is enrollment.

The chart begins with academic year 2018-2019, our unduplicated headcount for the year. As you know, there are multiple semesters in an academic year. When we report enrollment over a 12-month period, we use what we call an unduplicated headcount. If a student enrolls in both the fall and spring semesters, that student is counted once for the year.

We begin with academic year 2018-2019 because it was the last full academic year before the pandemic. Like institutions across the country, we experienced enrollment declines following the pandemic. The effects were not fully realized in 2019-2020 because the disruption occurred during the latter part of that academic year.

Enrollment reached its lowest point in academic year 2020-2021, when students faced significant uncertainty surrounding the pandemic. This was prior to my time at the College, but I know many people worked hard to keep things afloat.

The following year, enrollment began to trend upward. In 2021-2022, we enrolled a little over 10,000 students, followed by incremental increases through academic year 2023-2024. We started to see more significant growth in the years that followed.

By 2024-2025, we were back above 11,000 students in unduplicated headcount. What we're especially pleased to see is that, in Academic year 2025-2026, enrollment surpassed our pre-pandemic level from 2018-2019. In terms of enrollment, things have generally returned to normal.

We saw a similar trend with enrolled credits. There was a decline during the pandemic, followed by a steady recovery. By 2025-2026, enrolled credits had also surpassed pre-pandemic levels.

Another important point is that, while we often focus on credit students, nearly half of our students participate in non-credit programs through Continuing Education and Workforce Development (CEWD), which is overseen by Vice President Lori Margolin.

It's important to consider that enrollment as well. Students in these programs receive applied training and workforce credentials.

The cart reflects duplicated headcount for non-credit students. That is a more appropriate measure because these students are often taking specific classes or credentials and do not necessarily enroll in the same way as credit students. The red portion represents Continuing Education, while the blue portion represents Workforce Development.

Tracking non-credit enrollment can be challenging because these programs operate as the entrepreneurial engine of the College. They must be agile and responsive to community needs. If a need arises for a specific training program, they may be able to develop and launch it within a month.

Despite those challenges, we estimate that when credit and non-credit enrollment are combined, the College serves between 20,000 and 21,000 unduplicated students annually. That's a significant number.

Returning to credit students, we have four primary academic schools.

The School of Business, Culinary Arts, and Hospitality Management accounts for approximately 15% of students. About 26% of students, the largest share, are enrolled in the School of Humanities and Social Sciences. The School of Nursing and Health Professions represents about 22%, and the School of STEM represents approximately 16%. But 21% of our students last year were non-matriculated, meaning they were not enrolled in a degree program.

In addition to traditional college students, we have a healthy and growing Early College Program, where students enrolled in high school take courses either at the College or at their high schools.

Some of these students are non-matriculated, many are matriculated into academic programs, and some complete a credential before graduating from high school. Thanks to the work of Interim Vice President Chris Conzen and his team, that program has grown substantially over the last several years.

It's important to consider that segment of enrollment as well.

With regard to credentials, we generally award three types: associate degrees, academic certificates, and proficiency certificates. An associate degree typically requires approximately 60 credits and takes about two years to complete. Academic certificates generally consist of about 30 credits, while proficiency certificates require about half that amount.

It's important to note that some students may be enrolled in both an associate degree and a certificate program. For reporting purposes, students are categorized under the higher-level credential.

Then 69% of students are enrolled in associate degree programs, approximately 3% in academic certificate programs, and about 8% in proficiency certificate programs. Most students enrolled in proficiency certificates are pursuing our English as a Second Language Proficiency Certificate Program.

That certificate was developed to support our large ESL student population. Approximately 15% to 17% of incoming first-time students place into ESL coursework. This program provides those students with an opportunity to earn a credential while progressing toward college-level coursework. It is a very popular program and was the second most popular credential program at the College last year.

The Medical Science Pre-Nursing option was the most popular program and serves as the pathway for students seeking admission into Nursing.

Turning to demographics, some of you may recall that, historically, the College has been approximately 55% to 56% Hispanic or Latino.

