



**NEW MEXICO STATE UNIVERSITY BOARD OF REGENTS  
REGULAR MEETING  
April 28, 2026, at 2:00 PM**

Educational Services Building, Regents Room  
1780 East University Avenue, Las Cruces, NM  
LIVESTREAMED AT <https://regents.nmsu.edu/regent-meetings/>

**Regents of New Mexico State University**

Chair Ammu Devasthali, Vice Chair Deborah Romero, Secretary/Treasurer Christopher T. Saucedo, Marisol Olivas, Ricardo Gonzales

**Non-Voting Advisory Members** - ASNMSU President Wyatt Ziehe, Faculty Senate Chair Vimal Chaitanya, Ph.D., Employee Council Chair Sonia A. White

**University Officials** - President Valerio Ferme, Ph.D., Interim Provost Lakshmi Reddi, Ph.D., Vice President for Administration and Finance Allen Bottorff, P.E., Ph.D., General Counsel Lisa Henderson, J.D.

**MINUTES**

I. **Call to Order**, *Chairwoman Ammu Devasthali*

Chairwoman Ammu Devasthali called the regular meeting of the NMSU Board of Regents to order at 2:03 PM.

**A. Pledge of Allegiance**

Led by Air Force ROTC Cadet Eric Earsley. Cadet Earsley shared that he is a sophomore and serves as the commander for the Arnold Air Society and deputy commander for the Color Guard.

**B. Introduction of the Media and Elected Officials**, *Chief of Staff Justin Bannister*

Chief of Staff Justin Bannister confirmed no media members or elected officials were present.

**C. Introductions**

No further introductions were made at this time.

**D. Confirmation of Quorum**, *Chairwoman Ammu Devasthali*

The Board of Regents Chief of Staff conducted the roll call. All five voting members were present: Chair Devasthali, Vice Chair Romero, Secretary/Treasurer Saucedo (online), Regent Olivas, and Regent Gonzales.

**E. Approval of the Agenda**, *Chairwoman Ammu Devasthali*

The agenda for the April 28, 2026, meeting was approved as presented, with Regent Romero moving approval and Regent Olivas seconding.

II. **Approval of Minutes**

**A. Regular Meeting on April 1, 2026**

The minutes from the regular meeting held on April 1, 2026, were approved as amended to correct the spelling of President Ferme's name on page 6. Regent Gonzales moved approval and Regent Romero seconded.

### III. Awards and Recognitions

#### A. Proclamation Recognizing the NMSU Trap and Skeet Team Collegiate Nationals Performance, Chairwoman Ammu Devasthali

Regent Chair Devasthali read the proclamation as follows:

WHEREAS, the New Mexico State University Trap and Skeet team, a student-led club organization, represented the university with distinction at the collegiate national championships in San Antonio, Texas, from March 14 through March 20, 2026; and

WHEREAS, this dedicated team of 10 students competed as a club activity in only their second year of existence, demonstrating exceptional skill and sportsmanship on a national stage despite the lack of a professional coach and formal NCAA recognition; and

WHEREAS, the team showcased remarkable resilience and efficiency, achieving elite results while practicing only one to two times per week with limited supplies, in stark contrast to competing programs that benefit from daily professional coaching and significantly larger operational budgets; and

WHEREAS, despite restricted access to local practice facilities for specific disciplines, the team excelled against a field of 51 competing universities, securing a 13th-place finish overall; and

WHEREAS, the team's specific accomplishments include placing 5th in Skeet, 6th in Trap, 7th in Skeet Doubles, and 10th in Trap Doubles, proving that their discipline and talent are among the best in the nation; and

WHEREAS, the NMSU Trap and Skeet team has brought great pride to the university and the Las Cruces community, serving as a model of perseverance and collegiate excellence.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT PROCLAIMED in official session, that the achievements of the NMSU Trap and Skeet team be formally recognized and celebrated for their performance at the national championships.

PROCLAIMED this 28th day of April 2026, at Las Cruces, New Mexico.

#### B. Proclamation Recognizing the Service of Lakshmi Reddi, Chairwoman Ammu Devasthali

Regent Chair Devasthali read the proclamation as follows:

WHEREAS, Lakshmi Reddi served with distinction as Interim Provost and Chief Academic Officer of the New Mexico State University system from March 2024 through April 2026; and

WHEREAS, during his tenure, he helped establish a cohesive approach to institutional data by convening a Data Governance Committee to provide strategic direction for data-related initiatives systemwide; and

WHEREAS, he worked tirelessly to position data as a strategic asset in support of NMSU's mission, helping to ensure we have the infrastructure, culture, and practices needed to support decision-making, planning, and institutional effectiveness across all areas of the university; and

WHEREAS, his efforts to reorganize leadership structures and operations in a number of areas have resulted in significant operational efficiencies and brought synergy into more aspects of academic affairs; and

WHEREAS, he actively engaged with faculty and took advantage of every opportunity to highlight and celebrate the achievements and accomplishments of faculty members and students with great pride; and

WHEREAS, prior to his appointment as Interim Provost, Reddi served as Dean of NMSU's College of

Engineering for eight years; and

WHEREAS, during his tenure as dean, he doubled research funding to its historic high in the college and brought significant visibility to the college profile; and

