Student Services Planning Council

Cañada College

Minutes

Date: October 28, 2026
Time: 2:10 pm - 4:00 pm
Location: Building 9, Room 154
Zoom: https://smccd.zoom.us/j/83383664513
Department reports: Update here

Item	Presenter	Time (minutes)
I. Call to Order	Co-Chair DeVon	1

Time Keeper –

Please call time (verbally, chat, or via zoom time app) at the intervals of 5 mins, 1 min, 30 seconds and time Check out this video link on how to do timekeeper easily on Zoom!

II. Roll Call	Co-Chair DeVon	1

Quorum=14

✓	Adolfo Leiva	(SparkPoint Representative)
o	Kristopher Disharoon	(Classified Representative)
o	Aricka Bueno	(Faculty Representative)
	Vacant	(COLTS-U Transfer Center Representative)
	Vacant	(Career Center Representative)
✓	Breanna Castro	(Financial Aid Representative)
✓	DeVon Scott	(Disability Resource Center & Personal Counseling Representative)
✓	Jasmin Padilla Valencia	(Undocumented Community Center Representative)
✓	Juan Vera	(Veteran Resource & Opportunity Center Representative)
✓	Kathy Kohut	(International Student Representative)
o	Keith Wan	(Welcome Center Representative)
✓	Lizette Bricker	(Vice President of Student Services)
✓	Lorraine Barrales-Ramirez	(EOPS, CARE, NEXTUP, CalWORKs, FYSI Representative)
✓	Max Hartman	(Dean of Counseling)
	Vacant	(Post-Secondary Success Representative)
✓	Maria Huning	(TRIO Program Representative)
✓	Maria Lara	(Admission & Records Representative)
✓	Mayra Arellano	(Promise Scholars Program Representative)
✓	Michiko Kealoha	(Office of Equity Representative)
✓	Olivia Cortez-Figueroa	(College Recruiter)
✓	Paul Gaskins	(Classified Representative)
✓	Sergio Suarez	(Student Life & Leadership Development Representative)
✓	Juan Alvarado	(Student Representative)
✓	Wissem Bennani	(Dean of Enrollment Services)
	Vacant	(Student Representative)
	Vacant	(Instructional Faculty Representative)

Advisory

	Karen Engel	(Dean of Planning, Research and Institutional Effectiveness)
✓	Jason Ramos	(Library and Learning Center)
	Vacant	(IPC Representative)
	Vacant	(Puente)

III. Adoption of the Agenda Co-Chair DeVon 1

Approval of agenda for October 28, 2026

Kathy adopts the agenda revisions below for October 28, 2026
Lorraine seconds the move
Approved unanimously by consensus of all those in attendance

IV. Approval of the Minutes Co-Chair DeVon 1

Approval of minutes for October 14, 2026.

Juan adopts the agenda revisions below for October 13, 2026
Scott seconds the move
Approved unanimously by consensus of all those in attendance

V. Reports

a. "Program Highlights" 10

Juan Vera presented a comprehensive program report detailing recent developments and upcoming initiatives within the Veteran Resource & Opportunity Center:

- Staffing Expansion: VROC expanded its student assistant team from two to three positions. The Department of Veterans Affairs fully funds these positions, provided student employees are actively receiving VA educational benefits and working at the VROC. I have been working with CSM and Skyline to confirm whether they are receiving benefits and spending more time at Cañada College.
- Event Funding & Student Outings: Through a grant awarded by the Vending Commission, VROC is planning student educational outings, including a trip to Alcatraz and a December two-hour yacht ride around the Bay (pending confirmation from the provider).
- Educational Programming: Recent events included a joint workshop with the Cultural Center examining Filipino contributions to the U.S. Armed Forces. Last week, we partnered with the Cultural Center. Allen Ocampo discussed his family's military service, focusing on Filipinos in the U.S. who served in the United States military and had a pathway to citizenship. However, the only jobs they could get were working in the boiler room or serving as stewards, which is basically working in the mess hall or passing out clothes. Until the 1970s, the administrator said Filipinos should not be restricted to just those jobs, which opened up more opportunities for Filipinos to work in different capacities. Allen talked about his grandfather serving in the Navy during World War II, and cousins joining for financial reasons or because they did not know what to do, which is similar to why young men of color in under-resourced communities joined.

Veterans Day Observances: November 10th is the Marine Corps birthday; we will present on its history and leadership principles. On November 11, 2026, we will observe the military tradition known as the "Grog." It will be catered for students but open to everyone, and we will ask that you follow certain rules. Scheduled activities for Veterans Week include a presentation on Marine Corps leadership principles, a campus-wide "Ruck Walk," an educational film festival, and a student-centered adaptation of the traditional military "Grog" social event, all strictly in

accordance with campus non-hazing policies. On November 12, 2026, we will screen Canopy film festival movies about the Contributions of American Indians in the military. In February and March, we will host presentations on women in the military. In April, we will check with Jasmin to continue the deported veterans series. In May, we will highlight LGBTQ+ contributions to the military, both in service and after service. The pride flag and the Trans flag were created by a veteran. In the military, flags are very important. We do weekly Ruck Walks on Wednesdays with a flag from 12:30 pm to 1:00 pm.

Jasmin: I would like to agree to do deported Veterans again. But I also feel that UCC and Veterans Centers are places people don't stop by as much. Please make time to stop by and talk to our students in these spaces to build trust. The more people show up, the more students know that others also support these centers and the students.

b. Department Reports **All**

Thank you all for sharing your department reports using this link.

CalWORKS/FYSI: EOPS applications for fall 2026 close this Friday. The application for spring 2027 opens Nov 2. We currently have our Día de Los Muertos altar up in our EOPS/Veterans waiting area. Please feel free to bring a picture of a loved one to honor them. We will have pan dulce and hot chocolate/coffee on Tues, Nov 3, 9 am-1 pm. We have our Drop-In Priority Registration event on Wed, Nov 11, 9 am- 7 pm & Thurs, Nov 12, 9 am-4 pm. NextUp/FYSI is collaborating with Project Change to have a Registration Party in the Cultural Center on Nov 11. They are also having a Meal to Heal event on Wed., Nov. 18.

Financial Aid*:* 2027-2028 FAFSA, CADAA, and SMCCCD Scholarship applications are now open! Financial Aid Office is hosting weekly application assistance workshops in 9-110 on Thursdays from 1 pm to 4 pm. We are seeking Scholarship Reviewers! If you're interested in this rewarding opportunity, please contact Breanna Castro at castrob@smccd.edu or Christopher Wardell at wardellc@smccd.edu.

Promise Scholars Program: Promise will be holding a Priority Reg Event on November 12th from 8:30-5:00 pm. Our counselors and Promise team will be available to help students register for the Spring 2027 semester. Our Promise Application for Fulltime/Parttime program is still open; please encourage students to apply. Application closes on February 1st.

Student Life & Leadership: ICC has 22 activated clubs and continues to meet every 1st and 3rd Monday of the month. ASCC continues to support our campus community through collaboration and funding requests. ASCC continues to meet every Thursday from 3:15 p.m. to 5:15 pm and has 2 new Student Senators this month. ASCC and the Cultural Center collaborated on "Frames of Remembrance." The Vending Commission wrapped up its application review and, alongside ASCC, awarded up to $48,000 to specific projects and activities. Student Life Office held its "Can I Kick It" event on the upper lawn.

