

**North Central State College
Board of Trustees' Meeting
February 25, 2026**

I. CALL TO ORDER

This meeting was held in a hybrid format with some participants attending in-person in the Board Room (165-Fallerius) and others online via Zoom. Trustee participation was six in person and one online.

As Board Chair, Ms. Linda Nelson was participating in this meeting virtually and Vice Chair, Mr. Mark Masters was going to be absent, Dr. Dwight McElfresh served in the role of Acting Chair for tonight's meeting at the request of Ms. Nelson.

Acting Chair, Dr. Dwight McElfresh called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. and asked all to rise and join him in reciting the pledge of allegiance followed by the Global ENDS Policy for North Central State College.

II. ROLL CALL

The Secretary, Mr. Stephen Williams, called the roll.

Present:

Ms. Kristin Aspin
Dr. Dwight McElfresh
Ms. Elisabeth Morando
Ms. Linda Nelson (online)
Mr. Steven Stone
Mr. Patrick Williams
Ms. Kimberly Winkle

Absent:

Mr. Mark Masters
Ms. Duana Patton

III. INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

President Diab introduced: Dr. Kelly Gray, Vice President of Academic and Student Services; Ms. Lori McKee, Vice President of Business Services; Mr. Tom Prendergast, Executive Director for Strategic and Institutional Transformation; and Ms. Christine Copper, Vice President for Development and the College Foundation (online). Mr. Justin Beeman, representing the Staff Caucus, was also present (online).

IV. FOCUS OF THE MEETING – *Dr. Dwight McElfresh*

Dr. Dwight McElfresh explained that the focus of the meeting tonight is to approve the 2025-2026 Operating Budget Amendment. We are going to honor an exceptional employee and conduct the routine business of the Board.

V. **OSU-MANSFIELD ADVISORY BOARD REPORT** – *Dr. Dwight McElfresh*

Acting Board Chair, Dr. Dwight McElfresh announced that the next OSU-M Advisory Board meeting is scheduled for March 19, 2026, and called for everyone to check their calendars to see who might be available to represent the NCSC BOT at their meeting. Mr. Patrick Williams indicated that he thought he could attend but would need to confirm and will get back with the Board Secretary once confirmed.

VI. **PRESIDENT’S REPORT** – *Dr. Dorey Diab*

A. **Student Organizations Update**

Psi Beta – Psychology Fraternity

- Psi Beta - Outreach to potential new members by sharing information about Psi Beta with students in First Year Experience classes who are exploring campus involvement opportunities, as well as students who have declared psychology as their major, especially students who have not previously received information about Psi Beta.
- They are planning to hold an in-person meeting after spring break once they have a better sense of student availability with their session B classes.

Phi Theta Kappa Update:

- PTK is growing with members, and the group has been reaching out to partner with other organizations. Also, the group is currently planning their community service initiative for the semester.

Honors College Update:

- For spring semester, the Honors College has 20 students registered with 22 research projects representing all academic disciplines across the institution. 17 faculty are participating as mentors.
- The first Honors College colloquium will be on Wednesday, February 25, 5-6:00 p.m. in room 164 Fallerius. Rachel Matz, BBB Business Engagement Specialist, will present an informative session titled “**Trust Issues, the Role of BBB in Small Businesses – Because ‘Trust Me’ Isn’t Enough**”.

The event is open to all students, faculty, staff and community members.

The Honors College is proud to recognize the following Honors College Outstanding Faculty:

SP2025

Linda Worley is an adjunct faculty member for the HS division and has mentored 19 student projects.

FA2025

Dave Koepke is a full-time faculty member for the EBC division and has mentored 9 student projects.

B. Foundation Update

President, Dr. Dorey Diab introduced Ms. Chris Copper to deliver the Foundation update. Ms. Copper provided the following report:

Foundation-Emerald Club - Major Gifts

\$430,756 received, additional \$86,900 in asks made and outstanding, with invoicing of \$35,000 outstanding and in process.

Annual Scholarship application month is in process, with it starting Feb 1 and concluding March 1.

Hall of Excellence honorees have accepted and begun the process for marketing the event.

Rentals income FY26 \$39,611; FY27 \$3,475.00. Beginning to book for FY28 and FY29

Income generated other than Rentals FY26 \$35,416.

