



The Spartanburg County Commission for Technical and Community Education Minutes

Date: Monday, February 16, 2026, 12:00 pm

Location: Dr. Benjamin Snoddy Boardroom

Attendees:

Chairman Keller, Vice Chairman Bell, Commissioner Smith, Commissioner Kennedy, Commissioner Anderson, Commissioner Hill, Commissioner Hamrick, Commissioner J. Fowler, Commissioner Powell-Baker, Commissioner King, Dr. Mikota, Mr. Burroughs, Mrs. Walker, Dr. Williams, Mrs. Harris, Dr. Obi, Mrs. Painter, Ms. Schultz, Ms. Hughes, Dr. Brothers, Mrs. Sexton

Absent:

Commissioner K. Fowler, Commissioner Sarratt, Commissioner O'Neill, Mr. Aughinbaugh

Call to Order

Chairman Keller called the meeting to order at 12:05 pm.

Approval of Previous Minutes

Chairman Keller presented the minutes from the January 12, 2026, meeting, which had been previously shared with the Members. Hearing no amendments or objections, he asked for a motion to approve the minutes as written.

Motion: Commissioner Hamrick

Second: Commissioner Smith

Vote: All in favor

Consent Agenda Items

Chairman Keller presented the Consent Agenda Items, which previously had been shared with the Members and asked if any Member had edits or questions. Hearing no amendments or objections, Chairman Keller asked for a motion to approve the Consent Agenda Items as presented.

Motion: Commissioner Bell

Second: Commissioner Hill

Vote: All in favor

Research & Development

Presented by Mrs. Caroline Sexton, Dean, Research & Development

Closing the 2022–2025 Strategic Plan

SCC's new strategic plan was launched January 16, 2026. While there is excitement about the path ahead, it is equally important to pause and reflect on the journey that has led to this moment.

The 2022–2025 Strategic Plan, *Preparing to Chase: Eliminating Boundaries*, was intentionally designed to lay a strong and sustainable foundation for the future. The challenge was to think boldly, remove obstacles, and expand opportunities for students and the community.

Mrs. Sexton spoke to being incredibly proud of the college-wide commitment that brought this vision to life. Across every department and every role, dedication, collaboration, and perseverance have positioned SCC exceptionally well for this next chapter.

Before turning fully toward the future, today is an opportunity to celebrate the progress made, recognize the impact of collective efforts, and acknowledge how far the College has progressed.

Strategic Goals Overview

The major accomplishments and the key performance indicators that demonstrated the success of this plan are:

Five overarching goals:

1. Empower Student Success
2. Provide Healthy Financial Growth
3. Strengthen Culture and Community
4. Deliver Transformative Experiences
5. Optimize Economic Competitiveness

Under these goals, 51 objectives were established.

- 40 objectives fully completed
- 10 largely completed and carried forward
- 1 discontinued

That level of completion reflects an extraordinary institutional effort.

Empower Student Success

The goal was to foster a culture that places students first, promotes accessibility and affordability, and produces well-prepared graduates ready for the workforce or continued education.

Key Accomplishments

- Reimagined Transitional Studies through the creation of a College Success Department and the launch of the LEAP initiative
- Established and expanded Success Coaching — growing from our first coach to eight Success Coaches
- Created a Director of First-Year Experience role
- Leveraged data from our Bridging the Gap Report to launch data-driven student success initiatives
- Introduced Elevate Excellence, a college-wide soft skills initiative supporting workforce readiness
- Embedded a stronger culture of data-informed decision-making

Key Performance Indicators

- Persistence (Fall to Spring) - Increased from 68.6% to 73.1% - 298 additional students persisted
- Retention (Fall to Fall or Graduation) - Increased from 55.9% to 62.5% - 438 additional students retained
- Graduation Rate - Increased from 23.7% to 26.6% - 179 additional graduates

A quick note on the graduation metric: graduation is measured over a three-year cohort cycle, Fall 2021 and Fall 2022 were referenced as starting cohorts. That's why those dates appear in the data.

These numbers represent more than metrics. They represent lives changed and from a sustainability standpoint, also represents institutional stability and revenue growth.

Provide Healthy Financial Growth

This goal was to grow financial resources through enrollment, retention, workforce training, and strategic partnerships, while strengthening existing affiliations.

Key Accomplishments

- Created a metrics-driven Enrollment Management Division grounded in daily data tracking and continuous improvement
- Developed a comprehensive, college-wide enrollment management plan integrating:
 - Marketing
 - Outreach
 - Admissions
 - Retention
 - Workforce and non-credit strategies

- Strengthened alignment between credit and non-credit programming
- Established the Office of Research and Development
 - Implemented a new program proposal process
 - Launched an annual program alignment report to ensure workforce relevance
- Modernized marketing with targeted, program-specific campaigns
- Developed a 10-Year Facilities Master Plan to guide strategic growth

Key Performance Indicators

- Credit Enrollment - Increased 13.1% from Fall 2022 to Fall 2025
- Workforce Training Revenue (Non-Credit) - Increased from \$1.7 million to \$2.3 million
- Foundation Donations - Increased from \$393,000 to \$1.2 million

These figures reflect not just growth — but strategic, intentional growth aligned with mission and market demand.

