

**EASTERN NEW MEXICO UNIVERSITY
Board of Regents Meeting
Hotel Santa Fe Hacienda & Spa
Hacienda Conference Room
January 21, 2026 – 1:00 p.m.**

CALL TO ORDER

Regent President Phillip Bustos called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. and declared a quorum. Regents Phillip Bustos, Ray Birmingham, Emily Wilbanks, Lance Pyle, and Trish Ruiz were present.

*Roll call: Regent Bustos– Yes; Regent Birmingham– Yes; Regent Wilbanks – Yes;
Regent Pyle– Yes; Regent Ruiz – Yes.*

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

APPROVE THE AGENDA

Regent Wilbanks moved to approve the agenda as presented. Regent Birmingham seconded the motion. Vote: Bustos – Yes; Birmingham – Yes; Wilbanks – Yes, Pyle – Yes; Ruiz - Yes. Motion approved.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Regent Birmingham moved to approve the minutes of the December 12, 2025, meeting. Regent Pyle seconded the motion. Vote: Bustos – Yes; Birmingham - Yes; Wilbanks – Yes; Pyle – Yes; Ruiz - Abstained. Motion approved.

BUSINESS MATTERS

Consent Agenda

1. Annual Authorization of Officers Authorizing Signature Authority (*Dr. James Johnston, Action*)
2. Authorization of Open Meetings Act (*Dr. James Johnston, Action*)

Regent Ruiz moved to approve the consent agenda as presented. Regent Pyle seconded the motion. Vote: Bustos – Yes; Birmingham – Yes; Wilbanks – Yes; Pyle – Yes; Ruiz – Yes. Motion approved.

OTHER MATTERS

1. Promotion and Tenure Decisions, Fall 2025

Dr. Jamie Laurenz stated that the following faculty members were awarded tenure and promoted to associate professor:

- Brendon Asher – Anthropology
- Janet Birkey – Counseling
- Eduardo Ceh Varela – Computer Science
- Tala Esperat - Curriculum and Instruction
- Ying Yan – Personal Financial Planning

The following faculty member was awarded tenure:

- Leonard Madrid – Theatre

The following faculty member was promoted to professor:

- Chelsea Starr – Sociology

2. Real Property Purchase

Mr. Tony Major said the University has entered a verbal commitment to purchase property located at 423 N. Avenue N, on the west side of campus, south of the Boneyard. The agreed-upon purchase price is \$35,000 plus any applicable closing costs.

Regent Pyle asked if the appraisal comes in at a lower dollar amount, how would we proceed? Mr. Major stated that we would offer the appraised amount.

Regent Pyle moved to approve the purchase of real property of 423 N. Avenue N, Portales, NM, as presented. Regent Birmingham seconded the motion. Vote: Bustos – Yes; Birmingham – Yes; Wilbanks – Yes; Pyle – Yes; Ruiz – Yes. Motion approved.

ROUTINE MATTERS

REPORT FROM THE ENMU-ROSWELL PRESIDENT

Dr. Shaun Powell commented that close to two hundred people attended Monday's observation of MLK, Jr. Day on campus. In 2022, the Board of Regents approved a new Livestock Judging program at ENMU-Roswell and this year the team attended the Western Stock Show in Denver, CO.

A search is underway for Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs. Also, the search for Dean of Arts and Sciences is now open.

Spring enrollment is up 2% from this time last year. Enrollment for Dual Credit courses and Youth Challenge are ongoing.

Construction updates include:

- Sidewalk replacement has been delayed, is 55% complete and the completion date is projected for June 1, 2026
- Fire Suppression Sprinkler System has been delayed, and an extension has been requested through DFA. The project is currently 35% complete
- Health Science Building remodel is 70% complete and is on schedule
- Aviation Maintenance expansion is in the planning phase

REPORT FROM THE ENMU-RUIDOSO PRESIDENT

Dr. Ryan Trosper recognized staff members Robin DeMott and Christy Melton and thanked them for their presence and coordinating students at Higher Education Day and One Eastern Day at the State Capitol Building.

As of January 16, enrollment is up 20% and head count is up 30% from this time last year.

