

# SPE Center Community Outreach - Meeting Minutes

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## NPC representatives in Attendance:

Jeanne Swarthout, NPC President  
Mark Vest, NPC Vice President of Student Services  
Tamara Osborne, SPE Center Manager  
Tamara Martin, NPC Apache County Coordinator

## Community Members in Attendance:

Amy Martin, Human Resources at WMRMC  
Sammie Finch, CNO at WMRMC  
Becki Christensen, AC Chamber of Commerce  
Brandy Fuller, Boys and Girls Club  
Diane Arnold, Headstart  
Fely Earl, RV Public Library District  
Mary Nedrow, Springerville Major  
Tim Rasmussen, City of Springerville  
Lisa Muth, RVHS Guidance Counselor  
Slade Morgan, RVHS Principal  
Jennifer Smale, NAZ Innovative Workforce Solutions

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Date:	October 27 <sup>th</sup> , 2015
Scheduled:	1:00 pm – 2:30 pm
Location:	NPC – Springerville-Eagar Center, Room 133 940 E Maricopa Ave, Springerville, AZ 85938

## M I N U T E S

Meeting began 1:03 pm

### *Introductions and Welcome from President Swarthout*

President Swarthout welcomed all for attending and proposed the idea of working from a more natural dialog rather from the proposed agenda. Discussion was encouraged.

### *NPC Updates and Current issues by President Swarthout*

President Swarthout announced upcoming retirement of VP of Administration Services, Blaine Hatch.

President Swarthout provided the group with NPC's current state financial situation specifically with state funding. She indicated they do not foresee losing any more state funding for the next couple of years. NPC received about 1.3 million in State Operating Aid, but that NPC and other rural community colleges (Cochise and Eastern Arizona) also receive Equalization Aid. She explained that for NPC, Equalization amounts to about 5.6 million dollars and is based on property taxes.

President Swarthout explained another issue the college is keeping a close eye on has to do with JTED (Joint Technical Educational District) and CTE (Career and Technical Education) state budget cuts in which NAVIT (Northern Arizona Vocational Institute of Technology) is a part of NAVIT is the only group that has been restored in legislature. If the problem is not addressed, within 2-3 years it is possible there will no longer we any JTED. President Swarthout encouraged all industry representatives to keep pressure on the state legislature and for all business and industry to support the JTED programs.

Another concern the college is facing is the Expenditure Limit. It was explained that this was established in 1979 and has not changed. As a school, if you are close to reaching your expenditure limit, it means you can have money, but you are not able to spend it. President Swarthout explained that she has been spending time at the State Capitol to educate them on the problem. NPC would like to see changes made at a state legislature level to correct this issue as part of it is constitutional and would need to be changed with a ballot. There is an expenditure limit study committee in place to try to come up with fixes. There are 3 pieces they are working on that they would expect to alleviate the issue for about 10-15 years. She mentioned the County has the same issue and that it is complicated. ATRA (Arizona Tax Research Association) has claimed that NPC has too much cash in the bank, but NPC is not allowed to spend it based on the expenditure limitation issues.

### *Updates and Current Issues by Vice President Vest*

As a reminder, VP Vest explained to the group how NPC offers services in Apache County through an IGA (Intergovernmental Agreement). Funds for Apache County Programs and Services are paid to the college through a primary tax in Apache County.

He also reminded the group about a grant that was introduced at the last community outreach meeting in the Spring that has changed slightly. The original grant they anticipated using was the FIPSE grant; however this grant did not match what they wanted to do so NPC instead applied for and was approved for a Title 3 Grant that worked much better. This grant allows High School students in their high schools to attend connected classrooms (at each participating high school) to take college level courses and receive dual enrollment credit (both high school and college credit during high school hours). VP Vest reviewed the planning process and the timeline. These courses are being planned to begin in the Fall of 2016 allowing the summer for structural work and classroom preparations. The grant funds can cover increases to bandwidth, equipment, a project director, technical support pay to support the classrooms and full equipment refresh in the last year of the grant. One course NPC would like to offer is Math 152 (to get high school students that might be below this math level up to date so they are ready to take college algebra right out of high school). Others might include, American History, Geology, possibly Anthropology, etc. The grant allows NPC to work with 10 school districts initially and to add 2 every year. RVHS was not in the first group that said they were interested, but it is possible, they can be added in the upcoming years. This would apply to High School Sophomores, Juniors and Seniors and students can get up to 18 more credits before they complete high school. President Swarthout informed the group that studies have proven that students who attend University with an Associate Degree (transfer students with 30 credits) do better academically and have better graduation rates.

### *Recommendations and comments from members of the community*

President Swarthout directed the conversation to the group and inquired about their thoughts on what NPC might need to think about and focus on. There was discussion about what RVHS offers for dual enrollment (trigonometry, woodworking and business math) and how NPC hopes to reduce testing into remediation. There was some concern over if the proposed Title 3 Grant distance education courses would be transferable. President Swarthout explained that they will only offer transferable courses, but that they really want to focus on applicable, not just transferable. Meaning that, students need to work with an academic advisor to determine which courses are best for their plans so they only take what they need. This saves cost and time and encourages students to be more effective. There was conversation about how using NCRC (National Career Readiness Certification) could be useful. It was explained that the certification makes potential employees more marketable. Most agreed that Apache County struggles with quality employees. Jennifer Smale explained how the NCRC is used in various industries and she talked about 5 students who she is working with. These individuals did not complete their high school diploma or GED and are now working with Northeastern AZ Innovative Workforce Solutions and NPC to build a house as part of the iBest grant. Upon completion in June, the students will receive a Certificate of Proficiency in Construction, NCRC and National Center for Construction Education and Research certifications and a High School Equivalency diploma. This program is open to anyone who needs to obtain their GED. There was discussion about the upcoming STEM alliance meeting. NPC purchased some regional STEM kits in a box to be used over the summer for Kids College (aimed at kids 4-8<sup>th</sup> grade rather than high school). They have been contacting the middle schools to offer them use of the kits during the school year. Many in the group mentioned they think it would be helpful if people knew all their resources and a group was formed that brought these entities together. President Swarthout offered NPC's help to bring the right players to the table. Many in the group wanted to be sure this would include Apache County, County Schools Superintendent, possibly the Board of Supervisors or the County Manager as well as TEP and DES. Fely Earl with the Round Valley Library added that they offer many resources for community members that they may not be aware of including free courses for English as a second language. Tim Rasmussen with the Town of Springerville was interested in ADEQ courses and hoped NPC could help provide them. He mentioned there are 4 classes with 4 tiers in each and that there are very few options in the area. VP Vest mentioned that might be something we can assist with and recommended he speak with Royce Kincannon with NPC. There was more discussion regarding local resources and much praise for the NAVIT courses.

Meeting ended at 2:32