Through the title, Preparing to Chase, there was acknowledgment that before accelerating forward, the College needed a strong foundation.

Through data-driven decision-making, student-centered innovation, and cross-college collaboration, the College is now positioned not just for stability — but for momentum.

Mrs. Sexton expressed that she was incredibly proud of what this institution has accomplished together, and is even more excited about what lies ahead in the next strategic plan.

At this time the floor was opened for questions, none were put forth.

Chairman Keller thanked Mrs. Sexton for the presentation.

Motion: Commissioner Bell

Second: Commissioner Hill

Vote: All in favor

Office of Accreditation

Presented by Dr. Jenny Williams, Chief Accreditation Officer

SACSCOC Indicator Review and Adoption of Proposed KPI's for 2026-2031

Dr. Williams gave an update regarding the October accreditation visit from the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC).

The visit resulted in positive feedback and favorable evaluations. One follow-up item was identified. The institution is currently addressing this matter and remains on track to submit a formal response by the end of next month.

Student Achievement Data Reporting

The updated Student Achievement Indicators for the 2022–2023, 2023–2024, and 2024–2025 academic years was presented.

Key points included:

Student achievement data are reported on a three-year cycle, consistent with SACSCOC expectations.

The 2024–2025 data were published in January and reflect the standard reporting lag.

At SACSCOC’s request, student achievement data have been relocated to a more accessible section of the College website under Student Consumer Information.

Updated tables will be publicly available and reflect the most recent three-year reporting cycle.

Six-Year Completion Rate (SACSCOC Measure)

The Board reviewed the institution’s six-year completion rate, which serves as the official SACSCOC completion metric.

Discussion points included:

The six-year completion rate is a lagging indicator reflecting cohorts from prior academic years.

Although the 2024–2025 benchmark was not fully attained, the institution has significantly reduced the gap and is approaching the established target.

Retention and persistence rates continue to show improvement, supporting long-term completion gains.

The institution will strengthen documentation of annual review discussions and planning activities tied specifically to this measure.

Disaggregated Completion Data

The Board reviewed completion data disaggregated by:

Age, Race, Gender and Pell recipient status

This analysis supports institutional efforts to identify equity gaps and inform targeted student success strategies. Enhanced documentation of these analyses will be incorporated into annual planning and assessment processes.

Proposed Student Achievement Indicators (2026–2031)

The Board reviewed proposed Student Achievement Indicators for the 2026–2031 reporting cycle.

The proposed indicators:

Reflect approximately 2% projected growth where appropriate.

Maintain strong performance benchmarks in licensure pass rates and placement rates.

Align with strategic planning priorities and institutional performance trends.

This has been reviewed by President’s Cabinet, Dean’s Council, and Vanguard prior to Board presentation.

These indicators will guide institutional data review and performance discussions through the next five-year accreditation cycle.

At this time the floor was opened for questions, none were put forth.

Chairman Keller asked for a motion to approve the proposed Student Achievement Indicators for 2026–2031 as presented.

Motion: Commissioner King

Second: Commissioner Kennedy

Vote: All in favor

Financial Report

Presented by Ms. Melissa Hughes, Director, Finance

Revenues:

January curriculum revenue, is the largest source of revenue, totaling approximately \$31.6 million, which is a very strong start for the year.

Workforce Development and Continuing Education division is also having a prosperous year. Highlights include:

- \$700,000 in additional revenue from occupational health programs
- \$86,000 generated so far from the newly launched heavy equipment programs

These increases account for the growth within Workforce Development.

Auxiliary Services, which includes supply sales, revenue has surpassed budget projections. This is the first year in which textbook sales have been outsourced, and the budget was set conservatively based on initial expectations. Exceeding budget in this area is certainly a positive outcome.

System Office, full allocation has been received — slightly exceeding what was anticipated. The state allocation for the Cherokee portion has also been received.

Regarding county appropriations:

- Union County: \$122,000 received
- Cherokee County: approximately \$355,000 received
- Spartanburg County: request submitted; funds expected prior to the next meeting

Other Revenues, the primary driver continues to be interest earnings from the local government investment pool. Through January, just over \$1 million in interest income has been received.

Overall, as of the end of January, SCC is reporting a year-over-year surplus of approximately \$5.3 million.

Expenses

Full-time salaries, which represent the largest expense category, total approximately \$15.8 million through January, or about 54% of budget. For transparency, the employee bonus that was distributed at the end of the last calendar year, has been separately identified

Full-time fringe benefits total approximately \$7.7 million, representing about 56% of the budget.

Part-time salaries and expenditures are approximately 37% of budget, with part-time fringe benefits at about 35%.

