

UNM-Gallup College Council Recap

Wednesday, July 15, 2026 | 1 p.m.

Executive Conference Room - Gurley Hall 1216A

Attendance

John Zimmerman, Interim Chancellor

Joe Kee, Interim Dean of Instruction

Robert Griego, Director of Business Operations

Frank Sanchez, Staff Council President & Information Technology

Ashlee Velasquez, Director of Community Education & Workforce Development

Richard Reyes, Sr. Public Relations Specialist

Chancellor's Office, John Zimmerman

- **Council Structure and Communication:** The chancellor is seeking feedback on the current structure and effectiveness of the College Council to ensure it remains a meaningful forum for collaboration and transparency.
- **Campus Safety and Morale:** Improving campus-wide safety messaging and boosting employee morale are top priorities for the upcoming year.
- **Capital Projects:** Several major projects are underway, including the Student Experience project at Gurley Hall, the completion of the McKinley Academy building, and future upgrades to the campus gym.
- **Funding and Transitions:** Requests are being made for extensive stucco and roof repairs across campus buildings. While federal funding for the Native American student services center ends in September, the executive team is committed to finding ways to continue providing these resources.

Academic Affairs, Joe Kee

- **Interim Onboarding:** Since stepping into the interim role on July 1, the dean has been acclimating to the position and holding weekly meetings with division chairs.
- **Preparation for Fall:** Focus is currently on faculty hiring and finalizing the agenda for the upcoming development week.
- **Facilities Engagement:** The dean is working closely with facilities to identify and address physical space needs for various academic units.

Staff Council, Frank Sanchez

- **Leadership Changes:** Staff Council is recruiting a new secretary, with Lana Littleman expected to fill the role.
- **Community Initiatives:** Efforts are underway to establish a local Toastmasters chapter at UNM-Gallup, which would include opportunities for both staff and students.

Information Technology, Frank Sanchez

- **Infrastructure Upgrades:** IT is finishing network and climate control cabling for the new McKinley Academy space and installing new video control servers and stairwell cameras.
- **Phone System Transition:** Preparation has begun for a campus-wide move to a new IP-based phone system by the end of the year.
- **Classroom Tech:** Plans are being developed to retrofit classrooms with necessary projectors and hardware as departments move into new spaces.

Business Operations, Robert Griego

- **Budget and Bonds:** The budget for the new fiscal year is now available on the Business Operations webpage. A bond resolution will appear on the November ballot, and employees are encouraged to vote.
- **Staffing Updates:** A search is currently active for a new bookstore manager. In facilities, Kim Sowers, facilities, services tech, has taken the lead in maintenance.
- **Training:** New training sessions for index managers and "My Reports" are being planned to help administrative staff better manage departmental budgets.

Public Relations, Richard Reyes

- **Event Support:** PR is collaborating with the dean's office to help schedule and promote activities for kickoff week.
- **Visual Documentation:** The PR office has been assisting the chancellor by documenting campus facility needs through photography to support capital funding requests.

Community Education & Workforce Development, Ashlee Velasquez

- **Program Success:** The new residential electrician program is highly successful, with the first cohort already in progress and the third cohort currently enrolling.
- **CDL Advancements:** A new CDL simulator is now on campus. Work continues on creating a local CDL examiner position to allow students to test in Gallup rather than traveling to Farmington.
- **Leadership Transition:** Ashlee Velasquez announced she is leaving her role for a position with the school district. The chancellor is working with Ashlee and Emily Cabrera, education support coordinator, to facilitate a smooth transition in the CEWD office.