

**North Central State College
Board of Trustees' Meeting
December 3, 2025**

I. CALL TO ORDER

This meeting was held in a hybrid format with some participants attending in-person in the Gorman Board Room (165-Fallerius) and others online via Zoom. Trustee participation was seven in person and none online.

Chair Ms. Linda Nelson called the meeting to order at 5:35 p.m. and asked all to rise and join her in reciting the pledge of allegiance followed by her reading of the Global ENDS Policy for North Central State College.

II. ROLL CALL

The Secretary, Mr. Stephen Williams called the roll.

Present:

Ms. Kristin Aspin
Mr. Mark Masters
Dr. Dwight McElfresh
Ms. Elisabeth Morando
Ms. Linda Nelson
Mr. Steven Stone
Mr. Patrick Williams

Absent:

Ms. Duana Patton
Ms. Kimberly Winkle

III. INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Board Chair, Ms. Linda Nelson asked Ms. Lori McKee to introduce our special guest. Ms. McKee introduced Mr. Leroy Gifford (online) who is our Audit Partner from BHM CPA, Inc. and will be reporting on our annual audit this evening. The Board Chair called on President Dorey Diab to introduce the remaining guests present. President Diab acknowledged the presence of Dr. Kelly Gray, Vice President of Academic Services; Ms. Lori McKee, Vice President of Business Services; Mr. Tom Prendergast, Executive Director for Institutional Transformation; Ms. Chris Copper, Vice President of Development; Colonel Kenneth Kmetz representing the Ohio State University at Mansfield Advisory Board; and Mr. Matthew Smith, North Central State College Trustee Emeritus.

IV. FOCUS OF THE MEETING – *Ms. Linda Nelson*

Ms. Linda Nelson explained that the primary focus of tonight's meeting will include: A Report on the financial well-being of our College from our Auditor, reports from the OSU-M Advisory Board, our Foundation, and our President. We will attend to our Required Approval Agenda, and our Policy Governance Agenda and consideration of the Report of Efficiency Review and Implementation Plan for North Central State College and some other policy discussion and consideration of approval relative to Senate Bill 1 requirements.

V. AUDITOR'S REPORT – Mr. Leroy Gifford, Audit Manager, BHM CPA, Inc.

Mr. Leroy Gifford presented the results of the annual Auditor's Report for fiscal year 2025. Mr. Gifford reported that the fiscal year 2025 audit of North Central State College resulted in a clean audit with no findings. The independent auditors issued an unmodified opinion on the financial statements and the Schedule of Expenditures of Federal Awards, confirming that the college's financial statements are fairly presented in all material respects in accordance with U.S. generally accepted accounting principles. This is the highest level of assurance an audit can provide.

The audit also included required reports under Generally Accepted Government Auditing Standards and the Uniform Guidance. No significant deficiencies or material weaknesses in internal control were identified, and no instances of noncompliance with laws, regulations, grant agreements, debt covenants, or contracts were noted. Likewise, the Single Audit covering the Student Financial Assistance Cluster received an unmodified opinion, with no findings related to compliance or internal controls.

There were no audit adjustments, no disagreements with management, and no significant difficulties encountered during the audit process. The auditors confirmed their independence and reported no management letter comments or verbal issues requiring follow-up.

The audit included the implementation of GASB Statements No. 101 and 102. GASB 101, related to compensated absences, resulted in a beginning net position restatement that is fully disclosed in the financial statements. GASB 102 involved updated risk disclosures and did not have a material impact on the college's financial position.

Overall, the auditors commended college management for their consistent dedication to strong financial reporting and internal controls, noting that this marks approximately 25 to 26 consecutive years of clean audit results for the institution. The college staff was commended for their assistance in completing the audit. The Board congratulated Ms. McKee and her staff for another clean audit.

**VI. OSU-MANSFIELD ADVISORY BOARD REPORT – Ms. Linda Nelson
- Colonel Kenneth Kmetz (OSU-M Advisory Board)**

Colonel Kmetz's highlights on the OSU Mansfield Board Meeting and more, include:

- Enrollment is up over 70 students and campus clubs are experiencing strong participation.
- Dean Opal reported that this year's State of the University Address by President Carter highlighted three initiatives for OSU: Cancer research (#2 in the nation); AI (OSU is all in for virtually every aspect), and investments in students and access (the Regional Campus Commitment). Beginning Autumn 2026, new freshmen can start at a regional campus with no tuition or mandatory fees if they meet the criteria (be an Ohio resident, families with under 100K adjusted gross income, be full time). After 30 credits over two semesters, students can change to Columbus and continue for free, or stay at the regionals for free. The tuition money for students will be covered by development funds from Ohio State. Our enrollment is up over 7% with 18% being new first-quarter freshmen. Providing housing will be an issue and Mansfield has connected with the Office of Student Services in Columbus about enrolling area landlords in its third party-campus housing program; for a small fee, they inspect rental property and require compliance with certain things, and advertise to the students. Building new housing is not feasible due to the cost and length of time needed.
- A new bridge now spans the stream behind Ovalwood.
- At Kingwood Center on November 20th, interim Dean of the Fisher College of Business, Aravind Chandrasekaran "AC" and Dean Opal hosted Deans & Dialogues for Friends and Donors for a lively conversation on AI fluency and preparing students for the evolving business world.
- The featured speaker at the November 25th joint Rotary and Kiwanis annual meeting is the General Manager of WOSU – Anthony Padgett.
- On November 21st, Mansfield and Columbus administrators walked a potential campus site for an outdoor forensics' laboratory, the first of its kind in support of a new, four-year degree in forensic anthropology which can produce career paths in death investigation, law enforcement, medicine, mortuary sciences, public service and more. More to come in the future on this partnership.

