

CAMDEN BOARD OF DIRECTORS
Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey
January 28, 2026

A meeting of the Camden Board of Directors of Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, was held at 10 a.m. Wednesday, January 28, 2026. Dr. James F. Dougherty presided as Chair.

Present and constituting a quorum were Dr. Dougherty, Dr. Walter B. MacDonald, Amy B. Mansue, James P. McCarthy, and Jose A. Piazza.

Attending for university administration were Chancellor Antonio D. Tillis, Michael Sepanic, and George Loeser.

Also present were the following representatives to the Board of Directors: Helena Cabezas, graduate student representative; Jennifer Levy, undergraduate student representative; and Dr. Samuel Rabinowitz, faculty representative.

CALL TO ORDER

Dr. Dougherty called the meeting to order.

ANNOUNCEMENT PURSUANT TO CHAPTER 231, PUBLIC LAW 1975
(OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT)

Mr. Sepanic, Secretary of the Rutgers–Camden Board of Directors, announced that pursuant to Public Law 1975, Chapter 231 – the Open Public Meetings Act – public notice of this meeting was filed on January 20, 2026, with the Office of the Secretary of the State of New Jersey and three media outlets – the *Courier-Post*, the *Home News Tribune & Courier News*, and New Jersey Advance Media. Public notice of the meeting was posted in the following University libraries: the Alexander Library, New Brunswick; the Dana Library, Newark; the Smith Library, Rutgers Health; and the Robeson Library, Camden. In addition, notice of this meeting has been posted on the Camden Board of Directors website, under Governing Boards.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT

Mr. Sepanic asked the Board members if they had reviewed the meeting agenda and supporting documents and if anyone had a possible conflict of interest to disclose. No conflicts were reported.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE SEPTEMBER 16, 2025 MEETING

Dr. Dougherty called attention to the minutes of the September 16, 2025, meeting that were distributed to the Board and asked if there were any additions or corrections to the minutes. Receiving no objections, Dr. Dougherty called for a motion, which was seconded, and asked if there was any discussion. Hearing none, the minutes were approved.

MATTERS PRESENTED BY THE CHAIR

Dr. Dougherty welcomed Helena Cabezas as the new graduate student representative to the board. Ms. Cabezas is a PhD student in the public affairs program and is a two-time Rutgers–Camden graduate, having earned her master’s degrees in teaching Spanish and in public affairs from this campus.

Dr. Dougherty explained that there is a lot happening at Rutgers–Camden as the campus wraps up the very successful Year of the Arts and prepares to embark on its Centennial Celebration.

CHANCELLOR’S REPORT

Chancellor Tillis noted that 2026 marks 100 years of Rutgers–Camden’s evolution from its beginning in 1926 as the South Jersey Law School. Today, the campus celebrates a century of growth, scholarship, and community impact, and looks forward to shaping the next chapter together. Chancellor Tillis shared a brief video highlighting the centennial.

Next, Chancellor Tillis offered an update on student enrollment, emphasizing that diligent efforts in admissions, enrollment management, student success, and retention have helped Rutgers–Camden to reverse post-pandemic trends during the past two academic years. Rutgers–Camden’s current fall enrollment increased by 2.6%, nearly three times the national growth rate of 1%, demonstrating strong demand and effective enrollment strategies carried out through targeted marketing campaigns, brand presence, and local outreach. Campus housing is currently at 92% occupancy, rising from 85% the previous academic year. Chancellor Tillis explained that these numbers demonstrate the success of Rutgers–Camden’s strategic recruitment and retention, as well as renewed confidence in the residential experience.

Spring 2026 numbers show an increase of 3.7% over Spring 2025, a gain of more than 200 students. Chancellor Tillis noted that Rutgers–Camden’s Spring 2026 international enrollment increased by 14.3% over Spring 2025, driven by continuing undergraduates. The campus is now in its third consecutive year of international enrollment growth, reflecting sustained success in international recruitment and yield efforts. While international enrollment declined by 7% in fall 2025 across all U.S. colleges and universities, Rutgers–Camden achieved a 6% increase, significantly outperforming the broader higher education landscape.