Foundation nursing program students covered in Spring 26:

- PN 14
- RN 20
- BSN 8

Non-Credit Workforce

- AC/DC Technical Training at the Crawford Success Center has been completed, with 9 students successfully completing the course.
- Drone/UAS Community Cohort launched this week with 5 enrolled students, reflecting steady community interest and continued recruitment.
- TurboCert programming is now underway at the Crawford Success Center, including 5G, Drone, FANUC, and NIMS training pathways.
- Continued employer engagement around apprenticeships, with active meetings underway to streamline and expedite the apprenticeship process for partner companies.

- Workforce Development is concurrently working with employers to design customized workforce training classes aligned with apprenticeship and upskilling needs.
- Ongoing coordination and planning focused on expanding early 2026 training opportunities, apprenticeships, and strengthening employer partnerships.

Crawford Success Center

- **Recruiting** –Hosting financial aid night on February 5 in collaboration with NCSC and community partners, scheduled February visits in Crawford to solidify NCSC applicants and encourage NCSC Foundation Scholarship month.
- **Scholarships for Success:** Finalizing auction items, coordinating with table sponsors, and beginning preparation for the program.
- **TurboCert:** Launch was smooth on Friday January 9, 2026, and plans are in motion for fall 2025.

C. Monitoring Report: Executive Limitations Policy – Financial Planning/Budgeting (04-50)

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

FINANCIAL PLANNING/BUDGETING (EXECUTIVE LIMITATIONS) Policy No. 3357:13-04-50

Financial planning for any fiscal year or the remaining part of any fiscal year will not deviate materially from board’s Ends priorities, risk fiscal jeopardy, or fail to be derived from a multi-year plan.

The CEO will not allow budgeting that:

- 4.51 Risks incurring those situations or conditions described as unacceptable in the board policy “Financial Condition and Activities.”
- 4.52 Omits credible projection of revenues and expenses, separation of capital and operational items, cash flow, and disclosure of planning assumptions.
- 4.53 Provides less for board prerogatives during the year than is set forth in the Cost of Governance policy.
- 4.54 Does not incorporate between one and five percent in budget contingency.

The President and the CFO continue to provide the Board with monthly budget revenues, expenses, and projections based on the state and Government Accounting Standards Board (GASB) required principles. Monthly comparison between last year and current year, year-to-date comparison, and monthly cash flow that are presented at every board meeting for approval, provide the Board with a clear snapshot of how finances are tracking. We also have had clean financial audits.

We continue to have 1% to 5% budget contingency, to be conservative in allowing for unforeseen circumstances.

We continue to balance the budget, and we are expecting to do the same for the coming year. Not only did we not withdraw from the reserve for operation purposes, but we were also able to increase the reserve to 105% in FY25, which is the highest among all 23 community colleges, and exceeding the minimum reserve goal of 10% as

recommended by the state (OACC 23 community colleges average was 71%). The monthly cash-on-hand was \$25M in December 2025, that is 16 times the average cash needed per month (~\$1.56M). The total was \$24.4M in December 2024.

We had too many real and close calls events over the years that justified having a healthy reserve to provide more financial stability and mitigate risk. Such events included: the pandemic; enrollment decline in double digits; deferred maintenance breakdown of boilers and chillers; water damage from leaking rooks or broken pipes, frequent cyber security attacks which happened several times, and thankfully unsuccessful, not to mention that they are happening nationally including to the federal government; and most importantly minimizing the potential negative impact on employees' salaries and benefits.

Our fiscal viability remains strong as we have also maintained the Ohio Department of Higher Education composite score ratio above 4.0. The ratio continues to be much higher than 2.25 set by board policy.

The college has provided the necessary financial support for all the board activities and professional development and is looking forward to doing the same for the coming year.

Moving forward, we don't expect to add to the reserve as we have done in the past for multiple reasons:

- 1. The state legislature is not in favor of having too much cash in the reserve in order for colleges to use their own savings and not be as dependent on state support.*
- 2. The state no longer allows the colleges to charge and save student fees over a period of time to update equipment that are getting much more technological and expensive yet badly needed in labs. As a result, the College will use its own budget for that purpose.*
- 3. The cost of the renovation of the Fallerius Building and the cost of the needed furniture are going to be over budget.*
- 4. The administration would like to continue to compensate our people and maintain a strong benefit package to keep and attract capable individuals in a very competitive environment with declining demographics.*
- 5. The availability of federal grants is getting much more challenging due to uncertainty, cost reduction, consolidation, and government personnel reductions (Department of Education, Department of Labor, National Science Foundation...), with the process getting much more competitive.*