TRIO Programs: TRIO has an amazing workshop planned on 11/11 called Linguistic Wealth: Money Talks in collaboration with our colleagues at Sparkpoint. The workshop focuses on Financial Literacy and will be held in the MESA center from 1-2:15 pm. TRIO is also doing a big push for students to complete their 5-Star TRIO points, which helps students keep up their priority registration and incentivizes participation. Additionally, our Project Change Club was able to secure funds via the Vending Commission to go on a tour of UC Berkeley through our colleagues at Underground Scholars. All students should apply via the QR code on the flyers around campus. Free transportation and lunch will be provided, thanks to ASCC!

Office of Equity: We have still been hosting a cultural event every day and had three field trips in the past two weeks!

VI. District & College Highlights

a. Equity and Anti-Racist Planning Council (EAPC) Michiko 3

Michiko Kealoha provided updates from the EAPC meeting on October 27, 2026. Highlights included progress on two Student Equity and Achievement (SEA) program plans: disaggregated data collection and spring focus group planning focused on male-identified students' career interests, as well as institutional efforts to distribute hundreds of free laptops to support student access to technology.

b. Enrollment Services Committee Update (ESC) Wissem/Maria 3

The Enrollment Services Committee has not convened since the previous SSPC session. The next ESC meeting is scheduled for November 6, 2026.

c. Instructional Planning Council (IPC) Updates Nick 3

Dean Max Hartman summarized the IPC meeting held on October 16, 2026, based on notes provided by Nick:

- Discussions centered on online accessibility standards, Assembly Bill 1705 funding updates, and grant sustainability.
- IPC received updates on the "Nights Online Weekends" program (formerly CWA) and the reorganization of interest areas into division-aligned success teams.
- Review of the faculty handbook, Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs), and reassigned time processes.

d. Planning and Budgeting Council Juan Vera 3

Juan Vera reported on his attendance at PBC as the new SSPC representative:

- PBC reviewed the results of the 2025–2026 Participatory Governance Evaluation, in which SSPC responses demonstrated strong understanding of the program review process.
- Alex Kramer presented a faculty vacancy replacement request following the retirement of Elsa Torres from the Interior Design program. It can take up to 1 year to fill the position. The Interior Design program will most likely receive support from adjuncts and other faculty members.
- PBC discussed district-wide faculty replacement policies, noting local operational differences between Cañada College, CSM, and Skyline College regarding vacant position pools. Faculty have two semesters to request to fill a vacancy. CSM and Skyline have a different process. AT CSM and Skyline, if there is a vacant position, it goes back into the big pool, and they need to request the position again. At Cañada College, we don’t do that; we just ask for an extension to keep the faculty numbers.

e. Vice President of Student Services (VPSS) Updates Lizette 3

Vice President Lizette Bricker presented several administrative updates:

- Community Engagement: Expressed appreciation to attendees of the first VPSS Salsa Competition and announced Jackie Flores as the first-place winner of the Salsa competition. Thank you for attending,
- Staffing Return: Officially welcomed Mayra back to the Student Services division.
- Commencement Schedule Realignment: Confirmed that the Spring 2027 Commencement ceremony is scheduled for Friday, May 28, 2027, from 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM, with rehearsal set for May 27 and setup on May 26. VP Bricker noted that this schedule is specific to the 2027 calendar and that the ceremony will revert to Saturday in 2028 due to academic calendar structures. SSPC members raised concerns about office coverage, working hours, and family attendance during a weekday ceremony, which the Commencement Committee will address.
- Calendar Deadlines: Departments were advised to book facilities for end-of-year events immediately. The council was also reminded that the final SSPC meeting in December will be dedicated entirely to Program Review.

VII. Old Business

VIII. Special Presentations

a. Inquiry Group: Artificial Intelligence- Student Services Wissem & Lizette 30

Dr. Wissem Bennani and VP Lizette Bricker facilitated the first of two dedicated 30-minute inquiry sessions exploring Artificial Intelligence (AI) within Student Services to inform the college's upcoming five-year Strategic Plan. Council members engaged in a broad discussion regarding AI adoption, opportunities, and risks:

From the inquiry groups, we developed a new strategic plan to guide us for the next 5 years. As part of the leadership group, we had an AI inquiry group with two aspects: the Student Services Side and the Instructional side. For the student services side, we explored practical AI tools, ethical considerations, streamlining operations, and improving student services.