VII. PRESIDENT'S REPORT – *Dr. Dorey Diab*

A. Student Organizations

TRiO SSS Update:

- Thursday, November 20th, TRiO SSS held its annual First-Generation College Student Celebration between 11:00am-12:00pm. Participants were able to hear from and connect with students, faculty, and staff who are First-Generation Students, First-Generation Graduates, or First-Generation Advocates. The event hosted a potato bar beginning at 12:00pm.

Psi Beta – Psychology Fraternity

- NCSC Chapter Advisor has reached out to the OSU-Mansfield Psi Chi advisor (Psi Chi is the psychology honors program for 4-year institutions) to discuss pooling activities between Psi Beta and Psi Chi.
- Chapter Advisor has contacted a few North Central students to assess their interest in a leadership role for Psi Beta.

Phi Theta Kappa Update:

- PTK hosted its first new member meeting and have elected Mr. Jesse Halfhill as president. He is an outstanding student and great representative of NCSC.
- PTK meets as a group biweekly and will choose the January group service project on Dec 5.

Honors College Update:

- The Honors College currently has 12 students with 15 research projects being finalized for the Poster Exhibition event on Wednesday, December 3rd.
- Student academic posters will be on display throughout the lower level of the Fallerius Building from 8am – 5pm. Students will be present from 4:00 – 5:30 to share details of their research projects with those in attendance.
- Refreshments will be served during a reception from 4-5:30 for all guests in attendance.

B. North Central State College Foundation Development and Update – Ms. Christine Copper

Dr. Dorey Diab introduced Ms. Chris Copper to present the Foundation Report. Ms. Copper presented the Foundation Development and Update Report as follows:

Foundation-Emerald Club - Major Gifts

1. \$182,864.04 in on a \$442,560 goal (FY26 plan to increase donations by 5% YOY)
 - Increase annual gifts – New gifts Requested - \$75k for OB mannequin, \$75k for Respiratory Therapy; \$50,000 for criminal justice scholarships; \$27,884 for Lathe equipment; \$20,000 for foundation nursing support; \$15,000 for LPN to RN
 - Increased the results of Richland Gives by 5%, plan is in motion
 - Increased scholarships by 5%, met this metric with the new Innovation Grant, making Criminal Justice scholarship ask.
 - Implemented phlebotomy program with a total of 15 students so far

- Grant funded 10 workforce laptops have been received
- Next community drone program launches in January 2026
- Holiday gifts going to major and principal gift donors
- Rapid Response job and education fair resulted in 22 business partner, 78 job seekers signed in, and Avita alone hired three individuals. Nate helped register some potential students at NCSC. Evaluating doing this again in 2026 in response to job downsizing.

Workforce

1. Cory Monica is meeting with apprenticeship partners and ensuring and updating all apprentices' classes for spring 2026
2. Working on launch of the new 5G program
3. Meeting with NexGen on relaunching the Polymer program
4. Meeting request to the new Plant Manager at Timken and our interest in her joining the NCSC Foundation board
5. Invoicing is happening for corporate partners

Events and Kehoe Facilities

1. \$38,000 booked

C. Monitoring Report: Executive Limitations Policies – Treatment of Employees (04.30)

Dr. Dorey Diab explained that the monitoring report discussion is continuing with going over the six Ends policies and the 10 Executive Limitations.

This report focuses on the Executive Limitations policy 04.30 Treatment of Employees

TREATMENT OF EMPLOYEES (EXECUTIVE LIMITATIONS)

Policy No. 3357:13-04-30

With respect to the treatment of paid employees and volunteer staff, the CEO will not cause or allow conditions that are unfair, undignified, disorganized, unclear, or characterized by the non-uniform application of rules. The CEO will not

- 4.31 Leave employees without an effective and unbiased method to deal with grievances.
- 4.32 Subject employees to preferential treatment based on personal reasons.
- 4.33 Retaliate against any staff member for non-disruptive expression of dissent.
- 4.34 Allow employees to be unprepared to deal with emergency situations.

Employees have an effective and unbiased process to deal with grievances, and the human resources office does a good job in dealing with those issues and bringing them to the attention of the administration and the president. The director of HR is a permanent member of the President Staff's meetings to discuss personnel-related matters.

With regard to preferential treatment, if and when given on the positive side, is mostly due to hard work and commitment to the College that may result in advancement and higher

compensation. On the negative side, discipline is part of the process including written reprimand, unpaid leave, and dismissal in some cases.

With regard to expression of dissent, there is no retaliation against any employee for non-disruptive expression of dissent. After all, we are an institution of higher education with academic freedom of expression. People express their opinion freely so long as it is done professionally. Otherwise, they may be subject to disciplinary actions.

The Campus Emergency Response Team (CERT) has been meeting monthly, after every Cabinet meeting, to address potential risk factors and ways to address them. The team is made of 14 members from administration, deans, and directors. The Emergency Response Handbook has been finalized with updates as needed.

As a result of many crises or events over the past several years, several initiatives have been implemented or continue to be implemented including:

- 1. Working remotely and delivering courses and services online or in hybrid format.*
- 2. Implementing safety precautions related to social distancing during a pandemic*
- 3. Numbered all rooms in all buildings with external signage posted on windows for emergency access.*
- 4. Opening and closing of buildings automatically by locking and unlocking doors programmed to operate remotely and limiting entrance at specific time in the mornings and evenings.*
- 5. Camera surveillance at multiple locations.*
- 6. Text messaging to employees and students given the lack of speedy coordination on the part of OSU-Columbus, and while we will maintain the common messaging system with OSU-Mansfield (Buckeye Alert), we have been using our own "Regroup" platform to act independently as needed.*
- 7. We continue to meet with local law enforcement officials, and do training with OSU safety personnel, to update emergency and safety procedures as needed.*
- 8. Training, including mental health discussion and referral, are continually provided during college meetings, and faculty ask the students to watch the Run-Hide-Fight video.*

As far as disciplinary actions, when they take place, they are usually not due to preferential treatment and are mostly based on performance and job responsibilities. There is also an exit interview with every employee leaving the institution to gather ideas for improvement, and generally, albeit sometime with some reservation, they recommend the college as a place to work. Two areas of concern are firstly the need for higher compensation especially due to high inflation, and the strong competition especially from the private sector; and secondly the lack of advancement opportunities due to being a smaller organization. Past college reorganizations have been helpful to address the advancement concern or address challenging situations. As a result of the competitive higher education environment, due to demographic challenges and labor shortage with a strong economy, the College has reviewed its compensation structure two years ago, provided 4% raises to base salaries beyond stipends over the past two years, and adjusted the pay grades by 10% to both faculty and staff.