Chancellor Tillis explained that Rutgers–Camden continues to make strides in developing global partnerships. The university secured a new MOU with the University of the Philippines, and

School of Business Dean Monica Adya conducted productive visits to institutions throughout India. These efforts, among others, have bolstered Rutgers–Camden’s international enrollment.

Chancellor Tillis noted that Rutgers–Camden’s overall retention remains stable across the undergraduate population, with particularly encouraging gains among its incoming underrepresented minority students, whose retention rate increased to 76.5%. This marks one of the most positive year-over-year shifts in recent cycles.

Similarly, students are becoming more efficient in their pathway to degree completion while maintaining strong academic performance. A growing proportion of undergraduates are enrolling in 15 or more credits, with a 3.9% year-over-year compounded increase in full-load course taking. There has been a concerted effort by the Student Academic Success team, the deans, and the academic advisors to ensure students are enrolled in at least 15 credits to keep them on track for graduation. Importantly, this increased momentum has not come at the expense of quality: the average undergraduate cumulative GPA remains consistent at 3.31, and students continue to successfully complete 92% of the credits they attempt.

Rutgers–Camden’s four-year graduation rate for the Fall 2020 incoming cohort—the campus’s primary COVID-impacted class—experienced a significant decline, dropping to 34.1%. However, sustained student-success initiatives, targeted interventions, and improved academic pathway support enabled the recovery of this cohort’s outcomes. Their five-year graduation rate rebounded to normative levels at 48.9%, demonstrating the effectiveness of post-pandemic retention and completion strategies. Looking forward, Rutgers–Camden is now seeing substantial improvement in on-time completion. The most recent incoming cohort achieved a 41.6% four-year graduation rate, reflecting strong progress and signaling that the campus’s academic momentum is continuing to strengthen.

Chancellor Tillis noted that Rutgers–Camden saw meaningful upward momentum across multiple categories in the 2026 *U.S. News & World Report* rankings of online programs. The Rutgers–Camden Online Bachelor’s Programs ranking rose from #39 to #29. The Online Master’s in Business Programs (Excluding MBA) ranking advanced from #61 to #45, with the Graduate Business for Veterans ranking improving from #28 to #22. Online Master’s in Business Programs also showed notable gains, moving from #88 to #71 overall, and from #56 to #44 for Online Master’s in Business Programs for Veterans. While Online Bachelor’s in Business fell slightly from #21 to #24, the broader pattern is clear: Rutgers–Camden continues to strengthen its position nationally, with year-over-year improvements across most major indicators.

Chancellor Tillis discussed how Rutgers–Camden’s fiscal responsibility is sustaining momentum. For FY26, tuition and fees remained the campus’s primary revenue source, underscoring the importance of enrollment growth and retention. He explained that careful budgeting and strategic allocation allow the campus to invest in priorities while maintaining long-term stability, and that foundation is reinforced by external funding and philanthropy.

Just over halfway through FY26, Chancellor Tillis shared that Rutgers–Camden has secured nearly \$19.4 million in grant funding, nearing FY25’s total of approximately \$21 million. That

funding includes a bequest of more than \$1 million to Rutgers–Camden’s Center for Urban Research and Education.

Next, Chancellor Tillis discussed how Rutgers–Camden continues to strengthen its academic reputation. The School of Nursing earned redesignation as a National League for Nursing Center of Excellence, with national recognition for the doctor of nursing practice and baccalaureate programs. Rutgers–Camden is expanding academic pathways that meet workforce needs and accelerate student success. New academic pathways—including accelerated 4+1 degrees and certificates in applied data science, real estate, and Spanish for Health Professions—are making graduates more competitive. The School of Business launched a board-certified master of finance in financial planning, aligning the campus’s offerings with market demand and faculty scholarship that elevates its profile.