Lizette: The purpose of inquiry groups is to discuss and determine whether this rises to a level of priority. If we want to move forward with this as an EMP objective, we need to discuss all aspects of AI and identify which areas to prioritize. For instance, Dr. Scott mentioned using AI in DRC. What questions do we have about AI use? Are they ethical or technical?

Wissem: We are trying to collect feedback with the following questions:

What excites you about AI in Student Services and supporting students?

Michiko: How can AI do my procard packet?

Maria L: How do I put information together?

Jasmin: Not as excited. I know technology is changing, and I have to get up to date on what other colleges are doing and what is being generated across the US and the world. I am critical of AI because it has environmental and social consequences that affect the community I love. We have seen Silicon Valley encroach on our community within EPA, North Fair Oaks, Redwood City. Students feel the same way. How do we use AI ethically and stay conscious of what we are contributing to the world?

Wissem? This brings me to: what concerns you about AI?

Kathy: What excites me is researching student questions about regulations across the US, where so much is changing. I get a lot of random questions to research and summarize. However, without foundational knowledge, it can seem like it's 100% true. But someone with foundational knowledge can take the information compiled and summarize it for you.

Dr. Scott? What concerns me is the labeling. You see a label before you enter a room. But AI has been here since smartphones came into the picture. I am nervous about the kind of fear it can create. AI is on your GPS or your laptop. I am concerned that there is a barrier to not using it. For instance, we use lights and technology in our homes.

Maria H: As someone using AI, I have a Google house. I have an app that controls my home environment. My concern is that it hallucinates and imagines things that are not in the data. I have to spot-check to make sure that it is accurate. It pulls information based on data and statistics. I have to make sure the information I am asking for is accurate. I am concerned that if students or staff use it, the AI output might not be accurate, even with a spot check.

Wissem: What kind of literacy or PD is needed for staff and students to use this tool safely and avoid inaccurate information?

Maria H: We do need training so that AI does not make things up.

Max: I am an AI novice. I am interested and curious about many of the thing's folks are using AI for. I am going to share a tool someone used with AI. What are the possibilities for notes and tools, and what opportunities are there? I am concerned about AI literacy. For instance, sometimes we get AI-generated emails from students. Sometimes it is used for policies and spoken about with great confidence that the information is correct. My concern is: when using AI, how are we building tools to help, and how are we checking the knowledge that it feeds into the AI tool?

Mayra: I agree with everyone. One of the counselors led an AI workshop on how to use AI to support you while at Canada College. We also had conversations with counselors and students about how not to use it. Within our staff, we asked how to engage and held workshops to engage with students.

Juan: I agree with what folks are saying about water and data usage. I received an email from a student about their certification. A flex presentation helped me better understand how to use it and how to advise our students on using it ethically. For instance, NotebookLM helps with syllabi and organizes context. It is available through a single login. Gemini is available to us when uploading data to secure the system. I am on board with using AI. It is really helpful and gives ideas on how to organize thoughts. I look forward to how it will help us, rather than taking away jobs.

Wissem: By April, my goal is to have recommendations for council.

Michiko: Sometimes AI gives us incorrect information for EAPC. Having AI do it, even as an inquiry, changes what we do. As Student Services, is there a standard operating procedure to check our work, programming, and data?

Maria L: How do we ask questions to get the information we need? How do we take the information, check the numbers or data, confirm they match, and then select the information we need?

Breanna: How are we using AI in Financial Aid? It is helping us with SOPs. Financial Aid is highly regulated, and AI is helping us simplify the SOPs. We are seeing other FA offices use it. Another AI tool is being used to see how unhelpful our website chatbot is for students. One example is financial aid information related to our census data, which is buried on our website and hard to find. I worked on updating the census data to make it clearer for students.