You may look at the current numbers and ask where those students have gone. They haven't gone anywhere.

What we have seen over the past several years is that more students are choosing not to report their race or ethnicity. I recently conducted an analysis using historical data and found that, when accounting for students who no longer report race and ethnicity, our overall demographic profile remains largely unchanged.

We would still be approximately 55% to 56% Hispanic or Latino. However, about 16% of students currently do not report race or ethnicity. That figure has improved from the previous year, when approximately 21% to 22% of students did not report this information.

This is an important issue because it affects several areas, including our Hispanic-Serving Institution status and funding formulas tied to student outcomes.

Officially, students classified within traditionally underrepresented populations represented 61% of enrollment this year. If the students with unreported race and ethnicity are removed from the calculation, that percentage rises to nearly three-quarters of our student population.

Nothing has fundamentally changed demographically. What has changed is the behavior of student reporting their race or ethnicity.

In terms of age, we have seen a slight shift in recent years. Historically, enrollment has been distributed fairly evenly among three age groups: 19 and younger, 20 to 24, and 25 and older. This year, enrollment shifted slightly toward younger students, with approximately 36% of students age 19 or younger. Even so, we continue to serve a large adult student population compared to many community colleges across the state.

In terms of gender, we remain predominantly female. This mirrors a trend occurring throughout higher education nationally. Our student population is now approximately 40% male and 59% female, with about 1% unreported.

When looking at Pell-eligible students, we focus on students who are actually eligible to receive Pell funding. Early College students, for example, are not eligible. Approximately 77% of eligible students qualify for Pell Grants, and roughly 80% of students qualify for some form of financial aid.

The final section looks at where our students come from in terms of location and compares enrollment patterns with household income data.

Returning briefly to Continuing Education and Workforce Development, we do not have comprehensive demographic data for all participants. Among the students for whom we do have data, race and ethnicity patterns are similar to those on the credit side. However, the population skews significantly older and more female. Approximately 57% are adult students, and 73% are female.

So where do our students come from?

The largest sources include Union City High School, Bayonne High School, Memorial High School, North Bergen High School, and Dickinson High School.

For this analysis, I focused on students who graduated from high school in June 2025 and enrolled at the College in Fall 2025. At the top, 21% of that incoming class came from Union City High School.

That's a substantial number. Approximately 15% came from Bayonne High School, 11% from Memorial High School, and 10% each from North Bergen High School and Dickinson High School.

Nearly 90% of our students reside within Hudson County, which is a very high percentage even compared with other community colleges.

The map also shows student origin by ZIP code. Bayonne represents the largest share of enrolled students by ZIP code, at approximately 12%. Within Jersey City, the largest concentrations come from Greenville, Bergen-Lafayette, and Journal Square.

I encourage you to review the dashboard because it provides a clearer view of these patterns.

The green dots indicate student concentrations, while the map colors reflect income levels. Red represents lower-income areas and green represents higher-income areas.

One thing to pay attention to is the contrast between those indicators.

For example, Bergen-Lafayette has relatively modest household income levels, yet it produces one of the largest concentrations of students. You'll see similar patterns throughout the map, where many of our largest student populations come from lower-income communities. By comparison, more affluent areas of Jersey City, such as Downtown and the Heights, contribute a smaller share of students.

That helps explain why many of our students face financial hardships and why we have such a large Pell-eligible population.

I would also draw your attention to Union City. While it contributes a significant number of students, many of those students attend classes at our North Hudson Campus rather than the Journal Square Campus.

Before I conclude, I want to mention one additional item.

We have begun tracking students who indicate an interest in athletics during the admissions process. Jonathan will speak more about athletics, but the data have been very interesting.

In addition to basketball, we asked students about other sports. Soccer and baseball emerged as particularly popular choices.

I don't know if anyone is watching the Little League World Series right now, but maybe some of those kids playing in Bayonne today will be playing on our baseball team a few years from now.

If anyone has any questions, I'd be happy to answer them now or later. Otherwise, I'll pass it over to Jonathan.

Thank you.