Furthermore, in terms of uniform application of rules, and unlike what happened at so many state and national institutions of higher education, we have done very well with our employees when considering the totality of the salary and benefits package:

- 1. As a result of our fiscal discipline, we did not have a layoff nor did we have a reduction in salaries (several colleges and universities across Ohio have either closed, laid-off employees, or closed satellite branches. Such activities have already taken place at Eastern Gateway, Lakeland, Sinclair, and Columbus State)*
- 2. In addition to the 4% raises and 10% adjustment in pay grades, we kept the employer/employee insurance contribution at 81% / 19% in order to attract new employees and keep good employees.*
- 3. College contribution towards retirement continues to be: 14% for STRS and SERS participants and 11.09% for Alternative Retirement Plan participants.*
- 4. College paid life insurance is generally twice the salary; and College paid long-term disability insurance at 60% of salary; in addition to 15 sick days per year.*
- 5. Two/three personal days (staff/faculty) per year; in addition to 12 holidays per year*
- 6. Continuing with the Council of Governance (COG) health plan in Stark County with medical, dental, and vision coverage with low deductible and low co-insurance. Although higher than normal, the health insurance increase remains in single digit (4.97% this year, 6.48% last year). Also, insurance provided one month of premium holiday (no payment by employees for one month), saving up to several hundred dollars per year for employees (\$216 for singles and \$526 for family), and around \$250,000 for the College.*
- 7. College closes for two weeks over the holidays at the end of the year, allowing employees more family time with pay.*
- 8. Continuing with the four 10-hour day summer schedule (from mid-May to end of July) to allow employees to enjoy 3-day weekends with their family and friends. This was also due to low number of students (15% to 20%) taking courses with most of them being online/hybrid, having multiple facilities projects requiring the attention of the facilities department, cutting down on gas and electrical utility costs, helping our employees reduce their cost of gas and the impact of inflation, and minimizing the mental health stress levels. Key buildings with labs (Health Sciences and Kehoe) are open several days per week to allow for in-person activities; and the Child Development Center is open all the time.*
- 9. We plan to continue the four 9-hour day schedule, and one half-day remote on Fridays during fall and spring semesters.*
- 10. Free tuition at the College for employee, spouse, and dependents*
- 11. Tuition reimbursement for courses taken outside the College for employees*
- 12. Continuing with the Earned-Time-Off for part-time faculty and staff based on their years of service.*

D. College/Community Update

1. ACCT Leadership Congress, Oct. 22-25, in New Orleans. We had two great sessions that were well attended.
 - Concurrent session: Transforming Lives Through Workforce and Community Partnerships
 - Carver Policy Governance joint session with Jackson College

2. National Center for Inquiry and Improvement – Rural guided pathway project, Oct. 29-Nov. 3, in Louisville
 - A good group of administrators and faculty participated
 - Major focus on student success post-graduation, including labor market assessment and wages
3. Multiple policies coming before the board per Senate Bill One including: Freedom of Speech, Faculty Workload, Review of General Education program. Another review that comes for the Ohio Department of Education every 3 years is the Efficiency report.
4. November 4: held a meeting on campus on the topic of childcare that included the United Way and many of the local childcare facilities including our own to decide on the need and direction forward. The conclusion is that we have some capacity for childcare in the community but not at the Step Up to Quality Centers. The main need is for employees with the proper credentials; paying employees sustainable living wages; and making childcare more affordable. The College is re-establishing the education and early childhood education programs.
5. November 5: attended the ribbon cutting for Avita new cancer wing in Ontario
6. AACC Board, Nov. 12-14: Chaired the commission on Public Relations Advocacy and Advancement that focused on the new report on “Resilient by Design, the Future of Community Colleges.” And as a member of the Audit and Finance Committee, we discussed the different categories of revenues and expenses and helped set the budget for next year.
7. Presented on the alignment between the national, state, and local/regional community colleges strategic planning to the Leadership Academy cohort and the Foundation Board.

VIII. REQUIRED APPROVALS AGENDA

CONSENT AGENDA

The Chair, Ms. Linda Nelson, presented the Consent Agenda and called for any items that should be removed from the consent agenda for further discussion. On a motion by Dr. Dwight McElfresh and seconded by Mr. Patrick Williams the question was called. Passing unanimously, the following items were approved:

A. Approval of Minutes for October 15, 2025 “Regular Meeting”

B. Consideration of Approval of Employment of College Personnel – R-2025-37

CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL OF

EMPLOYMENT OF COLLEGE PERSONNEL

R-2025-37

NEW HIRES

BE IT RESOLVED: by the Board of Trustees that the following faculty and staff members are hereby employed at the dates stipulated below:

BEGINNING November 4, 2025

*Lydia McCullough, Sr. Administrative Assistant, Academic and Student Services
Ashland University, bachelor's degree, Religion and Philosophy, Minor Ethics*

BEGINNING November 24, 2025

*Taryn Baldy, Infant/Toddler Lead Teacher, Child Development Center
Hocking College, Associate of Applied Science, Early Childhood Teacher Education*

BEGINNING December 8, 2025

*Mary Niedermier, Assistant Registrar
North Central State College, Associate of Applied Science, Office Administration and Digital Arts
DeVry University, bachelor's degree, Technical Management*

EXPLANATIONS OF NEW HIRES FOR RESOLUTIONS R-2025-37

Taryn Baldy is hired as Infant/Toddler Lead Teacher at the Child Development Center to replace Terri Shafer who is retiring December 2025.