Rutgers–Camden faculty continue to earn national attention, competitive funding, and prestigious awards—advancing knowledge through rigorous, community-engaged research that addresses real-world challenges. He offered a few highlights. Assistant Professor of Physics Julianne Gripenburg and Professor of Mathematics Haydee Herrera-Guzman will benefit from \$700,000 in funding given to Rutgers–Camden by the Clare Booth Luce Program for Women in STEM. This award will fund their professorships over multiple years, allowing the university to create a multifaceted program offering mentorship for STEM faculty and students, community outreach, and curriculum reform. In the School of Business, Associate Professor of Marketing Yulia Strizhakova recently served as the co-editor of the newly published volume *Global Marketing in Times of Disruption*, which examines how businesses worldwide are responding to changes in the marketplace caused by climate change, trade wars, political instability, and digital technology. In the School of Nursing, Assistant Professor Jamille Nagtalon-Ramos and Clinical Professor Kevin Emmons were inducted as Fellows in the American Academy of Nursing late last fall. Fellows are inducted into the organization for their extraordinary contributions to improve health locally and globally. Dean Donna Nickitas was appointed to the Commission for Nursing Reimbursement to advance the economic visibility of the nursing profession. Rutgers Law Professor Kimberly Mutcherson and Assistant Professor Adam Crews received major national honors from the American Association of Law Schools at an awards ceremony in New Orleans. Prof. Mutcherson earned the 2026 AALS Deborah L. Rhode Award for leadership and trailblazing service in legal education, while Prof. Crews received the 2026 Emerging Scholars Award for Outstanding Scholarly Publication for his *Stanford Law Review* article.

Student Success, Chancellor Tillis explained, is Rutgers–Camden’s north star. On March 4, The Bridge Multicultural Student Center will open, expanding culturally responsive support and reinforcing inclusion and belonging that help students thrive. These supports empower students to seize high-impact opportunities beyond the classroom.

Chancellor Tillis then discussed civic engagement and how it defines the Rutgers–Camden experience. Partnerships with AmeriCorps and the City of Camden—including the Chancellor’s Mayoral Internship Program—provide meaningful public service experiences while strengthening the community. These commitments, noted Chancellor Tillis, deepen the campus’s bond with Camden and broaden its impact.

The Year of the Arts elevated the university's cultural presence, and the Centennial Celebration continues that momentum through speakers, installations, multimedia projects, and more. Faculty-led partnerships with AtlantiCare and Samaritan Health advance medical equity, public history, and community well-being, while the Student Wellness Center and investments in inclusive pedagogy strengthen the campus's academic community—local impact that is complemented by a widening global footprint.

Chancellor Tillis explained that Rutgers University–Camden remains firmly committed to its mission of access, impact, and service to the communities it supports. Considering the evolving federal guidance and the broader national conversation about how institutions describe their work, Rutgers–Camden will continue DICE's important efforts while updating the acronym to reflect its purpose more clearly. Chancellor Tillis shared that, moving forward, DICE will stand for the Division of Impact and Community Engagement, underscoring the campus's longstanding dedication to expanding opportunity, strengthening partnerships, and advancing the public good. As a result of adhering to federal law, job functions and responsibilities were redefined. Chancellor Tillis emphasized that no positions were lost in the process.

Chancellor Tillis then explained that he continues to pursue capital projects that expand Rutgers–Camden's footprint and elevate opportunities for students, faculty, staff, and the greater community. He discussed the possibility of transforming the historic Ruby Match Factory at 300 North Delaware Avenue into a 47,000-square-foot athletic and community facility adjacent to the Athletic Complex. A due diligence report was received and sent to President Tate. They have requested a third due diligence report. IPO has issued a facilities assessment detailing existing conditions, required renovations, and cost considerations—an essential planning document that will guide the university's go/no-go decision and, if approved, the development of a business model and lease terms.

Next, Chancellor Tillis highlighted some of Rutgers–Camden's points of pride among its students, faculty, and alumni. Students continue to excel across academic, civic, and global arenas. Undergraduates led New Jersey's Ballot Bowl in statewide nonpartisan voter engagement, and a new research-intensive course enabled students to present original work at national scientific conferences, expanding access to professional networks without financial barriers. Students are gaining international exposure by going abroad with professors and by identifying opportunities to conduct their own research. In October 2025, three first-generation students from each undergraduate college earned the prestigious Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship, with projects spanning Jamaica, France, and Taiwan. Chancellor Tillis expressed his pride in these students' success in winning national, competitive awards—a testament to student talent and dedicated mentorship.