Lizette: I struggle with AI and data centers and their impacts on our disproportionately affected communities. I have counterparts who use AI, and we have conversations about how students can be prepared and literate for jobs. Concerns include the loss of human interaction. The mental health aspect is important, as students use it for support and advice. What do we do when students use it heavily?

Lorraine: I agree with all folks, but there are many categories around AI for students and staff. We need ongoing training at all levels. We need to understand how it can be used for financial aid and counseling. Training needs to be tailored to the groups using it, based on department. How are students using it for mental health in healthy ways? I would ask that every flex day opportunity include something around AI for student services. How to create reports and how to review data in those reports. In counseling, how can students see careers or pathways? I feel for our students as AI evolves; I don't know what jobs will be out there for them. Students are feeling anxious; we need to address that and think fast on our feet about career pivots

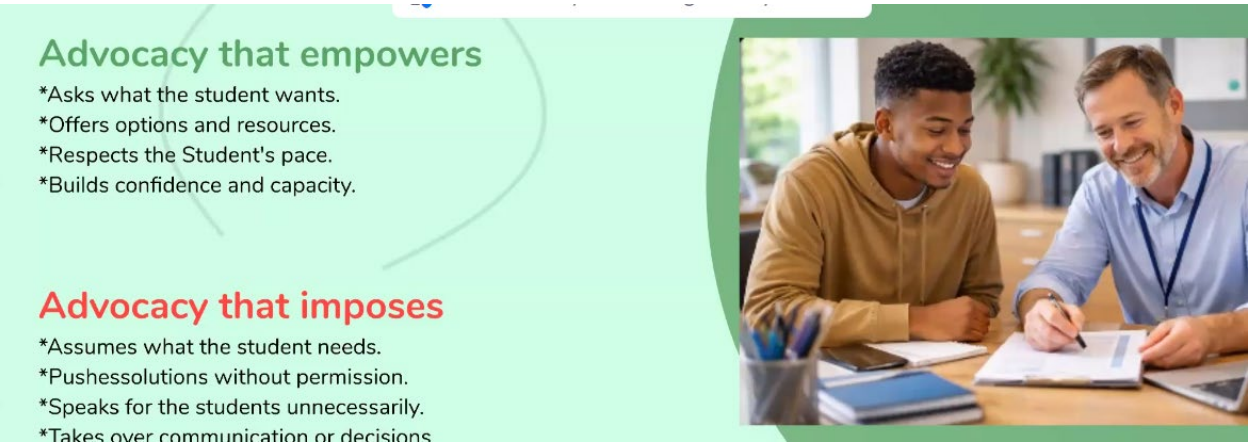
Kathy: Going back to the website and customer service, I love that Canada College has live support. One project would be to review our webpages and websites to see what information AI is pulling and whether it's too much or too little. Some of the information I received was about residency requirements. I checked where the student found the information, but it came from other websites. I had to explain to the student that AI was inaccurate.

Wissem: I have an obligation to ensure our next strategic plan comes from us and includes strategic initiatives to address everything we discussed. I went to the NASFA conference to learn about financial aid, but I learned it was all about AI. When all this technology is AI, the folks who benefit the most are privileged folks, and underserved folks lag in terms of catching up with technology. What can we do to support our students and ensure an equitable playing field for everyone? At the next SSPC, we are focusing on how AI can provide better student support. The outcome of these conversations will become a strategic initiative in the next strategic plan.