Lydia McCullough is hired as Sr. Administrative Assistant, Academic and Student Services to replace Traci Lykins who is retiring December 2025.

Mary Niedermier is hired as Assistant Registrar to replace Chana Robinson who will be retiring in May 2026.

C. Consideration of Approval of College Personnel Professional Growth Recognition – R-2025-38

CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL OF COLLEGE PERSONNEL PROFESSIONAL GROWTH RECOGNITION

R-2025-38

Sara Woodruff has completed the Certified Nursing Educator Certification Program.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED: by the Board of Trustees that the appropriate monetary recognition is added to base salary effective November 24th in accordance with the policy adopted under resolution 1991-30 for "Professional Growth Recognition."

REGULAR AGENDA

A. CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL OF 2025 REPORT OF EFFICIENCY REVIEW AND IMPLEMENTATION PLANS FOR NORTH CENTRAL STATE COLLEGE – R-2024-42 – Dr. Dorey Diab/Ms. Lori McKee

CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL OF 2025 REPORT OF EFFICIENCY REVIEW AND IMPLEMENTATION PLANS FOR NORTH CENTRAL STATE COLLEGE

R-2025-39

WHEREAS: *In the early part of 2015, Gov. John R. Kasich created the Ohio Task Force on Affordability and Efficiency to make recommendations to Ohio's institutions of higher education based on three simultaneous principles,*

- 1) to be more efficient both in expense management and revenue generation*
- 2) while offering an education of equal or higher quality*
- 3) decreasing costs to students and their families, and*

WHEREAS: *In October 2015, the Task Force issued a report with ten recommendations to advise institutions on efficiency and academic practices which will improve both the quality of education and lower costs for students, and*

WHEREAS: *House Bill 49 (Section 381.550) requires each institution's board of trustees to complete an efficiency review, based on the Task Force's recommendations, and*

WHEREAS: *House Bill 49 (ORC 3333.951) requires colleges and universities to annually review best practices and shared services and include this review as part of the efficiency report, and*

WHEREAS: *House Bill 33 of the 135th General Assembly, (SECTION 381.700) requires that in each fiscal year, the board of trustees of each public institution of higher education shall approve the institution's efficiency report submitted to the Chancellor of Higher Education under section 3333.95 of the Revised Code.*

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED: *by the Board of Trustees that the following 2025 Report of Efficiency Review and Implementation Plans is hereby approved for submission to the Chancellor, Ohio Department of Higher Education as required.*

ACTION TAKEN: Patrick Williams moved for approval of resolution R-2025-39 Report of Efficiency Review and Implementation Plans for North Central State College. Mr. Steven Stone seconded the motion and following some brief discussion, the question was called and the item was approved with a unanimous vote.

B. Treasurer's Report for October 31, 2025 – Ms. Lori McKee

Ms. Lori McKee presented the Treasurer's Report for the period ending October 31, 2025. She stated that revenues for the month totaled \$1,031,838. Expenditures were \$1,380,898 leaving a deficit of \$349,060. Year-to-date revenues totaled \$10,570,309. Year-to-date expenditures totaled \$6,370,465 leaving an excess of \$4,199,844. The Month End Investment Balance for October 2025 was \$14,816,840 (\$3,274,724 in Star Ohio and \$11,542,116 in Park National Bank). Ms. McKee described the trends that are demonstrated by the Tracking of the Monthly Cash Flow feature as well as the dashboard indicators.

ACTION TAKEN: Ms. Elisabeth Morando moved for approval of the Treasurer's Report for the period ending October 31, 2025. Dr. Dwight McElfresh seconded the motion and following some brief discussion, the question was called and the item was approved with a unanimous vote.

C. CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL OF FREE SPEECH ON CAMPUS POLICY (12-04) AND PROCEDURE (12-041) – R-2025-36 – Dr. Dorey Diab/Ms. Lori McKee "Lifted from the Table"

CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL OF 12-04 FREE SPEECH ON CAMPUS POLICY & 12-041 FREE SPEECH ON CAMPUS COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

R-2025-36

WHEREAS, the Board of Trustees of North Central State College recognizes that free inquiry and expression are essential to the mission of a college; and

WHEREAS, the First Amendment of the United States Constitution and Article I, Section 11 of the Ohio Constitution protect the freedom of speech, writing, and expression; and

WHEREAS, the Ohio General Assembly has enacted ORC 3345.0215, which requires state-supported institutions of higher education to adopt policies that affirm the constitutional right to free speech and that do not suppress ideas that are thought to be offensive or wrong-headed; and

WHEREAS, the Ohio Department of Higher Education has provided standards for campus free speech, including the requirement of a procedure for reporting and reviewing alleged violations and prohibits retaliation against those who file complaints; and

WHEREAS, the college is committed to providing an environment where students and faculty can exchange ideas openly, without fear of censorship, as long as such expression does not rise to the level of incitement, true threats, defamation, or other unprotected speech; and

WHEREAS, the college has developed a Free Speech Policy and Procedure that are consistent with these principles and legal requirements.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF NORTH CENTRAL STATE COLLEGE:

1. *That the Board formally adopts the Free Speech on Campus Policy (12-04) and , Free Speech on Campus Complaint Procedure (12-041) attached hereto, as the official policy and procedure of North Central State College.*
2. *That the college shall implement the policy, including the establishment of procedures for the timely and fair review of complaints and a prohibition against retaliation, as required by Ohio law and the standards of the Ohio Department of Higher Education.*
3. *That the college administration is directed to communicate this policy and procedure to all students, faculty, and staff and to provide appropriate training and resources for its implementation and understanding.*

ACTION TAKEN: Ms. Elisabeth Morando moved for approval of resolution R-2025-36 Free Speech on Campus Policy and Procedure. Ms. Kristin Aspin seconded the motion and following some brief discussion, the question was called and the item was approved with a unanimous vote.

