



LAREDO COLLEGE DISTRICT

Laredo, Texas

The regular monthly meeting of the Laredo College Board of Trustees convened on Thursday, February 5, 2026, beginning at 6:00 p.m. in the Adolfo C. and Maria de Jesus De La Garza Building Room 101, at the Fort McIntosh Campus, West End Washington Street, Laredo, Texas.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Rangel called the meeting to order.

2. ROLL CALL

Ms. Leven-Ramos called roll.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Esteban Rangel, President

Ernestina "Tita" Cantu Vela, Vice President

Jackie Leven-Ramos, Secretary

Cindy Liendo, Parliamentarian

Erica Benavides Garcia (*arrived at 6:02 p.m.*)

Adriana Alexander (*left the meeting at 7:41 p.m.*)

Lizzy Newsome

OTHERS

Minita Ramirez, Ph.D.

Rusty Meurer

Ruben Villarreal

Lindsey Ballesteros

David V. Arreazola, Ed.D.

Eli Mendoza

Marisela Rodriguez Tijerina, Ed.D.

MEMBERS ABSENT

Mercurio Martinez, Jr. (*excused*)

Karina "Kari" Elizondo

Ms. Leven-Ramos moved to excuse Mr. Martinez from the meeting. Ms. Alexander seconded the motion; motion passed.

3. PUBLIC TESTIMONY

Ms. Leven-Ramos referenced Laredo College Board Policy BDB(LOCAL) to clarify the topics permitted under public testimony.

Mr. David Patricio, Ms. Jasmin Vega, and Mr. Valentin Ruiz provided comments regarding Agenda Item 7.C. - *Laredo College and U.S. Government Real Property Lease Agreement*.

4. RECOGNITIONS AND INTRODUCTIONS – MR. RUBEN VILLARREAL

4.A. A TRIBUTE TO MRS. CAROLYN SCHMIES – DR. MINITA RAMÍREZ

Dr. Minita Ramirez, President, paid tribute to the life and service of Mrs. Carolyn Schmies, former college administrator. Mrs. Schmies will be honored with a bench dedication in the fall.

4.B. BUILDING THE TEXAS BROADBAND WORKFORCE PROGRAM

Laredo College's Continuing Education Department has been awarded \$2,264,975.07 by the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts Broadband Development Office to support the Building the Texas Broadband Workforce Program. Laredo College is one of only seven organizations statewide selected to receive this award, which will provide tuition-free training to an estimated 2,800 Texans in the installation, maintenance, and repair of fiber-based broadband networks.

This award was made possible through the efforts of Ms. Brenda Martinez, Dean Sandra Cortez, and Ms. Susana Carreon.

**4.C. INTRODUCTION OF
PERSONNEL/PERSONNEL
ACTIONS**

The new hires/personnel actions for the month were introduced - Delany A. Achoy, Enrollment Coach; Erika Botello, Career Development Coordinator; Christina D. Duarte, Workforce Development Coordinator-Health Careers; Priscilla V. Flores, Staff Assistant-Development; Ricardo Jalomo, Plumber Technician; Valeria Juarez-Peña, Academic Intervention Specialist; Gerardo Medrano, Patrol Officer; Jose E. Ortiz, Enrollment Coach; Ricardo Perez, Electrical Technical Instructor; Dr. Ramiro Rodriguez, Physical Therapist Assistant Instructor/Program Lead; Adriana A. Ruiz, Academic Advisor; Joseph P. Trevino, Patrol Officer; Guadalupe Castillo, Lead Instructional Design Specialist; and Rosa H. Rios, Library Systems and Digital Access Coordinator.

5. LAREDO COLLEGE STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION REPORT – MS. LINDSEY BALLESTEROS

Ms. Lindsey Ballesteros, Student Government Association President, provided updates on Student Body activities, including the tree lighting ceremony, inaugural First-Generation Ceremony, SGA retreat, welcome week, first official SGA meeting, The Big Event, WBCA parades, Hearts and Hooves, recruitment tables, and Fun Fest.

6. BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS

**6.A. PROGRAM/POLICY
COMMITTEE MEETING
REPORT – MS. JACKIE
LEVEN-RAMOS**

Ms. Leven-Ramos summarized the Program/Policy committee meeting held on February 2nd.

Ms. Leven-Ramos moved to bring up Agenda Item 8.K. - *Approval of Modifications to Laredo College Board Policy BDB(LOCAL)-BOARD MEETINGS: PUBLIC PARTICIPATION*. Ms. Vela seconded the motion; motion passed.

Ms. Leven-Ramos then moved to defer Agenda Item 8.K. Ms. Vela seconded the motion; motion passed.

**6.B. STUDENT SUCCESS
COMMITTEE MEETING
REPORT – MS. ERICA
BENAVIDES GARCIA**

Ms. Benavides Garcia summarized the Student Success Committee meeting held on February 3rd.

**6.C. BUILDING
COMMITTEE MEETING
REPORT – MS. CINDY
LIENDO**

Ms. Liendo summarized the Building Committee meeting held on February 4th.

**6.D. FINANCE & AUDIT
COMMITTEE MEETING
REPORT – MS. ERNESTINA
“TITA” CANTU VELA**

Ms. Vela summarized the Finance & Audit Committee meeting held on February 4th.

7. INFORMATION ITEMS

**7.A. REPORT ON THE
TEXAS PRESIDENTS &
TRUSTEES
COLLABORATIVE
MEETING – MS. CINDY
LIENDO/MR. ESTEBAN
RANGEL/MS. ERICA
BENAVIDES GARCIA/DR.
MINITA RAMÍREZ**

Ms. Liendo provided a summary of the collaborative meeting that she, Mr. Rangel, Ms. Benavides Garcia, and Dr. Ramírez attended in December. The collaborative will focus on a trustee framework and strategies to drive institutional change.

**7.B. REPORT ON THE
TEXAS HIGHER
EDUCATION**

Mr. Rangel reported that the trustees who attended fulfilled their required training.

**COORDINATING BOARD
(THECB) HIGHER EDGE
2025 CONFERENCE – MR.
ESTEBAN RANGEL/MS.
ERNESTINA “TITA” CANTU
VELA/ MS. CINDY
LIENDO/MS. ERICA
BENAVIDES GARCIA/MS.
ADRIANA ALEXANDER**

**7.C. LAREDO COLLEGE
AND U.S. GOVERNMENT
REAL PROPERTY LEASE
AGREEMENT – DR. MINITA
RAMIREZ**

Dr. Ramirez informed the Board that Laredo College has entered into an eight-month property lease agreement with the U.S. government for the use of six houses as office space on the Fort McIntosh Campus.

**7.D. FOREIGN TRADE
ZONE DESIGNATION
REQUESTS – DR. MINITA
RAMIREZ**

Dr. Ramirez informed the Board that letters of concurrence had been issued for Foreign Trade Zone designations for:

- AMERICAN EXPORT SERVICES, INC., located at 1152 Reuthinger Parkway, Laredo, Texas, 78045
- DUNAVANT LOGISTICS GROUP, LLC., located at 4013 Quivira Dr., Laredo, Texas, 78045

**7.E. NOTIFICATION OF
EMPLOYEE
COMPENSATION DURING
CLOSURE DUE TO
INCLEMENT WEATHER AS
PER LAREDO COLLEGE
POLICY DEA(LOCAL)-
COMPENSATION AND
BENEFITS:
COMPENSATION PLAN –
DR. MINITA RAMIREZ**

Dr. Ramirez informed the Board that, in accordance with LC Policy DEA (LOCAL), employees will be paid for the delayed two-hour start that occurred on January 26, 2026, and January 27, 2026, due to inclement weather.