Faculty scholarship reached broad audiences. Chancellor Tillis highlighted a national academic conference aboard the Battleship New Jersey, marking 250 years of U.S. naval history, and a creative work blending folk art and AI. Art Professor Allan Espiritu received the highly competitive AIGA (American Institute of Graphic Art) 50 Best Book Covers Award for the Rising Sun catalog.

Alumni continue to lead and give with distinction. Chancellor Tillis pointed to Bob Fishman, honored for his extraordinary commitment to student success through the Ruth E. Fishman Award, a legacy of access that opens doors for Rutgers–Camden students. Engagement and generosity remain central to the university’s advancement efforts, reflecting enduring confidence in the university’s mission and future. In fact, Chancellor Tillis was delighted to report that a number of Rutgers–Camden alumni will serve in New Jersey Governor Mikie Sherrill’s cabinet. Kris Kolluri SBC’91 has been asked to remain as president/CEO of New Jersey Transit and is being nominated to additionally serve as executive director of the New Jersey Turnpike Authority—an unprecedented dual role. In addition, Jacquelyn Suarez RLAW’15 has been asked to remain as commissioner of the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs.

Turning to athletics, Chancellor Tillis said that the Scarlet Raptors excel across men’s and women’s sports. Women’s soccer saw standout performances from Giselle Lizardi and Gianna Patitucci, who earned Second Team All-Conference honors, while men’s soccer celebrated Eric Swen and Brandon Valeri for their First Team All-Conference recognition. In track and field, Jacob Dinerman set a new school record in the mile and advanced to the National Championship in South Carolina. Together, these achievements showcase a community grounded in teamwork, grit, and academic commitment—momentum that carries the campus into a vibrant calendar of events ahead.

Chancellor Tillis invited the members of the board to a host of upcoming events. The Rutgers–Camden Centennial event lineup and Year of the Arts culminating performances are robust. From February through March, the campus will come alive with a series of events that celebrate creativity, community, and intellectual engagement. The season begins February 6 with “Hand Me Down the Silver Trumpet,” a performance packed with music and dance that was written by Theater Professor Ken Elliott and will feature Rutgers–Camden alumna Tiara Greene. This will be followed on February 18 by the fourth annual Raptor Rally, where men’s and women’s basketball take on New Jersey City University, and the new Scarlet Raptor mascot will be unveiled. On February 24, the campus will welcome Governor Thomas Kean for the Chancellor’s Centennial Lecture. On February 26, Runway to Renewal, the first-ever fashion show featuring Project Runway’s Korto Momolu, alongside Art Professor Margery Amdur’s Wearing the Inside Out, a live performance reimagining the hospital gown as both garment and metaphor, will debut. The momentum continues into March with the Spring Address on March 10, culminating on March 26 as the Year of the Arts concludes with Pulitzer Prize–winning novelist Percival Everett.

Chancellor Tillis concluded his presentation by thanking the Rutgers–Camden grounds crew, RUPD, and marketing and communications for all their help getting the campus through the recent snow and ice storm. He thanked the members of the Board of Directors and offered to address questions. Ms. Mansue extended congratulations on the increase in housing occupancy and asked if there were plans to address the housing issue. Chancellor Tillis responded by explaining that he has asked Senior Vice Chancellor Jimmy Jung and enrollment management to gather more data and that they are looking into the greater community for opportunities for additional housing. He also pointed out that they are looking into residential opportunities for students with families. Dr. MacDonald inquired about the timeline for the new field house's third

due diligence report. Chancellor Tillis explained that he is talking with Chief Administrative Officer Kimberly Lewis about this and that he wants a third party to confirm the numbers.

Mr. McCarthy thanked the chancellor for his comprehensive summary and said it was great to hear about all the campus's points of pride. He had a question about graduation rates. Pointing out that Chancellor Tillis referenced a turn in five-year graduation rates and efforts to reach out to at-risk populations, he asked the Chancellor to elaborate on what is being done to capture those students. Chancellor Tillis stressed that Rutgers–Camden is a predominantly commuter institution, with many non-traditional students who have families. He then expressed his pride in his colleagues' work. He called on Vice Chancellor for Student Academic Success Marsha Lowery to speak about the efforts of her team.