**D. CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL OF FACULTY WORKLOAD POLICY
(16-46) – R-2025-36 – Dr. Dorey Diab/Dr. Kelly Gray**

**CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL OF THE FACULTY WORKLOAD
POLICY (16-46) AS REQUIRED BY OHIO SENATE BILL 1**

R-2025-40

WHEREAS, *the Ohio General Assembly enacted Senate Bill 1, requiring all state institutions of higher education to adopt a faculty workload policy that includes specific requirements for instructional workloads, credit hour equivalents, and disciplinary actions; and*

WHEREAS, *the North Central State College Board of Trustees is committed to maintaining a fair and effective faculty workload policy that supports the institution's mission and instructional excellence; and*

WHEREAS, *the North Central State College Board of Trustees has developed a faculty workload policy in consultation with its faculty and in alignment with the standards and guidelines issued by the Ohio Department of Higher Education (ODHE).*

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, *that the North Central State College Board of Trustees hereby adopts the North Central State College Faculty Workload Policy (as attached to this resolution).*

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, *that this policy is effective immediately upon adoption and shall be implemented in accordance with the provisions of Ohio Revised Code 3345.45 and any other relevant laws and regulations.*

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the policy includes a clear definition of the baseline teaching workload in credit hours, methods for calculating justifiable credit hour equivalents for non-teaching duties such as research, service, and administration, and the specific administrative actions that may be taken for non-compliance, up to and including termination.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees directs the administration to submit this updated policy to the Ohio Department of Higher Education by the December 31, 2025, deadline and to review and update the policy every five years thereafter, or as otherwise required by law.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees delegates the authority to the President of North Central State College to approve any future revisions or amendments to this policy that are necessary to maintain compliance with state law and ODHE guidelines, and to oversee the policy's implementation and review processes.

Dr. Kelly Gray shared a recommendation that had come forward about adding clarification to paragraph (B)(1) that the credit hours of direct facilitation of learning was “per semester” and if approved, the policy should be amended accordingly.

ACTION TAKEN: Mr. Patrick Williams moved for approval of resolution R-2025-40 Faculty Workload Policy (16-46) as amended. Ms. Elisabeth Morando seconded the motion and the item was approved with a unanimous vote.

**E. CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL OF FACULTY ANNUAL
PERFORMANCE EVALUATION POLICY (16-34) – R-2025-41 – Dr. Dorey
Diab/Dr. Kelly Gray**

***CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL OF (16-34)
ANNUAL FACULTY PERFORMANCE EVALUATION POLICY***

R-2025-41

WHEREAS, pursuant to Ohio Revised Code §3345.452, each state institution of higher education is required to adopt a written faculty annual performance evaluation policy, including an appeals process, and submit a copy of the adopted policy to the Chancellor of Higher Education no later than December 31, 2025; and

WHEREAS, §3345.451 requires that each state institution establish a written system of faculty evaluations completed by students (focusing on teaching effectiveness and student learning) and a written system of peer evaluations for faculty (emphasizing professional development with respect to teaching responsibilities).

WHEREAS, the Board finds that adoption of a formal, transparent, and comprehensive evaluation policy will support faculty development, ensure accountability, and strengthen institutional quality.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Trustees of North Central State College hereby adopts (16-34) Faculty Annual Performance Evaluation Policy and associated forms as constituted in Article IX “Individual Contracts and Evaluation” of the Agreement between North Central State College and the chapter of the North Central State Faculty Association-American Association of University Professors (NCSFA-AAUP).

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the President (or designee) is authorized and directed to submit a copy of this resolution and the full policy to the Chancellor of Higher Education in compliance with statutory requirements.

ACTION TAKEN: Mr. Mark Masters moved for approval of resolution R-2025-41 Faculty Annual Performance Evaluation Policy (16-34). Dr. Dwight McElfresh seconded the motion, and the item was approved with a unanimous vote.

**F. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF GENERAL EDUCATION CURRICULUM
REVIEW – R-2025-42 – Dr. Dorey Diab/Dr. Kelly Gray**

***ACKNOWLEDGING COMPLETION OF THE REVIEW
OF THE GENERAL EDUCATION CURRICULUM***

R-2025-42

WHEREAS, Section 381.750 of Ohio House Bill 96 requires each board of trustees of a state institution of higher education to review and evaluate the components of its institution’s general education curriculum no later than December 31, 2025; and

WHEREAS, the Ohio General Assembly has directed this review to strengthen institutional accountability for curriculum quality, alignment with statewide expectations, and responsiveness to student and workforce needs; and

WHEREAS, the administration has completed its evaluation of the College’s general education curriculum, including learning outcomes, course requirements, assessment practices, and the degree to which the curriculum reflects the competencies identified by the State of Ohio; and

WHEREAS, the Academic Services leadership team, faculty, and curriculum committees have provided detailed findings and recommendations to inform this review by the Board of Trustees; and

WHEREAS, the Board has received, discussed, and evaluated the results of the College’s internal review as required under House Bill 96;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the North Central State College Board of Trustees formally acknowledges that it has completed the review and evaluation of the College’s general education curriculum in accordance with Section 381.750 of House Bill 96; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board authorizes the submission of this resolution and all supporting documentation to the Chancellor of the Ohio Department of Higher Education by the required deadline; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board affirms its continued commitment to maintaining a general education curriculum that supports student learning, transferability, career readiness, and the long-term educational and economic well-being of the region.

ACTION TAKEN: Ms. Kristin Aspin moved for approval of resolution R-2025-42 Acknowledgement of General Education Curriculum Review. Mr. Patrick Williams seconded the motion, and the item was approved with a unanimous vote.

IX. POLICY GOVERNANCE

A. Discussion of Agenda Planning – Ms. Linda Nelson

1. Review of Annual Calendar.

Board Chair, Ms. Linda Nelson reviewed the Annual Agenda for the upcoming months.