Lizette: Since we discussed this in cabinet, the PRIE office is working to consolidate this information. If you miss the next SSPC and what is being discussed in other inquiry groups, you can go to the PRIE website.

b. Advocacy vs. Imposition CARES Team 15

Dr. DeVon Scott delivered a reflective presentation examining the boundary between empowering student advocacy and unintended personal imposition:



The above shows, in green, what we want to do for students. However, what happens when that doesn't end up being the case? We have to ask the student what they need. Did we push solutions without the student's permission? Are we doing something with the student or for the student? I have an example. I partnered with a DRC, and we met. I saw a gap in services. I asked Wissem and Maria Lara to ask for support. They said yes, and they helped. Then another request moved forward, and they said sure but went over the policies. I filled a gap. I came back again, and I thought I was setting a precedent; I am hurting because there is no accountability on the other end. I checked myself through DRC, and I have to check myself and my requests. Is this helping? Sometimes students want to vent and not solve the issue. You are still supporting the student by listening. You have invested your energy, your mental health resources, and campus resources. Check yourself before proceeding. You do not need to fix all issues in every moment. We are here for a trauma-informed model, not a trauma-solving service model. We are here for a trauma-informed service model, not a trauma-solving one. We are not here to solve everything.



Sometimes students' psychological needs are not met.

Adolfo: Is the student ready to receive support? Sometimes we rush and don't ask whether they have a support team in place. Sometimes we rush, and the student doesn't have food or a place to live. Sometimes we need to talk to the student, identify resources, and ask whether they have a support team or resources, or whether we are duplicating support efforts. What would you like us

to support? We get emotionally involved and want to solve the issues, but the student is not ready to go at that pace.

Lizette: About 80% of our CARES cases are for SSPC. We try to connect with the student and PCC, and sometimes the student does not want support. We talk about where the student is connected and which student last saw them. We use that information to connect with the student, so it is a reach-out without the student knowing us.

Adolfo: I asked a student What do you want to do? He said, "I am OK staying in my car for now."

Jasmin: For undocumented students, resources are limited. Sometimes students do not know how to advocate for themselves. For students with vulnerable status, lay out the options on the table. Acknowledge who they receive support from and what they want to do. Not all students have the same needs, but they may not realize they need them yet. You cannot make students ready to access PCC resources. Ask the student before making decisions for them.

Maria H: We have to ask ourselves what we want to do. For example, I have Tuesday students who stop by weekly with a list of grievances. What do we do? They come to the next person, and I can see the student going from office to office. What can we do for ourselves?

DeVon: Monitor your mental health. Change your perspective and protect yourself; you can only do so much. If you notice a pattern, the student may be seeking attention.

Max: I see the importance of setting boundaries with students. There is a collegiate check-in to do with the student. That is part of the report and release.

DeVon: One of the most powerful ways we help students when we meet is to use all available resources. Next time, I will protect resources and energy, as students have repeated visits.

Lizette: This presentation is to bring awareness.

Core Principles: Effective advocacy requires working collaboratively *with* students—asking what support they desire, offering options, respecting their pace, and building self-efficacy—rather than doing things *to* them.

Signs of Imposition: Staff were encouraged to self-reflect on behaviors such as solving problems before fully understanding them, acting without student consent, speaking over the student's voice, or failing to accept a student's decision to decline assistance.

Active Listening & Trauma-Informed Boundaries: Emphasized that passive listening is a valid form of support when students simply need to vent. Staff were reminded to recognize clinical conditions like anxious attachment or factitious distress patterns, practice emotional regulation, maintain professional role boundaries, avoid burnout, and utilize the "refer and release" protocol.

Council members engaged in a brief closing dialogue regarding inter-departmental referrals and professional boundaries:

Collaborative Support: Staff discussed strategies for supporting students who repeatedly seek assistance across multiple campus offices, highlighting the value of single points of contact, clear communication between departments, and protecting staff well-being.