D. College Updates / Other

College Update

- 1. The week of January 26 was the start of our direct engagement with the grant we received from the Gates Foundation and Achieving the Dream to elevate our Digital Holistic Student Support (DHSS) and integrate our Student Information System (SIS) with our Student Course System (Canvas), and Customer Relationship Management (CRM). The ultimate objective is to have these networks connect with one another and utilize Artificial Intelligence to analyze the data and gain additional insight to enhance student success.**
- 2. Dr. Andrew Shella, Dean of Engineering, Business, and Criminal Justice, and I attended and presented at the American Association of Community Colleges Workforce Development Institute (AACC-WDI) in New Orleans, Louisiana, held January 27-30.**
- 3. On February 4, we started the interview process for the Executive Director of the College Foundation with five candidates, two internal, and three external.**
- 4. This year, we are starting a new process of strategic planning called "Compass Strategy" that has begun in earnest (February 3, 2026) to focus on our true north for accomplishing our mission of student access and success while**

utilizing Artificial Intelligence capabilities. We have designed a college wide prompt to scrub the strategic plan using more than 30 documents (internal to the College, OACC and statewide, and AACC/national), and different AI platforms (ChatGPT / OpenAI, Co-Pilot, Gemini, Perplexity, Claude, Grok, Network LM...), while keeping the main goals of access, success, and resources the same as they were derived from Board End Policy. No one person can possibly assemble and comprehend simultaneously all the documents listed below and do a critical analysis to arrive at the requested outcome.

- a. Documents to attach to the AI prompt include: the college strategic plan, the national AACC Resilient by Design report, Achieving the Dream (ATD) ICAT Survey and employee feedback, landscape factors impacting higher education, ATD Leah Myers Austin Report, ATD Adult Student Project with Dr. Dones' recommendations, Ohio Department of Higher Education Senate Bill 6 Scores, Rural Guided Pathways project, State Student Support for Instruction funding data, Campus Climate Survey, Program Cost Analysis over five years, latest Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), last year's strategic plan Key Performance Indicator's data, Workforce brochure, the six-year capital plan, the Community College Student Engagement survey, Higher Learning Commission requirements, last Trellis survey on student needs, among others.
 - b. The findings will be presented to Cabinet and strategic planning team (over 30 members)
 - c. These presentations/discussions will continue during the months of February, March, April and May in preparation for our strategic planning / Compass Strategy meetings on June 2, 3, and 11.
 - d. Based on the scrubbing outcomes of the strategic plan and documents, the whole strategic planning team (Compass Strategy Forum) will be divided into two groups to brainstorm two separate scenarios also using AI:
 - i. Scenario 1: The sky is the limit in fulfilling the mission of access and success, with all needed resources available
 - ii. Scenario 2: The sky is falling with drop in enrollment and student completion, and decrease in human and financial resources
 - iii. The two teams will switch and brainstorm each other's scenario, before they come back together, and decide on the future Compass Strategy (our True North)
5. The Engineering, Business, and Criminal Justice division held a graduation ceremony for the Ohio Peace Officer Training Academy (OPOTA) on February 6, with 15 students graduating, and many police departments and families participating.
 6. On February 9 and 10, trustees Morando and McElfresh, and President Diab attended the ACCT National Legislative Summit in support of OACC with their visits to Senators Husted and Moreno, and congressman Rulli.
 7. More than 20 people participated in the OACC Student Success Leadership Institute on February 24 and 25.

VII. REQUIRED APPROVALS AGENDA - *Dr. Dwight McElfresh*

CONSENT AGENDA

The Acting Chair, Dr. Dwight McElfresh, presented the Consent Agenda and called for any items that should be removed from the Consent Agenda for further discussion. On a motion by Mr.

Patrick Williams and seconded by Ms. Elisabeth Morando and passing unanimously, the following items were approved.

A. Approval of Minutes for January 21, 2026 “Regular Meeting”

B. Consideration of Approval of Status Change – R-2026-04

**CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL OF
STATUS CHANGES**

R-2026-04

STATUS CHANGE

BE IT RESOLVED: *by the Board of Trustees that the following staff members are hereby awarded the following status change:*

BEGINNING February 9, 2026

Leah Bisel

- *Leah Bisel is moving from Manager, Development and Special Events to Manager, Foundation Development and Workforce Contract Training.*

C. Consideration of Approval of Employment of College Personnel – R-2026-05

**CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL OF
EMPLOYMENT OF COLLEGE PERSONNEL**

R-2026-05

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 February 23, 2026

Amy Borders, Full-Time Custodian at the Kehoe Center.

