

**RIVERSIDE COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT
DISTRICT SAFETY & SECURITY SUB-COMMITTEE (DSSC)
MEETING MINUTES
Monday, September 5, 2025**

ATTENDEES:	ATTENDEES:	ABSENT:
Myisha Jackson (RCC Student Body President)	Mark DiMaggio	DiMemmo, Kristie
Collins, Michael	Gonzalez, Evelyn	Arguelles, Rudy
Askar, Majd	Kazsuk, Tracy	Covarrubias, Araceli
Esqueda, Monica	Taube, Rhonda	MVC Student Body President
Tu, Beiwei	Wurtz, Kevin	NC Student Body President
Moore, Frankie		RCC Student Body President
Hicks, Marie		Caringella, Graciela
Heim, Stefanie		Bolanos, Victor
Brandi Avila		
Ferrer, Greg		
Rojas, Octavio		

The meeting was called to order by Beiwei Tu at 10:00 am.

I. Blue Phone Strategy: Current Status and Future Proposal

A. Background and Challenges

The current discussion is focused on whether the district needs a new strategy for blue phones. Blue phones are an outdated technology, initially deployed in college campuses since 1990, before most people owned cell phones.

The district currently maintains **137 blue phones** across various locations. Challenges associated with keeping them include:

1. **Fixed Location:** Users must run to the location of the blue phone.
2. **Outdated Technology:** Nearly all phones at RCC and Norco are from a manufacturer that is now out of business, meaning replacement parts are unavailable. This necessitates a complete replacement to move forward.
3. **Significant Cost:** Making all phones function at all times requires a significant cost. The cost to upgrade the technology to modern standards (like 5G, as most currently use 2G, 3G, or 4G) would be about **\$4 million**. Complete replacement costs are estimated at **\$30,000–\$40,000 for each unit**.
4. **Functionality Issues:** Anecdotal data suggests usage is very low. Inspection records show that **almost half of the blue phones have issues**. A primary issue is the blue light not working, which makes the phone invisible at night. Other issues include two-way communication failure between the caller and dispatch.

5. **Technology Reliance:** New blue phone technology relies on cell phone signals, meaning if cell towers fail, the blue phones would also fail to connect.

B. Alternatives and Support for Removal

Many colleges, including four community colleges verified by staff, have decommissioned their blue phones, with some universities removing them as early as 2011 (e.g., UC Davis).

The identified alternative is the **Rave Guardian app**. This app is readily available through a state contract for the Rave mass notification system. The Rave Guardian app offers:

- Ability to call 911, connecting directly to dispatch.
- Dispatch receives the user's profile information and cell phone location.
- Two-way text messaging with the Police Department (PD).
- A "Virtual Export" or safety timer feature (if not canceled, PD and friends/family are notified).

Several members were in favor of completely removing the phones, citing the outdated technology. Marie Hicks suggested that the millions of dollars required to maintain/replace the blue phones could be "**better spent making sure that there was a phone in every classroom**" for emergencies.

C. Proposal for Strategic Locations and Phased Approach

The group considered three options: remove all, keep all, or the "**middle-of-the-road**" proposal to keep certain strategic phones.

Strategic Placement Discussion:

- **Rationale for keeping some:** To address the concern that some people may not have a cell phone or account, and because the visible blue lights act as a **deterrent** to potential predators.
- **Norco:** Sergeant Rojas presented 8 proposed locations focused on high-traffic **pedestrian areas**. Michael Collins expressed concern about lack of placement in parking lots, especially for evening classes, but Rojas indicated he was not opposed to reviewing that.
- **District Office (DO):** Rojas suggested relocating existing phones to better locations, such as near the flagpole by Hoyle School of Arts, citing higher foot traffic and better lighting. Monica Esqueda strongly supported the flagpole location.
- **Cost/Maintenance:** It was clarified that if phones are in strategic locations, they will be repaired or replaced using functional phones repurposed from non-strategic locations to avoid purchasing new units immediately.

D. Discussion on RAVE Adoption and Outreach

Majd Askar suggested a gradual phase-out to ensure constituents, students, and colleagues become accustomed to using the RAVE app. Rhonda Taube stated the district has had RAVE for about 10 years and needs to put energy into ensuring everyone is using it.

Some students may not have a cell phone. The idea was floated to investigate **free phone programs** or "low-cost programs" for students (such as those only capable of calling 911). Brandi Avila cautioned that the Basic Needs department should be used as a **resource hub or referral point**, not a funding source, as their state allocation is limited and does not cover the cost of providing phones.

E. Motion and Decision (Blue Phone Strategy)

Majd Askar and Marie Hicks advocated for a motion to phase out the phones over the next year. The final motion was clarified and summarized:

Motion: To phase out all **non-functional blue phones** immediately and keep blue phones in **strategic locations** for the next **12 months**. At the end of the 12 months, the plan is to **re-evaluate blue phones and then determine the next step**. During this one-year transition period, the district will aggressively promote the **Rave Guardian app adoption** and **911 usage campaigns** to prepare for complete decommissioning. Good, functional phones will be repurposed from non-strategic areas to strategic locations requiring functional units.

Mover: Majd Askar **Seconder:** Rhonda Taube **Vote:** Motion Carries unanimously.

Action Item: The recommendation will be forwarded to the DSPC. Majd Askar suggested the public messaging should emphasize that the technology is outdated and that there are better means of calling for help, rather than focusing on the cost of maintenance. Beiwei Tu will arrange a meeting with VPBSs to finalize strategic locations.

II. Key Administrative Policy: Locking and Unlocking Buildings

The second agenda item addressed the need for an official policy regarding the roles and responsibilities for locking and unlocking buildings due to inconsistencies among campuses. The draft policy suggests the PD (CSAs) should handle locking and unlocking.

Discussion Points:

- **PD Staffing:** Acting Chief DiMaggio stated that the PD is short-staffed (e.g., down 5 CSAs at RCC alone), making it difficult for them to perform lock/unlock duties consistently. He suggested assistance from custodians or designated faculty to handle keys.
- **Facilities Concerns:** Majd Askar reported that Moreno Valley Facilities staff had taken on the lock/unlock duties when PD was short-staffed, but this resulted in "**backlash**" because staff felt unsafe and it was outside their Job Description (JD), especially since

sister colleges were not doing the same. Askar emphasized that facilities teams are currently securing buildings (including alarms and gates).

- **Campus Inconsistencies:** At Norco, faculty typically have keys/access cards. At RCC, most faculty should have keys, but Tu Beiwei noted hearing from associate faculty members who were unable to get keys. Inconsistency exists even within the RCC based on the department.

Decision: The issue requires standardization across the district. Tu Beiwei decided to **table this discussion** and will arrange a sidebar meeting with the VPs to address and standardize the key issuance and management process.

III. Adjournment and Next Steps

Next Meeting: Scheduled for October 12th.

Action Items:

1. Beiwei Tu will arrange a meeting with VPs to discuss standardizing the key administrative policy (locking/unlocking).
2. Beiwei Tu will forward the Blue Phone recommendation to the DSPC.
3. Beiwei Tu will arrange another meeting with relevant parties (including VPBSs) to finalize the strategic blue phone locations, using a clearer map marking which phones are being removed.
4. The district will begin ramping up the Rave Guardian app adoption and 911 usage campaign for the next 12 months.