Dr. Lowery explained that her team recently analyzed credit completion and found that students are on track to complete degree requirements with higher GPAs. She described her team's high-touch approach in doing campaigns, having conversations, and holding workshops. They also review monthly progress reports to understand and address students' developing concerns. Dr. Dougherty commented that such a hands-on approach is very important and impactful. Regarding housing, Dr. Dougherty suggested that dining and social opportunities are important. Chancellor Tillis responded by noting that they have recently upgraded the residential areas to enhance social experiences and that they are working to ensure commuter students have spaces to spend their time between classes.

OLD BUSINESS

Dr. Dougherty directed the Board's attention to old business. There was no old business.

NEW BUSINESS

Dr. Dougherty introduced the Board of Directors' undergraduate student representative and Student Government Association president, Jennifer Levy, and asked her to share a brief update on the SGA's current work and priorities.

Ms. Levy thanked Dr. Dougherty, Chancellor Tillis, and the rest of the Board of Directors for this opportunity. She described the SGA as a group of 18 total members representing the Camden College of Arts and Sciences, School of Business, School of Nursing, and the Graduate School. The SGA's objectives are working alongside administration to better serve the student body and advocate for student needs and overseeing the funding and functions of 60+ student organizations. She explained that the SGA's goals for the 2025-2026 academic year are to increase advocacy for student voices; enhance SGA visibility and presence on campus; expand opportunities for students; and continue strengthening communication efforts.

Ms. Levy next described the SGA's committees. The Community Service Committee is a new committee tasked with promoting and facilitating activities involving the greater community and has a continuing service activity with the Ronald McDonald House. The Legislative Affairs

Committee held a post-election debrief event and advertised opportunities for Camden students from Rutgers Federal Relations and Scarlet Service Programs.

The SGA has done a lot of advocacy work this year, Ms. Levy explained. The SGA has assisted with the transition of dining services for students; hosted a Dining Town Hall; met with the deans of each respective school; and hosted guest speakers from various departments at weekly general body meetings and at additional meetings as needed. The SGA also works closely with university leadership. They meet monthly and work closely alongside Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs Vaughn Calhoun, and they meet semesterly and work alongside Chancellor Tillis and his office. This year, they also met with Student Government Leaders from the New Brunswick and Newark Campuses as well as President Tate.

The SGA assisted with many campus events during the fall semester, including the Welcome Week outdoor movie night, an election kick-off event, an RSS-I and RSS-DC Panel, and a Post-Election Debrief Event. They hosted a table at the involvement fair, held weekly general body meetings on Thursdays, and funded speaker giveaways for the Late Night Breakfast.

Looking ahead, Ms. Levy shared that the SGA's initiatives planned for spring 2026 include: piloting SGA liaison roles for students and departments, hosting a Meet the Dean's Town Hall event, working with Provost Sandra Richtermeyer to host a research town hall, connecting with alumni, and making new connections with departments and organizations.

Ms. Levy concluded her presentation by thanking the Rutgers–Camden Board of Directors and the Chancellor's Office for all the work they do for students. In response to Ms. Levy's presentation, Dr. Dougherty said it was refreshing to see all three SGAs represented and expressed his hope that the Rutgers–Camden SGA continues to meet with the other presidents. Ms. Mansue commended Ms. Levy for doing a lot of campaigning. Chancellor Tillis said that it has been a delight working with Ms. Levy, who he noted is a sophomore and has her finger on the pulse of the student body's interests and concerns. Dr. MacDonald asked how Aramark is doing. Ms. Levy explained that the students seem to be enjoying the new dining services, which have served many well-received events. The SGA, Ms. Levy shared, will meet with Assistant Vice Chancellor for Auxiliary Services Kristin Walker to further discuss these services. Dr. Dougherty advised that the SGA continue their conversation with the Chancellor, suggesting that voicing their concerns is the only way to get what they want.

ADJOURNMENT

Dr. Dougherty asked if there was any further business. Hearing none, he called for a motion and a second to adjourn the meeting.