Campus Community: Members acknowledged the strong working relationships across Student Services and praised the ongoing dedication of faculty and classified staff.

c. Pre-Health Pathfinder Web Finder Danny & Max 15

Link related to the Pre-Health Pathfinder Web Finder: https://prehealthpathfinder.netlify.app/

Dean Max Hartman presented a specialized web navigation tool developed by Counselor Danny Lynch (Transfer Articulation Officer and Lead Counselor for Science and Technology) using the AI platform:

- **Tool Overview:** The web finder aggregates Allied Health undergraduate and associate degree program information across California community colleges and four-year institutions within a local geographic radius into a single, searchable web interface.
- **Utility & Application:** Designed as a counselor-facing resource to streamline academic planning, the tool eliminates the need to navigate dozens of separate institutional websites when guiding pre-health students. Council members discussed expanding similar AI-assisted mapping approaches to draft dedicated resource guides for undocumented students navigating health careers and professional licensing.

Max: He compiled all the Allied Health Program information for California community colleges within a certain radius of Canadian colleges, so folks can see different undergraduate associate degrees and pathways. You can see the pathway and program options at various 4-year and 2-year schools. It's an incredible resource that counselors and hiring staff use across different websites to compile options so students can make the best choice. Danny and his friend Claude used AI to pool the information in one place. This is an incredible tool. This is not a professional website that IT maintains. This is a resource Danny made for his colleagues and for reference. Danny periodically checks it for updates. I am excited about this as a tool. We are getting good feedback from students and counselors on how they are using this tool. Some gears are gearing up on what options and opportunities to organize and do our jobs in ways that are helpful for our students. I shared this with cabinet and VPS, and the recommendation was to share this with SSPC. If you have any questions, you can reach out to Danny.

Jasmin: I have received requests from undocumented students who want to pursue careers in health care. This is interesting, and it is helpful to have this information. I am requesting that we also cater to undocumented students. Is that something I can do, or does it require employment authorization? What careers will help me obtain an employment-based visa? What careers should I focus on to get status through a job opportunity? I would like to know how we can include undocumented students in the medical field, specifically. I have been trying to find more resources on undocumented professionals. I want to make sure that I can support students in the right direction.

Max: I can connect you with Danny to discuss how we put this together and maybe a separate resource who can answer some of the questions you raised.

Wissem: This is a good example of how we can use AI in our workspace.

d. Timely Care DeVon 15

Dr. DeVon Scott and VP Lizette Bricker presented an update regarding the district-wide telehealth platform, TimelyCare.

Timely CARE is a service our district uses to provide mental health resources to students. After review, the district will not continue the service, as data showed it was no longer used or effective. The data covered the past 4 years. This service is important because it provides 24/7 access. However, students can access other county resources. This change will be district-wide. PCC counselors from CSM reported they were not satisfied with the services Timely CARE provided. We considered other options and reviewed Timely CARE's use. It will sunset in mid-December, and we will highlight 24/7 services from our county supports.

DeVon: One thing about mental health is that it is very individual and subjective, and the person is going to want help.

- **Service Evaluation:** District data revealed that the TimelyCare platform was significantly underutilized by students across the three colleges over its four-year implementation. Student feedback also indicated low engagement with the service model.
- **Sunsetting & County Alignment:** The district will sunset TimelyCare in mid-December 2026. Student Services will transition to leveraging existing 24/7 San Mateo County mental health crisis resources, local community-based organizations, and specialized support networks (including undocumented student therapy collectives) alongside on-campus Personal Counseling Center (PCC) services.

Maria L: I appreciate that Student Services gives a heads-up when we refer a student. We are all connected to support the student. This would be a helpful presentation for faculty.

Adolfo: We face challenges because we cannot do everything. What is in our scope? When we work with external partners, we don't control their resources. We need to be careful about how we promote, market, and present resources. We also need to recognize that not all resources are available to all students, such as undocumented students.

Jasmin: I know the county has resources for undocumented students related to mental health and group therapy. I will send them to DeVon to see how we can partner with this organization. Undocumented students come from diverse backgrounds and ethnicities.

IX. New Business

X. Discussion

XI. Open Forum and Feedback

XII. Adjournment

For Next Meeting:
Future Item: