



August 17, 2026

TO: ARC-AA Sponsoring Organizations:
American Academy of Anesthesiologist Assistants
American Society of Anesthesiologists
Association of Anesthesiologist Assistant Education Programs

FROM: Ty Townsend, CAA, Chair
Jennifer Anderson Warwick, MA, Executive Director

RE: Highlights from the ARC-AA Board Meeting – July 14, 2026

The Accreditation Review Committee for the Anesthesiologist Assistant Board of Directors met on July 14, 2026, via Zoom. The Board has adopted protocols that permit more predictable, consistent, and deliberate communications with sponsors about the Board's work. ARC-AA provides official updates to its sponsors via the Board Highlights. The highlights from the board meeting are below.

1. **Program Actions.** Six programs were reviewed for accreditation recommendations or progress reports.
2. **CAAHEP Standards & Guidelines.** The ARC-AA is in conversation with the CAAHEP Standards Committee regarding the draft *Standards and Guidelines*. Once an agreed-upon draft is available, a second Call for Comment period will be held. For more information, click [here](#).
3. **Simulation.** Simulation is an integral component of education, helping prepare students for the OR and practice. The Board discussed the literature review on the role simulation plays in attaining competency with clinical requirements
4. **Elections to the Board.** Nikki Brechtel, nominated by the AAAA, was elected to their first 3-year term. The term commences January 1, 2027. Ms. Brechtel is currently fulfilling a vacated term.
5. **Experience with the ARC-AA.** Earlier this year, ARC-AA surveyed its programs to gauge their experience with accreditation. ARC-AA stakeholders report a strongly positive overall experience, with high regard for staff support, core resources, and the value of accreditation, alongside clear, actionable opportunities to improve document formats, data organization, and clinical expectations. The Board discussed key takeaways and actions to take to improve stakeholders' experience. For the survey results, click [here](#).

6. Next ARC-AA Board Meetings.

2026

Tuesday, August 18, at 6 PM Eastern Time
 Thursday, October 15, @ TBD Pacific Time (@ASA)

web-based
 San Diego

2027

Tuesday, January 19, at 6 pm Eastern Time
 Saturday, April 17, at 11 am Eastern Time (@AAAA)
 Tuesday, July 20, at 6 pm Eastern Time
 Thursday, October 14, @ TBD Eastern Time (@ASA)

web-based
 Orlando
 web-based
 Boston

The purpose of ARC-AA: Act under the auspices of CAAHEP¹ (Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs), which is the national voluntary accreditation agency for the Anesthesiologist Assistants, assessment of educational outcomes, and recommendation to CAAHEP for accreditation of AA educational programs that meet the CAAHEP *Standards*.

The AAAA, AAAEP, and ASA sponsor the ARC-AA.

- a. Each organization nominates individuals to the ARC-AA, and the ARC-AA elects them.
- b. The fiduciary responsibility of the board's directors is to the ARC-AA.

Board Members of the ARC-AA:

Ty Townsend, MSA, CAA (AAAA), Chair
 Jermaine Leclerc, DHSc, CAA (AAAA), Vice Chair
 Gaurav Patel, MD (ASA), Treasurer
 Nikki Brechtel, CAA (AAAA)
 Sally Fortner, MD (AAAEP)
 Matthew Pinegar, MD (ASA)
 John Scott, DO (ASA)
 Kris Tindol, MMSc, CAA (AAAEP)

¹ CAAHEP = Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs