



**NEW MEXICO STATE UNIVERSITY BOARD OF
REGENTS SPECIAL MEETING
July 2, 2026, at 9:00 AM**

Meeting was held online via Zoom

Regents Present:	Chair Ammu Devasthali, Vice Chair Deborah Romero, Secretary/Treasurer Christopher T. Saucedo, Marisol Olivas, Ricardo Gonzales
Advisory Members:	ASNMSU President Carina Frisch, Faculty Senate Chair Kristian Finlator, Employee Council Chair Sonia A. White.
Officials Present:	President Valerio Ferme, Acting Provost R.T. James McAteer, Vice President for Administration and Finance, Allen Bottorff, General Counsel, Lisa Henderson.

MINUTES

I. Call to Order, Chairwoman Ammu Devasthali

Chairwoman Ammu Devasthali called the special meeting of the New Mexico State University Board of Regents to order at 9:01 AM.

A. Confirmation of Quorum, Chairwoman Ammu Devasthali

The roll was called to verify attendance. All five voting members of the Board of Regents were verified as present online. Advisory members President Frisch and Chair White were also confirmed present, alongside administrators President Ferme, Acting Provost McAteer, General Counsel Henderson, and Vice President Bottorff. Chair Finlator joined after roll was called.

B. Approval of the Agenda, Chairwoman Ammu Devasthali

Chairwoman Devasthali proposed to move the Authority to Reduce the Texas 135 Waiver to In-State Tuition item from action to informational. Chairwoman Devasthali moved to approve the agenda as amended and Regent Gonzales seconded. The agenda was approved as amended.

II. Confirmation of Prior Closed Executive Session on May 15, 2026, Chairwoman Ammu Devasthali

The Board of Regents of New Mexico State University held a closed meeting at 8:00 am on Friday, May 14, 2026. The closed meeting was called to complete an interim performance assessment of the President under his contract and as permitted under the personnel matters exemption of the New Mexico Open Meetings Act, NMSA Section 10-15-1, subsection H2.

Those board members present certified that only matters of that nature were discussed.

Regent Gonzales: Yes

Regent Olivas: Yes

Regent Saucedo: Yes

Regent Romero: Yes

Regent Devasthali: Yes

III. **Approval of Minutes**

A. Regular Meeting on May 14, 2026

The minutes of the regular Board of Regents meeting held on May 14, 2026, were presented for consideration. Regent Gonzales moved approval of the minutes, Regent Olivas seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

IV. **Consent Items**

The following items were approved on the consent agenda, with Regent Gonzales moving to approve and Regent Olivas seconding. The motion passed unanimously.

A. Doña Ana County Information Technology (IT) Easement – Office of Emergency Management, *Special Assistant to the President Scott Eschenbrenner*

B. Satisfaction of Mortgage – Lot 1, Hatch Valley Schools Plat No. 1 based on the terms stated in the Executive Summary, *Special Assistant to the President Scott Eschenbrenner*

V. **Action Items**

A. Ratification of the Graduate Student Union's 2026 Compensation Article, *General Counsel Henderson*

General Counsel Lisa Henderson presented the renegotiated compensation article pursuant to the Collective Bargaining Agreement between Regents of New Mexico State University and the Graduate Workers Union. The agreement includes a 3% increase applied directly to the minimum salary baseline on the graduate assistant salary table. Graduate assistants making above the minimum baseline will receive a 2.5% increase if they are on the revised salary table and they must have continuous employment with the same department in the same position for the Fall 2026 that they were in for Spring 2026. Departments with Research Assistants are encouraged to match the salary raises. The increase in salary will only be for one year until the agreement is renegotiated.

Regent Devasthali asked if there is a baseline for the salary that the departments will use when determining the salary for newly Graduate Assistants. General Counsel Henderson confirmed that the new minimum wage in the salary table in the agreement will be the baseline for the departments. Regent Romero asked to hear from the Representative from the Graduate Union. A representative was not at the meeting, but General Counsel Henderson noted that the union swiftly ratified the terms and anticipates implementation for the Fall of 2026.

Regent Gonzales moved to ratify the Graduate Student Union's 2026 compensation article. Regent Saucedo seconded, and a roll call vote was taken.

Regent Gonzales: Yes

Regent Olivas: Abstain

Regent Saucedo: Yes

Regent Romero: Yes

Regent Devasthali: Yes

VI. Informational Items

A. Authority to Reduce Texas 135 Waiver to In State Tuition, *Vice President Bottorff*

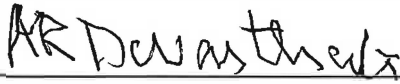
Vice President Bottorff and Vice President Marin presented a proposal to exercise the university's statutory authority under New Mexico state law to reduce the tuition rate for eligible Texas students residing within 135 miles of designated campuses. Currently, these students pay a 1.1 multiplier (10% above in-state tuition). The administration is looking to propose adjusting this rate to standard in-state tuition for undergraduate, graduate, and Dona Ana Community College (DACC) students, targeting implementation for the Fall 2027 enrollment cycle. This tuition change will counter competitive pressure from the University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP), which has expanded its "Pay Dirt Promise" program to offer free tuition to Texas families making up to \$100,000. This change will also align the tuition rate for El Paso students with undergraduate students from Arizona and Colorado.

Regent Saucedo asked if the statute and administrative rule restricts the tuition waiver to only 135 miles from the campus. Vice President Bottorff confirmed that the waiver can only be applied to those that live 135 miles from the campus. This waiver would only impact DACC and the Las Cruces Main campus. Regent Romero asked what the next steps are and when they can anticipate seeing the item on the Board of Regents agenda for approval. Vice President Bottorff noted that the administration is finalizing a system-wide financial analysis to budget for any short-term revenue variance. The proposal is slated to return to the Board for action early to mid-Fall of 2026 to align with the Fall 2027 recruitment cycle. In response to Regent Gonzalez's question regarding regional demographics, Dr. Marin confirmed that the Student Enrollment and Success team plans to launch an intensified, deliberate recruitment and marketing campaign focusing on El Paso County and neighboring counties (e.g., Hudspeth County) within the 135-mile zone. Chair Devasthali noted that while the 1.1 multiplier was originally implemented to generate additional revenue, the shifting competitive landscape and UTEP's free tuition expansion make moving toward standard in-state tuition a necessary and timely step to safeguard NMSU's regional pipeline.

VII. Adjournment

Sensing no further business before the board, Chairwoman Devasthali moved to adjourn the meeting. Regent Romero seconded the motion, and the special meeting of the NMSU Board of Regents was officially adjourned at 9:27 AM.

Meeting Minutes Approved on August 18, 2026 by the New Mexico State University Board of Regents.



Ammu Devasthali
Board of Regents Chair



Christopher Saucedo
Board of Regents Secretary/Treasurer