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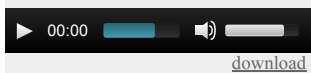
MCCCD Governing Board Votes To Appeal Ruling On DACA Student Tuition

By [Carrie Jung](#)

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(Photo by Carrie Jung - KJZZ)
Supporters of the appeal filled the MCCCD board room to capacity Tuesday night. Eight speakers made their case to board members before the vote.

The question of whether undocumented immigrants in the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program should be eligible for in-state tuition will be going back to court. By a one-vote margin the Maricopa County Community College District Governing Board voted to appeal the case.

The board room was packed Tuesday as students and members of the public delivered impassioned speeches about why they wanted to see the board continue to battle in favor of DACA students.

“I want you to think of the ambitious young men and women who love this country and this state as much as I do. I respectfully ask you to not close your doors on us now,” said Ezekiel Santos, a DACA recipient and student at Mesa Community College. He was one of eight people to take the podium.

After 20 minutes of public testimony, the board voted 4-to-3 to appeal a [recent appeals court ruling](#) that said DACA students should not qualify for in-state tuition.

The three board members who voted no said they are reflecting the will of Arizona voters who, in 2006, passed a measure to bar undocumented immigrants from access to in-state tuition.

“We not only represent you, we represent every citizen of this state as taxpayers,” said board member Tracy Livingston, one of the no votes. “And as much as this breaks my heart to say this, let’s keep in mind that ARS 15232 did overwhelmingly pass.”

Board members who voted to go forward with an appeal like Dr. Linda Thor said the move was an easy decision, saying morally, it was the right move.

“Besides the morality and the mission, there’s just the pure economics of this,” Thor said. “And DACA students, last year, paid almost \$2.9 million in tuition.”

While the yes votes narrowly won, all of the board members warned the students at the meeting that the outlook for a win in the Arizona Supreme Court is dim and they should use this extra time to plan for future outcomes of this case.

EDITOR'S NOTE: KJZZ is licensed to the Maricopa County Community College District.