Jonathan Sisk presented Basketball Coaches.

Good evening, everyone. I'm Jonathan Sisk, Director of Athletics here at HCCC, and we have some very exciting updates to share. Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to speak today.

Athletics was last presented to the Board in August 2025, and we have come a long way since then.

We hired head and assistant coaches for both men's and women's basketball. They have been hard at work recruiting student-athletes, developing schedules, and conducting workouts. I'll share more about these outstanding coaches in a moment.

We have officially been admitted to the National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA) following a year-long admissions process. Thank you to all of the employees, students, and community members who were instrumental in that effort. The process included a site visit and participation from many members of the College community, including Dr. Lisa Dougherty and the Student Affairs team.

As part of that process, we were also admitted to Region 15. Carrie Ann McTiernan has been working closely with us, and we look forward to continuing that partnership.

With the Center for Student Success scheduled to open later in the spring, we secured a great partner site for this season's basketball practices and games. We will be playing at High Tech High School in Secaucus.

High Tech has been a wonderful partner. The staff has been incredibly welcoming and supportive of our student-athletes and coaching staff. The maintenance team has also ensured that we have everything we need.

We have formalized a team name, are close to finalizing an official logo, have established a social media presence, and are building an athletics website to support recruitment, retention, and promotion of our programs.

We have also begun preparations for men's and women's volleyball, which is scheduled to begin in Fall 2027. Position postings for those programs will be available on the College website soon.

As mentioned earlier, I'd like to introduce two outstanding head coaches who have worked tirelessly to build their programs.

Carlos Cueto comes to us from Union City High School, where he led a very successful women's basketball program and has been Hudson County Coach of the Year twice.

Coach Carlos Cueto offered remarks.

Thank you for having us here tonight.

I want to thank the Trustees, employees, and staff who have helped make this possible. It's been a long process, and Ethan and I have worked tirelessly to build these programs.

We're almost at the point where our teams will be ready to compete in October. Thank you again for your support.

I have one of our players here tonight. She was our very first commitment, which makes this especially meaningful. Allison Torres, please stand up.

Allison is one of the reasons I decided to do this. She is a young woman who was not initially thinking about college, and the opportunity to continue playing a sport helped keep her focused on higher education.

I hope to bring that same opportunity to students throughout Hudson County, especially on the women's side. Men have traditionally had these opportunities, and now women have them as well.

At this point, we have 10 committed student-athletes and two student managers. It's very exciting to see the program coming together.

As a lifelong Hudson County resident, I truly appreciate this opportunity. Thank you.

Jonathan Sisk resumed remarks.

Ethan Nordone is an experienced college coach, which stops at SUNY Canton, SUNY Potsdam, Franklin and Marshall, and Iona. He currently works with the National Basketball Association.

Coach Ethan Nordone offered remarks.

Thank you for having us here tonight.

I want to echo everything Carlos said. I'm excited about this opportunity and what we are building at HCCC.

My goal is to create opportunities for our student-athletes not only to continue their education here but also to advance to four-year institutions after HCCC.

I want to help place students in environments that are a good fit both academically and athletically.

At the same time, we want to create something exciting for the entire community and build a program that everyone can support and take pride in when competition begins this October.

Thank you again for this opportunity. I am looking forward to what comes next.

Jonathan Sisk resumed remarks.

Thank you, Coach Nordone.

We have some exciting announcements to share.

We have officially selected a team name, which will be formally announced during College Service Day and New Student Convocation later in August.

Today, however, I can give you a preview:

The Hudson Hornets.

We're very excited about the name and look forward to the official launch later this month.

We are working with local vendor Jesse Lovely and Obsidian Promotions on our branding and logo design. The logo is still in draft form, but we love its energy and the marketing opportunities that come with the Hornets identity, including concepts such as the hive, the nest, and the buzz.

We are also developing an athletics website that will provide a professional platform for promoting our student-athletes and programs. The website will include statistics, articles, livestreams, coach and student-athlete profiles, a team store, donation opportunities connected to the Foundation, and other resources that support our teams.

In addition, our social media presence continues to grow. Coach Cueto has done an outstanding job building visibility for the women's basketball program, particularly through announcements of student commitments and recruiting updates.

We will continue adding content and expanding our reach as the programs develop.

Finally, our first home contest is scheduled for November 3, with the women's game beginning at 6:00 p.m. and the men's game following at 8:00 p.m. at High Tech High School.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide these updates. It is always a pleasure speaking with you.

Trustee Jeanette Peña offered remarks.

I have had this idea for a long time. I remember one of my first conversations with Dr. Reber, when I told him that we needed a way to attract student-athletes who would do well in our schools. I felt that starting a sports program would help bring those students to the college.

I want to thank everyone involved because I see the value of sports and understand how important these opportunities can be. Sometimes athletics can encourage students to pursue higher education who may not have otherwise considered it.

I am glad to see our sports program coming together. I would also like to put in a word for swimming. Although we do not have a pool, it is a great sport and is worth considering in the future.

I also inquired about Ms. Torres, our first athlete recruit, and learned that she attended Harrison High School.

Thank you to everyone involved in supporting and developing the athletics program.

Regular Monthly Reports and Recommendations

1. The Minutes of the Regular Meeting of June 9, 2026 were approved.
2. Gifts, Grants, and Contracts Report

Hudson County Community College has received the following grant:

Title: AI-Assisted Cybersecurity Training Environment for Technician-Level Workforce

Agency: The National Information Technology Innovation Center (NITIC)

Purpose of Grant: The purpose of this grant is to support the development of an AI-assisted cybersecurity training environment that enhances technician-level workforce preparation through hands-on learning, emerging technology integration, and the creation of shareable educational resources.

College Administrators: Yavuz Guner

College Contribution: \$0

Award Amount: \$10,000

Title: AI + Work Based Learning Design Challenge Initiative

Agency: Education Design Lab

Purpose of Grant: This initiative will support HCCC to co-design, implement, and scale AI-integrated WBL experiences in partnership with employers, leveraging the Riipen platform and the Lab's human-centered design Methodology.

College Administrators: Lori Margolin

College Contribution: \$0

Award Amount: \$10,000

The following actions were taken concerning **Fiscal, Administrative, Lease, and Capital Recommendations** brought forward by the Administration and endorsed by the Finance Committee.

1. Resolution Authorizing the Execution of the Second Amendment to the Amended and Restated Lease with the Jersey City Redevelopment Agency for Property Located at 68-74 Sip Avenue (Block 9501, Lot 21); 150-164 Sip Avenue; and 28 Tonnelle Avenue (Block 10602, Lots 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15 and 16), Jersey City, New Jersey was approved.
2. Resolution Approving Architectural and Engineering Services On-Call List was approved.
3. Resolution Authorizing Purchase of Furniture for the Center for Student Success (OMNIA Partners) to be funded from Chapter 12 funds, at a cost not to exceed \$2,959,786, was approved.
4. Resolution Authorizing Purchase of Furniture for the Center for Student Success (ESCNJ) to be funded from Chapter 12 funds, at a cost not to exceed \$353,818, was approved.
5. Resolution Authorizing Purchase of Furniture for the Center for Student Success (State Contract) to be funded from Chapter 12 funds, at a cost not to exceed \$19,264, was approved.
6. Resolution Authorizing Award of Athletic Training Services at a cost not to exceed \$179,452 was approved.
7. Resolution Authorizing Purchase of Advanced Email Security Protection Software to be funded from the operating budget, at a cost not to exceed \$141,949, was approved.
8. Authorizing Purchase of an Anti-Fraud Platform to be funded from the operating budget, at a cost not to exceed \$49,338, was approved.
9. Resolution Authorizing Renewal of Smart Net Maintenance and Technical Support to be funded from the operating budget, at a cost not to exceed \$345,834, was approved.
10. Resolution Authorizing Renewal of Citrix Virtual Apps and Desktop Software License to be funded from the operating budget, at a cost not to exceed \$139,670, was approved.
11. Resolution Authorizing Renewal of Adobe Licenses to be funded from the operating budget, at a cost not to exceed \$63,021, was approved.
12. Resolution Authorizing Renewal for Monthly Parking with Square Parking LLC., to be funded from the operating budget, at a cost not to exceed \$282,000, was approved.
13. Resolution Authorizing Renewal of Monthly Parking at Vroom Street Church to be funded from the operating budget, at a cost not to exceed \$49,500, was approved.
14. Resolution Authorizing Renewal of Digital Advertisement Services to be funded from the operating budget, at a cost not to exceed \$59,018, was approved.
15. Resolution Authorizing Award of Audit Contract for Fiscal Year 2026 in an amount not to exceed \$101,500, was approved.
16. Resolution Authorizing Renewal of New Jersey Council of County Colleges Membership to be funded from the operating budget, at a cost not to exceed \$78,628, was approved.
17. Resolution Authorizing Renewal of Purchasing Bid Threshold for Fiscal Year 2027 at a cost not to exceed \$44,900 was approved.
18. Hudson County Community College and Philadelphia Indemnity Insurance Company Settlement to be funded from the operating budget, at a cost not to exceed \$50,000, was approved.