EXPLANATIONS OF NEW HIRES FOR RESOLUTIONS R-2026-05

Amy Borders is hired as full-time Custodian to replace Karen Minnear.

REGULAR AGENDA

A. Treasurer’s Report for January 31, 2026 – Ms. Lori McKee

Ms. Lori McKee presented the Treasurer’s Report for the period ending January 31, 2026. She stated that revenues for the month totaled \$1,611,167. Expenditures were \$1,770,952 leaving a

deficit of \$159,785. Year-to-date revenues totaled \$19,038,003. Year-to-date expenditures totaled \$10,591,747 leaving an excess of \$8,446,256. The Month End Investment Balance for January 2026 was \$14,951,500 (\$3,307,652 in Star Ohio and \$11,643,848 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. Kimberly Winkle moved for approval of the Treasurer’s Report for the period ending January 31, 2026. Ms. Kristin Aspin seconded the motion, and the item was approved with a unanimous vote.

B. Consideration of Approval of 2025-2026 Operating Budget Amendment #1 – R-2026-06

– Ms. Lori McKee

**CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL OF 2025-2026
OPERATING BUDGET AMENDMENT #1**

R-2026-06

WHEREAS: *North Central State College has reviewed its 2025-2026 Operating Budget revenue and expenditure projections, and*

WHEREAS: *based upon this review, North Central State College needs to amend its 2025-2026 Operating Budget, and*

WHEREAS: *the Board of Trustees of North Central State College has reviewed the income and expense portion of the 2025-2026 Operating Budget Amendment #1, and*

WHEREAS: *the Board of Trustees approves the income and allocation of payroll and non-payroll expenditures of this budget amendment.*

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED: *by the Board of Trustees that the 2025-2026 Operating Budget Amendment #1 of the College is hereby adopted as presented.*

**NORTH CENTRAL STATE COLLEGE
FY26 Budget Development Summary Worksheet**

	Proposed FY 2026	Amended FY2026
<u>Revenues:</u>		
State Appropriations	10,152,053	10,086,182
Student Tuition and Fees	11,253,407	11,353,382
Other Revenues	638,200	638,200
University Center		
Capital Debt Service	40,000	40,000
Child Development Center	667,964	719,217
Workforce & Community Dev.	337,615	337,615
Facilities	48,972	48,972
Total Revenues	23,138,211	23,223,568
 <u>Expenditures:</u>		
Payroll (excludes CDC/Workforce/Facilities)	8,921,141	8,829,175
Fringes (excludes CDC/Workforce/Facilities)	4,348,073	4,155,588
Printing	31,350	31,350
Advertising	158,000	158,000
Postage	50,000	50,000
Shared Campus Expense	1,100,000	1,100,000
Professional Development	373,872	373,872
Grants and Scholarships	2,200,000	2,200,000
Equipment Lease and Rental	104,200	104,200
New Equipment	328,177	688,926
Professional Fees	353,022	353,022
All Other Expenses	2,840,436	2,840,436
Child Development Center	721,586	719,217
Corporate	203,875	224,438
Facilities	1,354,479	1,345,344
Contingency		
Total Expenditures	23,088,211	23,173,568
	50,000	50,000
 Total Payroll and Benefits	 14,861,864 0.64	 14,586,472 0.63

ACTION TAKEN: Mr. Patrick Williams moved for approval of resolution R-2026-06 2025-2026 Operating Budget Amendment #1. Mr. Steven Stone seconded the motion, and the item was approved with a unanimous vote.

C. Consideration of Approval of a Resolution in Recognition of Exceptional Service to the College – R-2026-06 – Dr. Dwight McElfresh

**RESOLUTION IN RECOGNITION
OF EXCEPTIONAL SERVICE TO THE COLLEGE
CHRISTINE L. COPPER**

R-2026-07

WHEREAS, Ms. Christine L. Copper has served North Central State College with distinction as Vice President of Development, College Foundation and Government Relations, providing exemplary leadership, vision, and commitment to advancing the mission of the College; and

WHEREAS, throughout her tenure, Ms. Copper demonstrated unwavering dedication to strengthening institutional development, cultivating meaningful relationships with donors, alumni, community partners, and public officials, and elevating the visibility and reputation of the College locally, regionally, and statewide; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Copper played a pivotal role in stewarding the College Foundation, promoting philanthropic investment in student success, academic excellence, and campus growth, and ensuring that private support aligned with the College's strategic priorities and community needs; and