**7.F. SOUTHERN
ASSOCIATION OF
COLLEGES AND SCHOOLS
COMMISSION ON
COLLEGES FIFTH-YEAR
INTERIM REVIEW –
REFERRAL REPORT
UPDATE – DR. DAVID V.
ARREAZOLA**

Dr. David V. Arreazola, Vice President of Student Success and Compliance, provided a status update on the Fifth-Year Interim Report and accreditation timeline. He noted that the QEP Impact Report has been recommended for recognition.

8. CONSENT AGENDA

Ms. Liendo made a motion to approve the following items under Consent Agenda.

- Agenda Item 8.A. – Approval of the Minutes of the Regular Monthly Board Meeting of November 19, 2025
- Agenda Item 8.B. – Approval of Title V Learning, Engaging & Academic Support through Data Driven Action (LEAD) P031S230150 Matching Funds of \$50,000 for Year Two as Per Grant Criteria
- Agenda Item 8.C. – Approval of Donor Requested Endowment Matching Funds for the Carroll E. Summers, Jr./Mr. South Texas - LC Nursing Endowment
- Agenda Item 8.D. – Approval of Cloud-Based Fundraising & Donor Management Software Contract Renewal with Blackbaud Raiser's Edge NXT Complete
- Agenda Item 8.E. – December 2025 Financial Report
- Agenda Item 8.F. – Approval for Purchase of Microscopes for Natural Science Department
- Agenda Item 8.G. – Approval for Workforce External Lab Project
- Agenda Item 8.H. – Approval of Building Plaques for Raquel Gonzalez Automotive Technology Center Auto Body & Diesel Shop Expansion
- Agenda Item 8.I. – Approval for Laredo College Employees and Students Out of Country Travel to Spain
- Agenda Item 8.J. – TASB Board Policy Update 50: Review Updated LEGAL Policies and Act on LOCAL Policies

Ms. Leven-Ramos seconded the motion; motion passed.

9. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION

9.A. FY 2025 AUDITED ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORT – MR. CESAR VELA

Mr. Eli Mendoza from Garza Gonzalez & Associates presented a summary of the FY 2025 audited financial report. Ms. Vela moved to acknowledge receipt of the report as presented. Ms. Alexander and Ms. Benavides Garcia seconded the motion; motion passed.

9.B. APPROVAL OF REVISION TO THE 2026 - 2027 LAREDO COLLEGE ACADEMIC CALENDAR – DR. DAVID V. ARREAZOLA

Dr. Arreazola presented a revision to the 2026-2027 academic calendar to change the Spring Break week. Ms. Liendo moved to approve the revised calendar. Ms. Benavides Garcia and Ms. Vela seconded the motion; motion passed.

9.C. TENURE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CONSIDERATION AND APPROVAL BY LAREDO COLLEGE BOARD OF TRUSTEES – DR. MARISELA RODRIGUEZ TIJERINA

Dr. Marisela Rodriguez Tijerina, Provost/Vice President of Academic Affairs, recommended that the following faculty be granted tenure beginning with the 2026-2027 academic year:

- Bryant J. De Jesus, Assistant Professor of Biology
- Dr. Dacun Li, Assistant Professor of Engineering
- Jessica Rodriguez, Assistant Professor of Radiologic Technology

Ms. Leven-Ramos moved to approve the recommendations presented. The motion was seconded by all other Board members; motion passed.

9.D. APPROVE RESOLUTION REQUESTING THAT THE LAREDO COLLEGE BOARD OF TRUSTEES APPROVE THE SUBMISSION OF A GRANT APPLICATION BY THE LAREDO COLLEGE GRANTS OFFICE TO THE STATE OF TEXAS, OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR, PUBLIC SAFETY OFFICE FOR THE 2026-2027 EDWARD BYRNE MEMORIAL FUND – JUSTICE ASSISTANCE GRANT (JAG) FOR A TOTAL OF \$25,000 IN FUNDING – MR. GABRIEL LOZANO

Ms. Leven-Ramos read the resolution.

