*Santa Monica Community College District*

# Budget Planning Subcommittee of the District Planning and Advisory Council (DPAC)

## MEETING MINUTES – October 21, 2026

A Meeting of the Budget Planning Subcommittee will be held Wednesday, October 21, 2026 at 2:00 pm at Santa Monica College's Student Services Center (SSC 396), 1900 Pico Boulevard, Santa Monica, California. The public may join the meeting via zoom with the following link: https://smc-edu.zoom.us/j/87373203722

**I. Call to Order** 2:04 pm

**Members:**

- Mitch Heskel, District Representative
- Chris Bonvenuto, District Representative, Co-Chair
- Tania Acosta, District Representative (Absent)
- Tracie Hunter, District Representative
- Vicenta Arrizon, Academic Senate Rep (Just Cause)
- Aileen Huang, Acad. Senate (Proxy-Elisa Meyer)
- Matt Hotsinpiller, Faculty Association Representative, Co-Chair
- Peter Morse, Faculty Association Representative
- Martha Romano, CSEA Representative (Proxy -James Stevenson)
- Kennisha Green, CSEA Representative
- Dagmar Gorman, CSEA Representative
- Cindy Ordaz, CSEA Representative
- David Dagne, Associated Student Representative
- Vacant, Associated Student Representative
- Vacant, Associated Student Representative
- Vacant Associated Student Representative

Interested Parties in attendance: Lizzy Moore, Chante DeLoach, Stacy Neal, Esau Tovar

**II. Public Comments**

**III. Approval of Minutes:** October 7, 2026 Motion: Dagmar Gorman Seconded: Kennisha Green
AYES: 10 NAYS: 0 ABSTENTIONS: 1 – Mitch Heskel Minutes were approved.

**IV. Reports/Discussion**

1. Jason Beardsley, Vice President, Academic Affairs, presented data on course sections, disciplines, instruction modalities, and fill rates added through the Foundation donation for Winter 2026 and Spring 2026 Sessions.
2. Fiscal Services Update
   Chris Bonvenuto reviewed ten budget recommendations from the February 5, 2025 meeting, as requested by the Budget Committee on September 16, 2026. The summary highlights actions taken to improve SMC's financial standing.
   The relevant documents are attached below for reference.
3. Process for the Committee to propose recommendations to address the ~$5 million structural deficit in 2027-2028 and balance the budget. This item will be discussed at a future meeting.

**V. Adjournment:** 3:16 pm

**For all documents**, visit www.smc.edu/administration/governance/district-planning-policies/budget-planning-subcommittee.php

**Future Budget Planning Committee Meetings**: Meetings will be on 1st and 3rd Wednesdays of the month, except as noted, and will begin at 2:00 pm.

Date: October 21, 2026

The following update addresses the ten budget suggestions recorded in the February 5, 2025 minutes as requested by the Budget Committee at the September 16, 2026 meeting, and covers many of the actions taken to date that have led to improvements to SMC's financial standing.

**# 1 Closing the college a certain numbers of days each week.**

Administration reviewed this recommendation and determined that maintaining access to college facilities best supports the College's mission and service to students and the community. Under the current furlough arrangements, classified employees take one furlough day per month and managers take two days per month. Furlough days are staggered to keep the campus open for students and the community.

The District could explore negotiating a common monthly furlough day for eligible employee groups to allow coordinated facility closures. A preliminary District estimate identifies approximately $172,000 in potential utility savings from seven coordinated closure days during fiscal year 2026–2027. Achieving these savings would require suspending office operations and on-campus instruction, transitioning employees to remote work on closure dates, and reducing building operations across District facilities, while maintaining police/dispatch and other essential functions.

**#2 Sell 2714 and move staff to campus.**

At the March 4, 2026 Budget Committee meeting, Chris Bonvenuto addressed suggestions to sell property by explaining restrictions on the use of sale proceeds. Education Code section 81363 generally requires proceeds from a sale or proceeds from a lease with an option to purchase to be used for capital outlay or deferred maintenance. An exception permits proceeds to be deposited into the General Fund if, before the transaction, the Board determines that the District has no anticipated need for additional sites or building construction during the following five years. The District does not qualify for this exemption, given that the District's adopted Facilities Master Plan extends well beyond the five-year time frame.

Market conditions and relocation costs also warrant consideration. Colliers' second-quarter 2026 West Los Angeles office report indicates that approximately one-third of Santa Monica's office inventory was available for lease. These conditions could make securing a buyer less beneficial or securing a long-term tenant more challenging.

Relocating Human Resources and Business Services would require suitable confidential workspaces and secure records storage. Significant improvements to campus facilities would be needed before relocation.

Additionally, retaining ownership of the 2714 Pico Building for future sale preserves an additional source of capital for District facilities needs.