2. Review of Actionable Items.

Board Chair, Ms. Linda Nelson reviewed the listing of Actionable Items which Included:

a. Confirm all BOT ethics training requirements have been met for submission of Report of Completion to our Legal Counsel for reporting by Dec. 31st– This item was completed prior to the meeting.

b. Submit Efficiency Report for Board’s Review/Approval at December Meeting– This item was completed earlier in the agenda.

c. Lift Free Speech on Campus Policy Resolution from the Table for Review/Approval at December Meeting – This item was completed earlier in the agenda.

d. Chris Copper to send details about the Richland Gives event to Board members – This item was completed prior to the meeting.

e. Cory Monica to distribute the Tech Cred Workforce booklet to help employers with the sign-up process – This item was completed prior to the meeting.

f. Send recommendation for re-appointment of Ms. Kim Winkle to governor-appointed position to Office of Boards and Commissions (2nd submission) – This item to be completed on or after January 17, 2026

3. Community Connections.

Dr. Dwight McElfresh – Over the holidays, Ashland University experienced a significant challenge when an electrical fire broke out in one of its residence halls. The fire required the evacuation of all 172 students living in the building. Fortunately, no one was inside at the time, and there were no injuries, which was a major relief. The fire originated in the electrical panels and traveled through the wiring, causing extensive damage throughout the building. In addition to fire damage, the interior suffered substantial water and smoke damage, particularly on the third, fourth, and fifth floors. Many students lost most of their personal belongings. Emergency crews from three counties responded, and while the situation was serious, it could have been far worse. The residence hall will need to be fully renovated due to the extent of the damage. Thankfully, the university was able to relocate students quickly, in large part because another residence hall had already been vacated for planned renovations. The incident served as a stark reminder of how critical emergency preparedness and crisis planning are, even though it was a nightmare scenario for the campus community.

Ms. Elisabeth Morando – I continue to hear positive, unsolicited feedback about the nursing program from the community. Recently, while downtown in Mansfield, I struck up a casual conversation with a salon owner who proudly shared her daughter's career story. Her daughter began her nursing education at North Central State, later completed her BSN at Ohio Northern before that option was available locally, and is now working as a charge nurse. She is even considering advancing further to become a physician assistant. What stood out was how strongly the family credited North Central State as the starting point for her success and spoke very highly of the program. It was especially meaningful because this was completely unexpected feedback from someone I have known for years, reinforcing the program's strong reputation and lasting impact in the community.

Ms. Kristin Aspin – I had a conversation this morning in the office with an employee whose daughter is an LPN. She was gathering information about the college's LPN-to-RN program, which gave me the opportunity to share details about the pathway and the opportunities it provides. It was a positive and engaging conversation and a good reminder of how accessible these programs are for working professionals who want to continue advancing their careers.

Dr. Dwight McElfresh - I thought the recent news out of Columbus was telling. Ohio Wesleyan received an \$18 million donation to launch an engineering school, which really reflects where the state's priorities are right now. Dr. Dorey Diab added that Ohio is facing demographic challenges, and there is a strong push to attract and retain companies by building a workforce with STEM skills. That focus is shaping funding decisions across higher education. The state has increased State Share of Instruction support for STEM degrees, and the impact is noticeable. Out of Ohio's 22 community colleges, six received no STEM-related funding at all. We, by contrast, received an additional \$87,000, while larger institutions with extensive engineering and STEM programs received as much as \$500,000. Other universities are moving quickly in this direction as well, recognizing the same workforce pressures. This emphasis extends beyond colleges and universities to high schools, with a growing push for career pathways that prepare

students with job-ready skills before graduation. Since students are required to attend high school but not college, the goal is to ensure they can move directly into the workforce if they choose. Overall, this reflects a clear statewide strategy to address workforce shortages and align education more closely with employer needs.

Elisabeth Morando - At last week's foundation meeting, we heard a presentation from our new workforce lead, Cory Monica, and his enthusiasm for workforce development was clear and encouraging. His energy and focus give me confidence that we will continue moving in a positive direction and build on our current success. Dr. Dorey Diab added that as we expand workforce initiatives, especially on the non-credit side, a key challenge will be creating clearer pathways from non-credit training into credit programs, since credit enrollment remains essential to our long-term financial health. We also discussed recent workforce-related activities, including the career fair held at the Bucyrus Center for Student Success, which supported this broader effort to connect students and employers.

Chris Copper - We recently carried out an emergency workforce response at the Bucyrus campus after a local employer abruptly closed its doors, leaving a large number of employees, many just months from retirement, without jobs just before the holidays. In response, the college quickly organized a rapid response hiring fair that brought together 22 employers, including hospitals, manufacturers, and three staffing agencies. A total of 89 individuals signed in, and several employers made immediate hires. Avita, for example, hired three people on the spot and later sent a thoughtful note of appreciation. Employers also donated gift cards to support displaced workers. Interview rooms were set up so candidates could meet with employers that same day, and the turnaround from closure to response was remarkably fast. At the same time, staff worked closely with individuals who were interested in enrolling in programs at the college, helping them start classes and move onto new career pathways. The success of the event was the result of a true team effort, with many people pulling together under tight timelines. Given the circumstances and timing, the outcome was extraordinary and a powerful example of the college's ability to respond when the community needs it most.

C. Board Policy Governance Training (IAW 02.70) – Ms. Linda Nelson

1. Ms. Linda Nelson led the discussion of Rehearsal Scenario 5.11 “Where Does the Surplus Go?”

In this scenario: During a nonprofit organization's board meeting, a board member expresses concern that there are surplus funds at year-end. How should the board respond?

2. Policy Governance Policy Review (IAW 02.14) – training includes a continuing review, refresher, and reassessment of current Policy Governance policies. Mr. Patrick Williams led the discussion and review of Governance Process policies 4.6, 4.7, and 4.8. While the Board concurred that policies 4.6 and 4.8 are still relevant and accurate in their current form, there were questions about the \$25,000 ceiling in paragraph 4.73 and the

inclusion of the exception for compliance with “federal guidelines”. To that end, Ms. Lori McKee will look further into these aspects of policy 4.7 and will bring back to the Board for discussion at a time when the information can be appropriately confirmed.