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, Laredo College finds it in the best interest of the citizens of Laredo and South Texas that the Laredo College Police Department participate in the State of Texas – Criminal Justice Program– JAG Grant Project in FY 2026-2027; and

WHEREAS, The Laredo College Board of Trustees approves the submission of a grant application by the Laredo College Grants Office in the amount of \$25,000 to the State of Texas – Office of the Governor – Public Safety Office under the 2026-2027 Edward Byrne Memorial Fund – Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) Program. The application identifier is State of Texas E-Grants Application #5790601.

WHEREAS, grant funds will be utilized to purchase traffic safety enforcement equipment for the Laredo College Police Department including radar equipped trailers, digital signs and cloud-based software. These items will augment current speed enforcement and driver safety initiatives underway at Laredo College.

WHEREAS, Laredo College agrees to provide applicable matching funds when required for the said project but no matching funds are required for this grant application as noted by program guidelines.

WHEREAS, Laredo College agrees that in the event of loss or misuse of the State of Texas, Office of the Governor funds, Laredo College assures that the funds will be returned to the Office of the Governor in full.

WHEREAS, Laredo College designates Dr. Minita Ramirez - President as the grantee's authorized official. The authorized official is given the power to apply for, accept, reject, alter or terminate the grants on behalf of the applicant agency.

WHEREAS, Laredo College designates Mr. Cesar Vela – Vice President of Finance and Administration as the grantee's Financial Officer (FO). The Financial Officer is given the power to submit financial and/or programmatic reports or alter a grant on behalf of the applicant agency.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Laredo College Board of Trustees approves the submission of a grant application for a total of \$25,000 by the Laredo College Grants Office to the State of Texas, Office of the Governor, Public Safety Office for the 2026-2027 Criminal Justice – JAG Grant.

DULY RESOLVED by the Board of Trustees of Laredo College on the 5th Day of February of 2026.

Ms. Leven-Ramos moved to approve the resolution. Ms. Vela and Ms. Benavides Garcia seconded the motion; motion passed.

**9.E. APPROVE
RESOLUTION
REQUESTING THAT THE
LAREDO COLLEGE
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
APPROVE THE
SUBMISSION OF A GRANT
APPLICATION FOR A
TOTAL OF \$138,200 IN
GRANT FUNDING BY THE
LAREDO COLLEGE
GRANTS OFFICE FOR
THE 2026-2027 LAREDO
COLLEGE POLICE
DEPARTMENT
OPERATION LONE STAR
PROGRAM TO THE STATE
OF TEXAS, OFFICE OF
THE GOVERNOR, PUBLIC
SAFETY OFFICE – MR.
GABRIEL LOZANO**

Ms. Leven-Ramos read the resolution.

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, Laredo College finds it in the best interest of the citizens of Laredo and South Texas that the Laredo College Police Department requests grant funding under the State of Texas Operation Lonestar for the 2026-2027 fiscal year; and

WHEREAS, The Laredo College Board of Trustees approves the submission of a grant application by the Laredo College Grants Office in the amount of \$138,200 to the State of Texas – Office of the Governor – Public Safety Office for the 2026-2027 Laredo College Police Department Operation Lone Star Program. Funding will be used for specialized law enforcement equipment, overtime and fringe benefits for LCPD Officers working under Operation Lone Star.

*\$138,200 – FY 2026-2027 Operation Lone Star Grant Program
State of Texas E-Grants Application #5790801*

WHEREAS, Laredo College agrees to provide applicable matching funds when required for the said project but no matching funds are required for this grant application as noted by the State of Texas guidelines.

WHEREAS, Laredo College agrees that in the event of loss or misuse of the State of Texas, Office of the Governor funds, Laredo College assures that the funds will be returned to the Office of the Governor in full.

WHEREAS, Laredo College designates Dr. Minita Ramirez - President as the grantee's authorized official. The authorized official is given the power to apply for, accept, reject, alter or terminate the grants on behalf of the applicant agency.