**# 3 Faculty banking summer hours instead of payment**

On December 8, 2025 an MOU was agreed to which allowed full-time faculty to bank Winter 2026 assignments. A signed MOU dated February 12, 2026 extended the option to Spring 2026 overload and Summer 2026 intersession assignments.

The 2026–2027 Adopted Budget reports $466,801 in unaudited expenditure deferrals for 2025–2026 and projects $933,602 for 2026–2027. These amounts are classified as one-time items and reflect expenditure deferrals rather than permanent reductions in the cost of instruction.

**# 4 Malibu campus: Is there a way to lessen costs?**

At the Budget Committee's recommendation, a review was conducted in 2025 to evaluate potential cost savings associated with closing the Malibu Campus. Most campus costs are attributable to support staff, management, operations personnel, and security personnel assigned to the site.

In 2024–2025, the campus generated approximately 118 FTES, with an estimated FTES-based funding value of $623,000. Estimated direct instructional faculty costs, including benefits, were approximately $565,000.

Closing the campus without staff layoffs or a reduction in weekly teaching hours would yield estimated savings of approximately $153,406 in discretionary expenditures. If closure included layoffs of associated staff and management, along with a reduction in weekly teaching hours, the review estimated net savings of approximately $1,672,439.

The Board of Trustees has repeatedly expressed support for maintaining the Malibu Campus and continuing to provide direct educational services to the Malibu community.

| Malibu Campus | Projection |
|---|---|
| Direct Support Salary | 417,045 |
| Direct Support Benefits | 204,395 |
| Direct Support for Malibu | 621,440 |
| | |
| Ground Worker and Custodians | |
| Salary and Overtime | 293,556 |
| Benefits | 185,993 |
| Grounds and Custodial for Malibu | 479,549 |
| | |
| CSO | |
| Salary | 214,404 |
| Overtime | - |
| Benefits | 118,189 |
| | |
| CSO Cost for Malibu | 332,593 |
| | |
| Supplies charged to Malibu | 6,145 |
| Supplies charged to Operations for Malibu | 4,982 |
| Waste Disposal for Malibu | 37,814 |
| Utilities for Malibu | 104,465 |
| | |
| Total Non-Salary | 153,406 |
| | |
| Grand Total | 1,586,988 |
| | |
| | |
| **Key Points/Issues** | |
| *All salaries and benefits are full-time personnel who would be moved to another campus if Malibu were closed. Savings would be discretionary supplies, contracts and utilities.* | |

**# 5 If we are not filling positions, we need to train technology, payroll, and budget to increase efficiency especially as positions are not hired.**

The District has provided training in technology, payroll information, data reporting, and budget-related processes through the EpiCenter, Fall and Spring Professional Development Days, and targeted training sessions. During 2024–2025, the EpiCenter supported 59 workshops led by 17 classified professionals. The District also held 21 HCM/BEST training sessions to support system implementation. Specific examples of sessions include:

**File sharing and collaboration — March 20, 2025**. Miguel Reyes and Johnny Meza presented training on OneDrive, Teams, SharePoint, Google Drive, and email, including information security.

**Payroll information — June 3, 2025**. Payroll Manager Ian Fraser presented "How to Read Your Paystub 101 + Q&A" for all employee groups.

**Grant approval and budget development — May 16 and August 28, 2025**. Tracy Beidleman and Nane Zadouri presented the Grant Approval Process Workshop and Grant Writing 101. Topics included internal responsibilities, approval forms, proposal budgets, cost principles, and audit considerations.

**Precision Campus — August 28, 2025**. Anne Marre Bautista and Yosief Yihunie offered hands-on training specifically for classified staff in retrieving student and course enrollment/outcomes data and saving, sharing, and presenting results.

**Changed job duties — August 28, 2025.** Carol Long, Amy Gurjian, and August Faustino offered "When Does a Job Change become a Classification Issue?" addressing temporary and permanent duty changes and potential classification/salary implications during fiscal challenges.

**WebISIS/APEX efficiency — August 27, 2026.** Academic Scheduling Specialist Sara Eazell presented "WebISIS/APEX Tips and Tricks for Speed and Efficiency," covering saved reports and filter, highlight, data, and chart tools for departmental use.

**SCFF and fiscal sustainability — August 27, 2026.** Chris Bonvenuto presented "Student Success & the SCFF: Connecting What We Do to How We're Funded." The session connected enrollment, outcomes, equity, and daily college work to funding.

**Documenting changed duties — August 27, 2026.** Cindy Ordaz offered "Job Creep, Reclassification, and Taking Back Your Job," including tools for documenting work and preparing for classification reviews.