X. BOARD CHAIRPERSON REPORT- *Ms. Linda Nelson*

A. Highlights from ACCT Leadership Congress (October 21-25, 2025)

Ms. Linda Nelson - I attended several sessions focused on AI, but one presentation stood out, even though there were very few in the room. It focused on higher education in Micronesia, a region in the Pacific near Hawaii that is made up of three main island groups: Palau, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Federated States of Micronesia. Travel between islands requires air transportation, which creates significant cost challenges, and reliable internet connectivity between campuses is still a work in progress.

The presenters explained that the region includes four primary languages, and no single leader is fluent in all of them. Instead, each island relies on designated individuals to help bridge communication gaps. Literacy rates across the islands range from only 30 to 40 percent, which adds another layer of difficulty to delivering education. When combined with geographic isolation, travel costs, and limited infrastructure, the challenges they face are substantial.

The islands have a complex history of occupation by several countries, including China, Japan, the United States, and Australia, and they have partnered at times with institutions such as Stanford University to support their educational goals. Listening to their experience was humbling and put our own challenges into perspective. The presenters closed by emphasizing that their future success depends on strong financial planning and, just as importantly, trust and collaboration among the islands.

Dr. Dwight McElfresh –shared that he appreciated the opportunity to attend the Jackson College presentation. It was engaging and informative, and I found it particularly interesting. I also thought the other presentation went very well overall. Both sessions were well attended and thoughtfully presented, reflecting strong preparation and collaboration. It was a solid showing and something the team should feel good about.

Mr. Steven Stone - While others were presenting, Patrick Williams and I attended a session on federal funding at Dorey’s request. The content was not entirely new, but it reinforced how closely grants are being monitored and how easily funding can be jeopardized by perceived violations. The message was clear: grants can be rescinded at any point, and the current environment is complex with many moving parts.

One of the most important takeaways was the emphasis on thoroughly reviewing all public-facing language, not just on the college website, but also across foundation materials, scholarship descriptions, and related content. The presenters shared an example of a grant application focused on soil diversity that was rejected solely because of the word “diversity,” with no consideration of context. This underscores the need for extreme vigilance.

Dr. Dorey Diab added that the concern is not only about being denied funding, but about having funds pulled back after a grant is already underway, which can create serious financial and operational challenges. This is especially relevant given that we are more than halfway through the Title III grant. We are grateful that funding has continued so far and that support for the TRIO grant remains in place, as it is critical to serving our highest-need students. Still, the session highlighted the importance of continuing caution and close attention to compliance moving forward.

Mr. Patrick Williams – I attended a session focused on data analysis and how institutions use data effectively, with Tri-C serving as one of the presenters. The session included members of their board and leadership team, which added valuable perspective on how the work is supported at the highest levels of the organization.

One moment that stood out was when a Tri-C leader shared how transformative it was once they began using data more intentionally to guide outreach and engagement. By applying data tools to better understand potential donors and community partners, they were able to strengthen relationships and significantly increase sponsorships and philanthropic support. The presentation highlighted how targeted, informed use of data can directly influence generosity and align community support with institutional priorities. I would be very interested in connecting with them to learn more about their approach.

Elisabeth Morando – I attended the Community College Lawyers Roundtable, as I regularly do, and the discussion topics were familiar since many remain highly relevant. The agenda included recurring issues such as college athletics—which doesn’t directly affect our institution—along with the ever-evolving landscape of First Amendment law and, increasingly, the influence of artificial intelligence.

One of the most interesting dynamics in the AI discussion was the clear divide among education law professionals. Some participants expressed enthusiasm about the potential of AI and the innovations it can bring, while others viewed it with concern, worried about ethical implications and loss of control. There was no consensus within the group, particularly regarding what constitutes the ethical use of AI in education. The field is changing rapidly, and with court interpretations still developing, it’s difficult to predict how certain issues will be resolved. For now, the general guidance is to proceed cautiously and conservatively when experimenting with AI tools.

A key takeaway from the sessions was the importance of establishing a clear institutional AI policy. One major concern raised involved the reliability of AI-generated content. Even when using tools like ChatGPT, it’s essential to verify the accuracy of information before publishing or sharing it to avoid potential missteps. On a personal note, my son, who works as a data analyst at CNG, uses AI daily and feels very comfortable with its capabilities—an interesting contrast to the uncertainty expressed by many in the legal field.

B. Highlights from OACC Governing Board Meeting (November 12, 2025)

Dr. Dwight McElfresh’s highlights of the meeting included:

- 1) The OACC Board recently met in Columbus and adopted a new strategic plan built around four main pillars:
 - a) Policy and advocacy
 - b) Student success and impact
 - c) Professional development and member engagement
 - d) Innovative solutions, including the use of AI
- 2) The new strategic plan aligns closely with the organization's mission and long-term direction, marking a positive step forward.
- 3) The OACC has established a Workforce Committee and invited Dorey to serve as a member.
 - a) Dorey confirmed willingness to participate and is awaiting confirmation from the committee.
- 4) The Board approved the financial report and successfully closed the year with a surplus.
 - a) Some funds were reinvested into organizational development initiatives.
- 5) A virtual meeting policy was approved, allowing the Board to hold meetings online as needed.
- 6) The All-Ohio Scholars Luncheon will return on April 23rd at the State House.
 - a) This marks the first time the event has been held before the COVID pandemic.
- 7) Jane Timken was introduced as the new Head of the Higher Education Committee in the House.
 - a) She brings a strong, practical leadership style and local connections to the role.
- 8) Dr. McElfresh announced promotion to Chair-Elect of the Board (a two-year role).
 - a) Currently he serves alongside Mr. Avi Zaffini, who is doing excellent work in strengthening trustee education and organizational commitment.