Operating expenditures are currently at approximately 46% of budget. In response to administrative discussions regarding travel, the travel expenses have been broken out separately for added visibility. Previously, these costs were included within overall operating expenses.

Overall, total expenditures through the end of January are approximately \$40.5 million, or about 55% of the annual budget.

At this point in the fiscal year:

- Approximately 76% of budgeted revenues have been received, reflecting a \$5.3 million year-over-year increase.
- Expenditures are tracking at 55%, with no major issues to report.

Overall Financial Position

As of January 31, 2026 the College has received approximately 76% of budgeted revenues, representing a \$5.3 million increase compared to the same period in the previous fiscal year. No major financial issues have been identified, and expenditures are tracking appropriately relative to revenues.

Based on the review of revenues and expenses, administration is recommending acceptance of the financial report as information.

The floor was opened for questions. None were put forth.

Chairman Keller asked for a Motion to approve the financials.

Motion: Commissioner Kennedy

Second: Commissioner Bell

Vote: All in favor

President's Report

Presented by Dr. Mikota

On this President's Day, Dr. Mikota reflected on various former Presidents of the United States, and how individual administrations have either been shaped by the forces of history; or how they have had the leadership and capability to shape history. Dr. Mikota emphasized that we cannot control the occurrences of the day, but we can push forward with leadership, expertise, and influence that will shape the future. That philosophy continues to guide the response to enrollment growth, fiscal pressures, and statewide economic dynamics. Dr. Mikota then shared an update on specific impactful topics that are important to the current state of the college and the next steps forward:

Enrollment Growth & Institutional Impact

- 70% enrollment growth over the past five years.
- Significant expansion in academic delivery and workforce solutions.
- Growth has amplified existing facility needs and created new infrastructure demands.
- Continued emphasis on building capacity while maintaining operational efficiency.

Operational Efficiency

- Per-student cost reduced by more than \$3,000 over four years.
- Strong control of variable expenses (travel, discretionary spending, operational efficiencies).
- Strategic cultural alignment through structured onboarding (President's Coffee with new faculty/staff).

SCC's financial stewardship remains disciplined and mission-focused.

Rising Structural Employment Costs

Despite internal cost containment, employer-mandated costs continue to escalate:

- Increased employer contributions to health and dental insurance.
- Rising state retirement system obligations.
- Post-pandemic acceleration in benefit-related expenditures.

While employee premiums have remained relatively stable, the institutional share has increased significantly, raising the total cost per FTE and impacting long-term budget flexibility.

State Budget Outlook

- State revenue projections currently held steady by the Board of Economic Advisors.
- Wage growth and tax collections normalizing post-pandemic.
- No projected employment slowdown statewide.
- Budget process underway (House → Senate → Conference Committee).

The outcome of the \$38 million system-wide recurring funding request for the 16 technical colleges remains uncertain. One-time funds (including SC Wins support) appear promising; recurring base funding is less certain.

This creates potential tuition pressure if recurring appropriations do not keep pace with inflation and operating costs.

Capital & Advocacy Efforts

- Ongoing engagement with legislators and county leadership.
- Upcoming presentation to Spartanburg County Council to highlight:
 - Enrollment growth
 - Workforce development impact
 - Aging infrastructure needs
 - Return on investment to the region

Advocacy efforts remain targeted and strategic partnerships and the showcase of return-on-investment.

Strategic Outlook

Remain on a strong trajectory aligned with the 2026–2027 strategic vision:

- Continued enrollment momentum
- Workforce alignment with state economic growth
- Cultural strengthening from day one of employment
- Responsible fiscal navigation amid structural cost increases

Overall Assessment

The college is performing exceptionally well in growth, efficiency, and mission delivery. However, sustained success will depend on securing stable recurring funding and addressing long-deferred capital needs while managing rising employer-mandated costs.

Dr. Mikota remains confident in the direction and appreciative of the Board's continued leadership and support.

At this time the floor was opened for questions; none were put forth.

Chairman Keller asked for a Motion to approve the President's Report.

Motion: Commissioner Kennedy

Second: Commissioner Bell

Vote: All in favor

Announcements

Presented by Chairman Keller

- Spring Fling Cherokee - April 25, 2026 - Cherokee Campus
- Girls on the Run 5k - May 2, 2026 - Spartanburg Campus
- CRIT - May 1, 2026 - Downtown Spartanburg
- 2026 Commencement:
 - Wednesday, May 13, 2026
 - 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm (Rain Date May 14)
 - Please notify Donna of your attendance
- Spartanburgers - Veterans Games - May 23, 2026 & May 24, 2026

Adjourn

Chairman Keller asked for a motion to Adjourn the meeting.

Motion: Commissioner King

Second: Commissioner Bell

Vote: All in favor

Meeting adjourned at 1:10 pm.

Respectfully submitted by:

Tracey Hill

Mrs. Tracey Hill, Secretary