WHEREAS, Laredo College designates Mr. Cesar Vela – Vice President of Finance and for Administration as the grantee's Financial Officer (FO). The Financial Officer is given the power to submit financial and/or programmatic reports or alter a grant on behalf of the applicant agency.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Laredo College Board of Trustees approves the submission of a grant application for a total of \$138,200 in grant funding by the Laredo College Grants Office for the 2026-2027 Laredo College Police Department Equipment Enhancement Project to the State of Texas, Office of the Governor – Public Safety Office.

DULY RESOLVED by the Board of Trustees of Laredo College on the 5th day of February, 2026.

Ms. Leven-Ramos moved to approve the resolution. Ms. Alexander seconded the motion; motion carried.

**9.F. APPROVAL OF
BOARD MEMBER(S)
TRAVEL AND
REIMBURSEMENT OF
REASONABLE TRAVEL
EXPENSES TO ELLUCIAN
LIVE 2026 AS PER
LAREDO COLLEGE
BOARD POLICIES
BBG(LOCAL) - BOARD
MEMBERS:
COMPENSATION AND
EXPENSES, AND
BBH(LOCAL) - BOARD
MEMBERS:
CONVENTIONS,
CONFERENCES, AND
WORKSHOPS**

Mr. Rangel noted that Ellucian invited him, Ms. Liendo, Ms. Benavides Garcia, and Dr. Ramirez to present two sessions at their conference. Ellucian will cover travel expenses for Dr. Ramirez, Ms. Liendo, and himself. He asked that any other Board members interested in attending email the President's Office by the deadline.

Ms. Leven-Ramos moved to approve travel for Board members. Ms. Liendo seconded the motion; motion passed.

10. PRESIDENT'S REMARKS AND REPORTS

**10.A. CAMPUS POLICE,
PERSONNEL, AND**

Reports were provided to the Board as part of the meeting materials.

**TRAVEL REPORTS – DR.
MINITA RAMÍREZ**

**10.B. PRESIDENT'S
REMARKS – DR. MINITA
RAMÍREZ**

Dr. Ramírez provided remarks on the following items:

- Spring enrollment
- Student financial aid
- Employee in-service
- Donations
- LC Palomino Empire Dance Team
- Attendance at:
 - Texas Association of Community Colleges CEO meeting
 - Texas Association of Community College Attorneys annual conference
 - State Bar of Texas President & State Bar Family Law Section Leadership Conference
 - Panelist for the Laredo Chamber of Commerce Vision conference
 - State of the City Address
 - UISD/AHEC 9th Annual Wind Symphony Concert
 - Texas Philosophical Society

11. UPCOMING EVENTS:

Tuesday, February 17, 2026, 11:00 a.m. – Building the Texas Broadband Workforce Grant Program Press Conference at the Yearly Library – Falcon Bank Executive Conference Room

Saturday, February 28, 2026, 12:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. – Laredo College Fun Fest Sponsored by AEP at Fort McIntosh Campus

March 9 – 13, 2026 – Spring Break

March 18, 2026, 10:00 a.m. – Laredo College Regional Law Enforcement Academy Open House – LC South

April 16, 2026, time TBD – Laredo College South Raquel González Automotive Technology Center Ribbon Cutting (tentative)

April 18, 2026, time TBD – Laredo College Car Show (tentative)

April 24, 2026, time TBD – Laredo College Lamar Bruni Vergara Environmental Science Center Open House (tentative)

May 26, 2026, time TBD – Laredo College Dr. Domingo Arechiga Hall Ribbon Cutting (tentative)

12. NEXT MEETING DATE:

Thursday, March 26, 2026, 6:00 p.m. – Regular Monthly Board of Trustees Meeting

13. ADJOURNMENT

At 7:42 p.m., Ms. Leven-Ramos made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Liendo seconded the motion; motion passed.