C. Highlights from OACC Annual Conference (November 13, 2025)

Dr. Dwight McElfresh began his report by noting that Mr. Stone gave an excellent presentation and participated in another valuable professional development opportunity. He and several others revisited the Policy Governance and Effective Leadership presentation originally offered a few years ago, which attracted about six or seven highly engaged attendees. The session focused on addressing common challenges that arise within boards and board culture, emphasizing how policy governance provides clear structure and accountability.

Dr. McElfresh commended the overall quality of the conference, highlighting a presentation by Josh Weiner from the Aspen Institute on “Community College 3.0.” This presentation underscored the importance of effectively using data to inform institutional decisions. He noted that Marsha Ballinger and Ryan McCall from Marion demonstrated how this data-driven approach positively impacted their campus, making the session particularly effective.

He also mentioned comments by Chancellor Duffy, who emphasized the responsibility of trustees in holding colleges accountable for their operations. The Chancellor referenced the recent financial crisis at Central State, suggesting that trustees could have taken actions to prevent the situation. Dr. McElfresh reflected that this perspective seemed somewhat unfair, as other indicators and sources should also have identified warning signs. Nevertheless, it served as a sobering reminder of how state leadership views the role of college trustees.

During the luncheon, Dr. McElfresh had the honor of presenting the Terry Thomas Friends of Community College Award to Tina Husted, the college's nominee. She attended with family, expressed deep appreciation for North Central State College, and was honored by the recognition. Several other impressive award recipients from the community college system were also acknowledged during the event.

Dr. McElfresh concluded by praising the conference as one of the best in recent years—well-organized, highly relevant to community colleges, and filled with positive energy. Although scheduling it close to the AACC conference and midweek posed challenges for attendance, it still drew a strong crowd of a few hundred participants. He extended appreciation to the college's representatives—specifically Dorey, Dwight, and Matt—for their outstanding contributions to the statewide organization, which strengthen both North Central State College's relationships and its reputation across the network. He also expressed gratitude to Avi for his leadership in keeping participants engaged and for fostering a strong, collaborative board culture.

D. ACCT National Legislative Summit (February 8-11, Washington, D.C.)

Dr. Dorey Diab discussed the upcoming ACCT National Legislative Summit scheduled for February 8–11. He noted that the college has previously sent a group to attend and asked whether there is interest in participating again this year. Currently, the administration is waiting for guidance from AACC and ACCT before making a final decision, given the uncertainty and rapid changes occurring at the federal level. Dr. Diab emphasized the importance of assessing whether the college can have an influence on forthcoming developments before committing to attend.

He mentioned that much of the U.S. Department of Education's authority has already been transferred to the Department of Labor, and while the Department of Education cannot be fully dissolved without congressional action, there appears to be an effort to strip it of most decision-making responsibilities. The college's leadership intends to monitor these shifts closely and decide on participation in the summit once more information becomes available.

If attendance is warranted, Dr. Diab suggested that he, along with Elizabeth, Dwight, and perhaps a student, participate as they have prior experience and established relationships that can help achieve the college's objectives. Others are welcome to join if interested.

Chair Nelson expressed strong concern about recent efforts to declassify nursing and education as professional fields, which would eliminate federal funding for individuals pursuing degrees in these areas. She described this move as illogical and reflective of a broader cultural shift rather than sound policy.

E. Trustee Training Guidelines beginning 2026

The group discussed updates related to trustee training requirements and recent developments communicated by email. Some of the highlighted areas in the correspondence tied back to topics covered during the statewide trustee conference held in October. The statewide annual conferences continue to address many of these core areas, though there remains some uncertainty about what trustees who missed that event would need to do to stay in compliance.

One idea proposed was to follow a model similar to ethics training, where—if the state does not coordinate specific sessions—local trustees could host their own group training to complete requirements together. This approach would help maintain compliance without waiting for state-led options. The conversation also touched on the depth and variety of sessions at the OACC conference, acknowledging that it would be difficult to replicate the same content locally. There are ongoing plans to streamline future trustee training. The goal, according to preliminary communication, is to consolidate overlapping topics—such as ethics and other governance areas—so trustees will only need to complete one integrated session rather than multiple stand-alone trainings. The aim is to make the process less time-consuming and more manageable, addressing concerns that the previous multi-hour conference format felt overwhelming. However, some trustees have expressed frustration with reports that a few have considered stepping down rather than meeting what they perceive as excessive or redundant requirements. There was concern raised about duplicating training already covered in existing board policies, particularly regarding the defined roles of committees and governance procedures. Finally, the discussion acknowledged a broader cultural and political context influencing these changes. Some participants viewed the expanded trustee training as part of a state-level effort to shift governance culture and assert more oversight of higher education leadership. The group agreed that maintaining a balanced, moderate approach—consistent with the shared responsibility for public resources—would best serve the institution moving forward.

XI. MEETING EVALUATION (IAW 02.16) – Ms. Linda Nelson

Board Chair, Ms. Linda Nelson called for a discussion on tonight's meeting evaluation. Trustees commented that they enjoyed and appreciated the decorations for the holiday event and conveyed their deep appreciation for the festive nature of the meeting. Kudos for another great Auditor's Report as they congratulated Ms. Lori McKee and her staff. This was another great report on behalf of the OSU-M Advisory Board.

XII. TIME AND PLACE OF NEXT MEETING


The next Regular meeting of the Board of Trustees is scheduled for Wednesday, January 21, 2025 at 5:30 p.m. in the Gorman Room (Board of Trustees Meeting Room – 165 – Fallerius).

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

The Chair called for any additional business or information items.

ACTION TAKEN: As there was no further business or information items, the Board Chair, Ms. Linda Nelson declared the meeting adjourned at 7:32 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:


Mr. Stephen R. Williams, Board Secretary


Ms. Linda S. M. Nelson, Board Chair