**# 6 Restructuring as people leave.**

The District has taken steps to restructure operations, consolidate positions, and redistribute responsibilities as staffing levels decline. Specific examples include:

- **Information Technology:** Following two Network Services retirements representing 8% of FTE, IT redistributed workload and maintained operations without immediately filling the vacancies.

- **Senior leadership consolidation:** The Vice President, Enrollment Development and Vice President, Student Affairs positions were consolidated into the Vice President, Student Success position.
- **Management restructuring:** Changes included converting three dean or associate dean positions to director positions and reducing the Assistant Athletic Director position from 100% to 50% FTE.
- **Human Resources:** HR Operations reported cross-training and strategic reassignment of responsibilities to support continued service with current staffing and prepare for BEST HCM.

**# 7 The deficit amount is large and we need to have Administration lead the conversation for large changes with each constituency group.**

Administration has engaged the college community through budget presentations, Budget Committee and DPAC discussions, Districtwide memos from the Office of the Superintendent/President, and a November 24, 2025 budget forum. Labor negotiations also resulted in specific cost-reduction agreements.

At the November 2025 Budget Forum, the projected 2026–2027 structural deficit was approximately $17 million. By the September 2026 adopted budget, District budget actions and more favorable State funding had reduced the projected structural deficit to approximately $4.8 million.(The structural deficit is the amount that ongoing costs exceed ongoing revenues.)

Also by the September 2026 adopted budget, the District was able to adopt a nearly balanced operating budget. This was achieved using one-time items, the largest of which are the two-days-per-month furloughs for managers and the one-day-per-month furloughs for classified staff.

Having a positive operating budget results in an increase in the District's general fund balance and gives the District flexibility to adjust to changes in state and federal circumstances. The District now believes that it will likely end 2026-2027 with a positive operating budget due to the improvements in domestic nonresident enrollment it is experiencing and by drawing on funds from the Student Support Block Grant to support additional instruction.

These improvements will also help to lower the structural deficit, though the amount is difficult to predict. (Domestic nonresident enrollment is likely to stay elevated, but

international nonresident enrollment may continue to slip; and state action to fund growth above SMC's cap is not yet known.)

In short, much has been accomplished, but continued efforts are needed to close the remaining structural gap.

**# 8 We need an Organizational Plan that looks at efficiency, especially if staffing changes.**

On June 10, 2026, Human Resources presented a districtwide staffing-plan proposal to DPAC covering organizational structure, staffing levels, workload distribution, vacancy trends, benchmarking, and resource allocation. Proposed deliverables include updated organizational charts, staffing recommendations, and an implementation roadmap.

The October 6, 2026 Board agenda included an approved contract with Kennedy and Company Education Strategies LLC, the firm that previously assisted with the College's Education Master Plan, to conduct the staffing assessment and develop the plan.

**# 9 Reviewing initiatives and reallocating resources to core services.**

The District has reviewed selected programs, contracts, and funding arrangements to reduce pressure on the Unrestricted General Fund while supporting instruction and essential operations. Specific examples include:

- **Funding shifts and discretionary reductions:** The 2025–2026 adopted budget identified $1,848,206 in funding shifts and $620,200 in discretionary reductions. Funding changes included moving Big Blue Bus costs to the parking fund and facilities planning staff costs to redevelopment funds. These shifts reduce the unrestricted fund's burden and help preserve resources for core services, although they do not necessarily reduce total District spending.
- **Software and technology review:** IT reported more than $15,000 in annual savings from reviews of Oracle, Lansweeper, Jamf, and Citrix contracts. IT also implemented an internally developed student evaluation application to replace Watermark software. These actions support cost control and operational efficiency.
- **Additional resources directed to instruction:** Working with the SMC Foundation, the District secured a $1 million donation to fund additional classes in 2025–2026. This one-time funding directly supported core instruction.

- **Recovery of operating costs:** In 2025–2026, the District reported $1,194,884 in KCRW Foundation reimbursement for prior-year maintenance and operating costs. This cost recovery reduced the unrestricted operating burden and helped preserve resources for core services.
- **Additional Wildfire Relief reimbursements and additional Student Support Block Grant funding.** In 2025-2026, the District received $4,836,000 for wildfire reimbursement and recovery, of which $1,700,000 went to the SMC Foundation as reimbursement of direct aid and the remainder to the District. In 2026-2027, the District will receive an allocation of $2,466,343.72 for the Student Support Block Grant thanks to the combined efforts of SMC administration, CSEA leadership, and FA leadership.

These actions demonstrate progress in reviewing operations, controlling costs, recovering expenses, and directing resources toward instruction and essential services.

**# 10 Restructuring is at the core of concern for all groups**

Following staffing reductions and departures, restructuring has already occurred through the consolidation of management functions, changes in staffing allocations, and redistribution of responsibilities.