The following actions were taken regarding **Personnel Recommendations** brought forward by the Administration and endorsed by the Personnel Committee.

1. The retirement of an Accounts Receivable and an Associate Professor were approved.
2. The resignations of a Coordinator II, Academic Counselor, and two support analyst were accepted.
3. Appointments of Full-time Staff were approved.
4. Appointments of Temporary Full-time Staff were approved.
5. Appointments of Full-time Faculty were approved.
6. Appointments of Temporary Full-time Faculty were approved.
7. Authorizations of Part-time Staff through August 2027, as needed, were approved.
8. Appointments of New Hire Adjunct Instructors were approved.
9. The following Modifications to the Staffing Table were approved:

Current Approved Title	New Title/ Classification	Incumbent	Current Salary Grade	New Salary Grade	Current Salary	New Salary	Effective Date
Associate Vice President for Institutional Research and Planning	N/A	John Urgola	124	124	\$ 129,063	\$ 136,400 *	July 1, 2026

*Increase supported by internal and external equity metrics as discussed.

10. Approvals of Travel Requests were passed.

The following actions were taken regarding **Academic and Student Affairs** as brought forward by the Academic and Student Affairs Committee.

1. Resolution Authorizing Amended Agreement Between Hudson County Community College (HCCC) and Digital Promise Global was approved.
2. Resolution Authorizing Policy on Academic Integrity was approved.
3. Resolution Authorizing Agreement Between Hudson County Community College (HCCC) and Beacon Christian Academy was approved.
4. Resolution Authorizing Agreement Between Hudson County Community College (HCCC) and West New York Board of Education was approved.
5. Resolution Authorizing Agreement Between Hudson County Community College (HCCC) and Marion P. Thomas Charter School was approved.
6. Resolution Authorizing Amended Agreement Between Hudson County Community College (HCCC) and Union City Board of Education was approved by 6 Trustees.
7. Resolution Authorizing Affiliation Agreement Between Hudson County Community College (HCCC) and Better Tomorrows was approved.

8. Resolution Authorizing Agreement Between Hudson County Community College (HCCC) and Community Supports Network (CSN) was approved.
9. Resolution Authorizing Agreement Between Hudson County Community College (HCCC) and New Jersey Reentry Corporation (NJRC) was approved.
10. Resolution Authorizing Agreement Between Hudson County Community College (HCCC) and College Board was approved.
11. Resolution Authorizing Articulation Agreement Between Hudson County Community College (HCCC) and New Jersey Institute of Technology (NJIT) was approved.

The following actions were taken regarding **New Business**.

1. Resolution Authorizing Award of Presidential Search Firm Contract was approved.

The **meeting was adjourned** at 5:40 p.m.

The minutes of the Board of Trustees Meeting, upon approval, are available in the College Library, the President's Office, and on the College website.