ENMU-Ruidoso Legislative included monetary asks for the following:

- State General Obligation Bond \$975,000
- Pickup and trailer 180,000
- Meat processing 100,000
- UTV 60,000
- Graphic Design Lab 50,000
- Tribal Education Funding 100,000

Other updates include the ENMU-Ruidoso Foundation recently providing \$3,000 for their resource room, and Wildfire training took place during the first week of January. Active shooter and resiliency training will take place soon.

REPORT FROM THE CHANCELLOR OF THE ENMU SYSTEM and Dashboard Presentation

Dr. Johnston reported spring enrollment headcount is up 5.5%, retention is up 2%, and semester credit hours are up 4.8%. We will continue to track these numbers through census day.

We are working to refresh and update the marketing and recruiting plan for the next five years, focusing on enrollment growth and student success. The higher education landscape is changing with more adult learners, and we are striving to meet them where they are.

Work continues within the System to collaborate with area community colleges to strengthen the transfer pipeline and concurrent enrollment initiatives. Following this legislative session, our initial outreach to area public schools will begin to emphasize that higher education is attainable.

Dr. Johnston voiced his appreciation for the work and coordination across the three campuses to make the first week of the Legislative Session a spotlight of the ENMU System.

The Student Academic Services building continues to track for completion and occupancy by the end of the spring semester. A tour will be planned for the Regents in March, following the Board meeting.

REGENT MATTERS

1. Committee Appointments

Regent Phillip Bustos made the following committee appointments for 2026:

- Alumni Board – Regent Wilbanks
- Foundation Board – Regents Birmingham (voting member), and Bustos
- Audit and Finance – Regents Pyle and Bustos
- HERC – Regent Ruiz
- NMPSIA – Regent Ruiz

Regent Ruiz moved to approve the 2026 committee appointments as presented.

Regent Birmingham seconded the motion. Vote: Bustos – Yes; Birmingham – Yes; Wilbanks – Yes; Pyle – Yes; Ruiz – Yes. Motion approved.

2. National Milken Educator Award

Regent Trish Ruiz highlighted the virtues of this award for young educators across the United States. This philanthropic organization seeks to find and reward new teachers, hoping to inspire, encourage, and reward them for their stellar efforts. This year's recipient is an ENMU Alumna, Ms. Morgan Hagler.

Ms. Hagler is a high school Ag teacher in Lovington, NM, and has received national recognition and a check for \$25K.

Regent Birmingham exited the meeting.

3. Student Financial Aid Data

Dr. Johnston provided data across three campuses with a breakdown of Financial Aid sources reflecting our student body.

- Pell Eligible Students: Portales = 44.7%; Roswell = 52.1%; Ruidoso = 18.2%
- New Mexico Lottery Scholarship: Portales = 15%; Roswell = 6.5%; Ruidoso = 2.6%
- NM Opportunity Scholarship: Portales = 45.4%; Roswell = 35.7%; Ruidoso = 27.9%
- Certificate/Degree Seeking Students receiving other forms of Financial Aid: Portales = 26.0%; Roswell = 7.6%; Ruidoso = 27%

Dr. Johnston stressed the importance of being mindful of the cost of attendance and that these reported numbers are typical for regional comprehensive schools.

4. Regent Expectations

Regent Trish Ruiz praised our student lobbyists present in the meeting and reminded them of their immense potential as budding public servants.

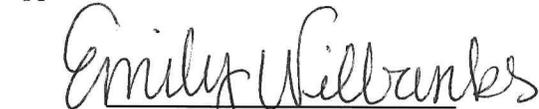
Regent Ruiz stressed the importance of being knowledgeable and mindful of the requirements in the Regent Policies and the Regent Manual. Anyone elected to a public position must be mindful of situations that constitute a rolling quorum and constitute a violation of the Open Meetings Act. It should be noted that the New Mexico Attorney General monitors these situations.

ADJOURNMENT

Regent Pyle moved to adjourn the meeting at 2:34 p.m.

Regent Wilbanks seconded the motion. Vote: Bustos – Yes; Birmingham – No response; Wilbanks – Yes; Pyle – Yes; Ruiz - Yes. Motion approved.


President of the Board


Secretary of the Board

*Minutes recorded and prepared by Karen Van Ruiten
Senior Executive Assistant to the Chancellor and Board of Regents*