The District Staffing Plan will build on these changes and provide an opportunity for employees and constituency groups to help shape the next steps. The review will examine reporting relationships, workload distribution, staffing allocations, vacancies, and operational processes, with particular attention to workload concerns and continuity of services.

Updated organizational charts, staffing recommendations, and an implementation roadmap will help clarify responsibilities, align resources with institutional needs, and guide future decisions. Employee and constituency participation will help ensure that the plan reflects operational needs and addresses the concerns raised by the college community.

*Santa Monica Community College District*

# Budget Planning Subcommittee of the District Planning and Advisory Council (DPAC)

## MEETING MINUTES – February 5, 2025

A Meeting of the Budget Planning Subcommittee will be held Wednesday, February 5, 2025 at 2:00 pm at Santa Monica College's Student Services Center (SSC 396), 1900 Pico Boulevard, Santa Monica, California. The public may join the meeting via zoom with the following link: https://smc-edu.zoom.us/j/85009325229

**I. Call to Order** 2:06 pm

**Members:**

- Mitch Heskel, District Representative
- Chris Bonvenuto, District Representative, Co-Chair
- Teresita Rodriguez, District Rep (Absent)
- Tracie Hunter, District Representative
- Vicenta Arrizon, Academic Senate Representative
- Jamar London, Academic Senate Representative
- Matt Hotsinpiller, Faculty Association Representative, Co-Chair
- Peter Morse, Faculty Association Representative
- Martha Romano, CSEA Representative
- Kennisha Green, CSEA Representative
- Dagmar Gorman, CSEA Representative
- Cindy Ordaz, CSEA Representative
- David Duncan, Associated Student Representative
- Jordan Davis, Associated Student Rep (Absent)
- Vacant, Associated Student Representative
- Vacant, Associated Student Representative

Interested Parties in attendance: Yasmin Alpay, Tre'Shawn Hall-Baker, Adrienne Johnson, Ingrid Cardwell, Catherine Weir, Elaine Roque, Esau Tovar, Febe Soliman, JR Stevenson, Jason Trihn, Johnny Kurokawa, Paige Glaves, Pressian Nicolov, Sandra Hernandez, Sasha King, Scott Silverman, Stacy Neal, Elaine Roque, Jason Beardsley, Fariba Owlya, Maral Hyeler

**II. Public Comments**

**III. Approval of Minutes**

**IV. Reports/Discussion**

1. Student Centered Funding Formula Allocation Calculator

   Chris shared the Student Centered Funding Formula (SCFF) Allocation Calculator to show past and future changes in funding allocation for the district in the upcoming years. Funding in many metrics are based on a 3 year average. The following allocations were discussed: Base Allocation FTES, Supplemental Allocation (AB 540, PELL, Promise), Success Metrics (AS for Transfer, AD, BA Granted, Certificates, Transfer Level Math and English, Transfers to Four-Year University. Under Hold Harmless we received additional funds for COLA, which the district will no longer receive in 2025-2026 when the district moves to the Student Centered Funding Formula (SCFF).

   The Committee also reviewed the Unrestricted General Fund- Five Year Projections Fiscal Years 2023-24 thru 2028-29.

2. Budget Planning – suggestions on reducing the projected ~$15.493 million deficit in the 2025-26 fiscal year. The following ideas were discussed:

   1. Closing the college certain numbers of days a week.
      Possible savings of $480,000 to $980,000

   2. Sell 2714 Pico and move staff to campus
      Question: Can sale go to Unrestricted Fund?

3. Faculty banking hours in summer instead of payment
   *Requires negotiations and discussion with Academic Affairs

4. Malibu campus: Is there way to lessen costs?
   *Close college for part of the year?
   *Way to run more efficiently?

5. If not filling positions we need to train technology, payroll, and budget, to increase efficiency especially as positions are not hired.

6. Restructure as people leave.
   Do exit interviews to find out what the person leaving had done

7. Suggestion: Amount is large and need to have Administration to lead conversation for large changes with each constituency group

8. Suggestion: Organizational Plan that looks at efficiency especially if staffing changes. Make clear expectations change when staffing changes

9. Savings: Review initiatives and reallocate resources toward core services.

10. Restructuring is at the core of concern for all groups.
    Group wants to know from Administration what the steps are

The Budget Committee made the following recommendation:

While the Budget Committee waits for the Superintendent/President and Senior Staff to address the projected ~$15.5 million deficit, the Budget Committee will work on guiding principles to inform budgetary cuts and decisions.

Motion: Dagmar Gorman  Second: Jamar London  AYES: 10  NAYS: 0  Abstention: Tracie Hunter

The motion was approved.

**V. Adjournment:** 4:20 pm

**For all documents**, visit www.smc.edu/administration/governance/district-planning-policies/budget-planning-subcommittee.php

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