WHEREAS, his academic and administrative career has garnered numerous awards and recognitions for his teaching, research, advising, and administrative excellence; and

WHEREAS, Reddi's next path takes him to the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, where he will assume the role of Executive Vice President and Provost; and

WHEREAS, President Valerio Ferme said, "Lakshmi has been a valuable partner in leading our university into its next chapter and has transformed our academic leadership structure in a way that will have a positive impact for years to come. I am deeply grateful for his contributions and wish him the best in his future pursuits;" and

WHEREAS, Regents Chair Ammu Devasthali said, "Lakshmi is a friend and colleague that I cherish. In his decade of service to NMSU, he has always been an enthusiastic innovator and a compassionate leader. Though we will miss him, we are grateful that he leaves a legacy of positive change and growth."

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT PROCLAIMED in official session that the Board of Regents of New Mexico State University thanks and commends Lakshmi Reddi for his dedicated service and wishes him great success in his future endeavors.

PROCLAIMED this 28th day of April 2026, at Las Cruces, New Mexico.

#### IV. **Regent Committee Reports**

##### **A. Real Estate Committee Report, Regent Ammu Devasthali**

Chairwoman Devasthali reported that the committee conducted an email vote to approve two easements for Aggie Uptown. The committee is scheduled to meet again on April 29, 2026.

##### **B. Financial Strategies, Performance and Budget Committee Report, Regent Deborah Romero**

Regent Romero reported that the committee met yesterday, Monday, April 27, and reviewed and approved two action items on today's agenda: the Budget Adjustment Requests for all campuses for fiscal year 2025-2026 and the New Mexico Higher Education Department Fiscal Year 2026-2027 Operating Budget Submission.

The Quarterly Financial Report to HED was also approved and submitted to HED. The record that the Board of Regents has delegated authority to the chair of the Finance Committee to approve the report on behalf of the Board of Regents.

#### V. **Consent Agenda Items, Chairwoman Ammu Devasthali**

The following items were approved on the consent agenda, with Regent Gonzales moving approval (abstaining from items B and C) and Regent Olivas seconding. The motion passed unanimously.

**A. Appointment of Dr. Joe Bull to the position of Provost & Vice President of Academic Affairs, Associate Vice President William Dial**

**B. El Paso Electric Easement – Aggie Uptown – White Sands Federal Credit Union, Interim Associate Vice President Scott Eschenbrenner**

**C. El Paso Electric Easement – Aggie Uptown – Blake's Lotaburger, Interim Associate Vice President Scott Eschenbrenner**

VI. **Action Items, Chairwoman Ammu Devasthali**

**A. Budget Adjustments Request: All Campuses Fiscal Year 25-26, Chief Budget Officer Kim Rumford**

Chief Budget Officer Kim Rumford presented adjustments based on estimated actuals. Notable changes included an increase in student financial aid due to higher enrollment, drawing more Pell, Opportunity, and Lottery funds. The motion to approve was made by Regent Romero and seconded by Regent Gonzales. A roll call vote was taken, and all were in favor.

**B. NM Higher Education Department Fiscal Year 2026-2027 Operating Budget Submission,**

*Chief Budget Officer Kim Rumford*

Chief Budget Officer Rumford presented the \$1.1 billion system-wide operating budget for FY27. The report highlighted a 3.5% increase in tuition and fees (primarily Global) and significant non-recurring state appropriations. Discussion included indirect cost recoveries and deferred maintenance funding. A motion to approve was made by Regent Romero and seconded by Regent Gonzales. A roll call vote was taken, and all were in favor.

VII. **Informational Items, Chairwoman Ammu Devasthali**

**A. None.**

VIII. **NMSU System Report, President Valerio Ferme**

President Valerio Ferme reported on the groundbreaking of the new reforestation center in Mora, a partnership involving multiple state universities. He also noted that summer enrollments are significantly up compared to last year, and campus housing requests for the incoming first-year class have increased by approximately 160 students.

IX. **Announcements and Comments, Chairwoman Ammu Devasthali**

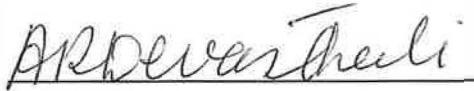
**1. Good News for NMSU!**

- Regent Gonzales congratulated the Ethics Case Competition Team for taking second place in the 2026 National Competition.
- President Ziehe noted the American Marketing Association team placed second in a national competition behind Cornell.
- Regent Olivas recognized the National Agri-Marketing Association student chapter for placing 5th in the nation.
- Chair Devasthali celebrated Aman Kumar, an Astronomy PhD student, for winning a prestigious NASA FINESST award, and Emma Bunch for her second-place finish at the Conference USA Women's Golf Championship.

X. **Adjournment, Chairwoman Ammu Devasthali**

The meeting was adjourned upon a motion by Regent Olivas with a second from Regent Gonzales at approximately 3:03 PM.

**Meeting Minutes Approved on May 14, 2026 by the New Mexico State University Board of Regents.**



Ammu Devasthali  
Board of Regents Chair



Christopher Saucedo  
Board of Regents Secretary/Treasurer