

Minutes of Presidents Council Meeting
June 19, 2026

The Presidents Council met at 10:00 a.m. on June 19, 2026, via Zoom. Executive Council members present were Houston Davis (co-chair), Jennifer Methvin (co-chair), Tyrone Jackson, Brian Shonk, Wade Derden, and Todd Shields. Charles Robinson and Terisa Riley were unable to attend.

Jennifer Methvin moved to approve the minutes of the April 4, 2026, meeting. Wade Derden seconded, and the council unanimously concurred.

Information Items

Finalization of the Professional Skills Training (PST) Funding

Tina Moore outlined ADHE's proposed funding model for Professional Skills Training (PST) programs, which are non-credit workforce training programs offered by higher education institutions. A statewide workgroup consisting of college presidents, chancellors, workforce leaders, university representatives, and ADHE staff developed the model. Moore noted that funding will be distributed pro rata and in arrears, meaning institutions are funded based on prior-year performance. A future return-on-investment (ROI) metric may be added but will not be included initially. The model uses a point-based weighting system rather than simple enrollment counts. Points begin with completed clock hours and are increased through multipliers based on desired workforce outcomes. ADHE tested the model using AY25 activity data. Results showed a wide distribution of funding among institutions, with most funding concentrated among institutions reporting the largest workforce training activity. The model moves Arkansas toward performance-based funding for non-credit workforce education while rewarding programs that are most likely to meet employer needs and support student advancement.

Productivity Funding Model ROI Metric Update

Nick Fuller provided an overview of proposed revisions to Arkansas's higher education productivity-based funding formula, focusing on changes intended to better align institutional funding with student outcomes and return on investment (ROI). Fuller noted that a major proposed change is the introduction of Years to ROI as a multiplier within the Credentials metric. Also, the Gateway Course Success metric, which previously stood as a separate performance measure, would be incorporated into the Progression metric as a multiplier. This change will place greater emphasis on how successfully students advance through key academic milestones rather than treating gateway course completion as a standalone indicator. The revisions shift the funding formula away from rewarding specific program categories (such as STEM or high-demand fields) and toward rewarding measurable economic outcomes and student progression success.

ADHE Updates

Commissioner Warden reported on the progress of the Arkansas Direct Application Portal. Significant development work has been completed, and Phase 1 of the project has been finalized by the programming team. To date, six institutions of higher education, along with a small group of high school students, have participated in system testing. The portal will be made available to participating institutions on July 1, while student access will begin on October 1. This phased rollout provides time for both ADHE and institutional partners to identify and address any issues, refine system functionality, and conduct training prior to the student launch. Warden emphasized the importance of patience and flexibility during the implementation process as any remaining issues are resolved. In addition, training is being provided to high school counselors and career coaches to ensure they are well prepared to assist students in navigating and utilizing the new application system.

Announcements

The next Presidents Council meeting will be July 7, 2026.

The next AHECB will be on Friday, July 24, 2026, at the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville.

With no further discussion, the meeting adjourned at 10:55 a.m.