WHEREAS, through her leadership in government relations, Ms. Copper effectively advocated for the interests of the College, fostering constructive partnerships with elected officials and public agencies, and contributing to a strong foundation of trust and credibility in support of public higher education; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Copper's work has had a lasting impact on students by expanding access to scholarships, enhancing educational opportunities, and supporting initiatives that remove barriers to completion and workforce readiness; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Copper has exemplified professionalism, integrity, and collegiality, earning the respect and admiration of the College Board of Trustees, the Foundation Board, College leadership, faculty, staff, donors, and community stakeholders;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees of North Central State College hereby commends Ms. Christine Copper for her exceptional service and outstanding contributions to the College; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees expresses its sincere appreciation for Ms. Copper's leadership, dedication, and lasting legacy, and extends its best wishes for continued success, fulfillment, and good health in her well-earned retirement.

ACTION TAKEN: Ms. Linda Nelson moved for approval of resolution R-2026-07 Resolution in Recognition of Exceptional Service to the College. Mr. Patrick Williams seconded the motion, and the item was approved with a unanimous vote.

VIII. POLICY GOVERNANCE

A. Discussion of Agenda Planning – Dr. Dwight McElfresh

1. 2025-2026 Annual Calendar/Agenda

Acting Board Chair, Dr. Dwight McElfresh called for a preview of the 2025-2026 Annual Calendar/Agenda for the upcoming months of March, April, and May 2026.

2. Review of Actionable Items.

Acting Board Chair, Dr. Dwight McElfresh reviewed the listing of Actionable Items which included:

- a. Revise Asset Protection Policy (04-70): 1) 04-73 increase to \$50K 2) amend to include “except as required by federal guidelines”.– This item was deferred until it is ready to be presented at a future meeting.

3. Community Connections.

Ms. Linda Nelson – Shared A recent webinar hosted by the Association of Community College Trustees that highlighted collaborative efforts among Sinclair Community College in Dayton, Ohio; College of Menominee Nation in Keshena, Wisconsin; and Brightpoint Community College in Chester, Virginia. The institutions shared strategies for improving belonging, well-being, and academic success among students who are parents returning to college.

A central finding across all three colleges was the importance of creating a strong sense of belonging. Parenting students reported greater persistence when they felt supported by the institution, experienced reduced isolation, and viewed their children as a motivating factor for completing their education. Addressing basic needs was also identified as critical, as some parenting students face financial challenges related to housing, childcare, and other living expenses.

The discussion noted that the average age of parenting students participating in these initiatives was approximately 36, representing diverse racial backgrounds. Most participants had children around eight years old, and while both mothers and fathers were represented, mothers made up the majority. Participants also reflected a range of family situations, including married individuals and those in committed relationships.

Across participating colleges, a consistent conclusion emerged: institutions that intentionally design services and outreach for parenting students are better positioned to support their persistence and academic success. This work underscores the growing importance of recognizing parenting students as a distinct population within community colleges and ensuring they have access to supportive resources and a welcoming campus environment.

Ms. Kristin Aspin - Reported a community connection that highlighted the long-term impact of a North Central State College education through a recent outreach from grandparents of a 2025 graduate. The family contacted local community members in Ashland and Richland counties seeking a summer internship for their granddaughter, who completed an Associate degree in Business Administration at North Central State and is now pursuing a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration and Economics at Bowling

Green State University, with anticipated graduation in 2027. Their message emphasized the strong educational foundation she received at the College and reflected the continuing role the institution plays in preparing students for successful transfer and career advancement.

Additionally, a meeting was held with representatives from Jobs for Ohio's Graduates, a nonprofit organization working with individuals ages 16–24 to develop workforce readiness skills. The organization, which operates in several Ohio counties and is expanding its presence in Ashland County, focuses on supporting underserved and disadvantaged youth, including those referred through Job and Family Services and individuals transitioning from foster care through programs such as Bridges. Their services address barriers such as transportation, childcare, food insecurity, and housing while helping participants complete high school and prepare for employment.

During the discussion, information was shared about North Central State College programs and workforce development opportunities. The organization expressed interest in exploring partnerships that could connect participants with educational and career pathways at the College, potentially strengthening regional workforce development efforts and expanding opportunities for students facing significant barriers to success.

Ms. Kimberly Winkle – During a recent accreditation review at the hospital conducted by DNV Healthcare, surveyors visited clinical areas and spoke with staff members about their professional backgrounds and training. One discussion highlighted the career progression of a healthcare employee whose education was supported through a partnership with North Central State College.

The employee began her career as a medical assistant before enrolling in North Central State's nursing pathway. With support from the College's foundation and employer matching funds, she advanced through multiple credential levels, first earning her Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) credential and later completing the Registered Nurse (RN) program. She now serves on the nursing floor as a registered nurse.

Her story illustrated a clear example of how educational access, employer collaboration, and financial support can create meaningful career advancement opportunities within the healthcare workforce. The example was shared with surveyors as evidence of successful workforce development and the positive impact of North Central State College's nursing programs in preparing individuals to grow professionally while meeting regional healthcare staffing needs.

Ms. Elisabeth Morando – shared that a community inquiry was received from a board member of Discovery School regarding opportunities for teacher credentialing. As a private school, some members of the teaching staff are not currently certified; however, school leadership is exploring pathways that would enable educators to obtain appropriate credentials.

To explore potential options, the inquiry was connected with workforce development leadership at North Central State College. The intent is to determine whether existing programs, training opportunities, or partnerships could support teachers in pursuing certification or related professional development.

This connection may present an opportunity for the College to provide guidance on credential pathways and strengthen relationships with regional educational partners seeking to expand the qualifications and professional growth of their instructional staff.

Dr. Dwight McElfresh – shared that he had recently attended a dual enrollment information session at a local high school where multiple colleges presented program opportunities to students and families. The session included presentations from institutions such as The Ohio State University, Ashland University, Bowling Green State University, and North Central State College. Feedback from a parent indicated that the number of presentations and program options created confusion for families trying to understand the differences among institutions.

The conversation highlighted the importance of clearly distinguishing the value of North Central State College’s offerings during these events. Key differentiators discussed included the accessibility and affordability of the College Credit Plus pathway, the ability for students to continue seamlessly into programs such as Solution 3 transfer pathway, and the option to transfer earned credits toward a future bachelor’s degree. The College’s strong local presence was also noted as an advantage, enabling students and families to more easily access support services such as advising, registration assistance, and financial aid. **Ms. Elisabeth Morando** shared an additional perspective that emphasized the practical benefits of proximity. Experiences with programs delivered through more distant institutions were noted to create logistical challenges for families when issues arose with registration, course materials, or student support. In contrast, the local availability of North Central State College programs allows families to more easily access assistance and maintain a closer connection to the institution. This accessibility was identified as an important factor for parents evaluating dual enrollment opportunities for their students.

Dr. Dorey Diab – shared that a discussion was held regarding potential engagement with the Richland Area Chamber & Economic Development as part of the Board’s ongoing community connection efforts. Options under consideration include attending a Chamber board meeting at its downtown location or inviting Chamber leadership to present to the Board about current initiatives and community activities. Either format would provide an opportunity for trustees to learn more about the organization’s work and strengthen the College’s connection to regional economic and community development efforts. Planning for this engagement is tentatively targeted for April.

During the discussion, it was also noted that North Central State College maintains memberships in multiple local chambers of commerce across the region. These memberships provide trustees with opportunities to attend chamber events and activities as representatives of the College, further strengthening community engagement and awareness of regional priorities. Additionally, solicitation for the president’s participation in a community strategic planning steering committee was mentioned as another avenue for strengthening collaboration between the College and local leadership.

C. Board Policy Governance Training (IAW 02.70) – *Dr. Dwight McElfresh*

1. Mr. Patrick Williams led the discussion of Rehearsal Scenario 5.5 “Why Are We Spending So Much Time Talking About This?”

In this scenario: Certain board members are becoming frustrated by the fact that not enough board meeting time is being devoted to ends. What should they do?

2. Policy Governance Policy Review (IAW 02.14) – training includes a continuing review, refresher, and reassessment of current Policy Governance policies. Ms. Kristin Aspin led the

discussion and review of Governance Process policies 2.0, 2.1, & 2.2. The Board concurred that all policies are all still relevant and still accurate.

IX. BOARD CHAIRPERSON REPORT- *Dr. Dwight McElfresh*

A. OACC Professional Development & Strategic Plan

Dr. Dwight McElfresh shared a report highlighting the strategic priorities and statewide impact of the Ohio Association of Community Colleges. The organization recently updated its strategic plan around four primary pillars: policy and advocacy, student workforce success, professional development, and innovative solutions. Through coordinated advocacy efforts, including a joint visit to Washington, D.C., community colleges across Ohio aligned their messaging to strengthen federal engagement and highlight the role of two-year institutions in workforce development. The report also emphasized statewide data demonstrating the significant workforce role of community colleges, particularly in high-demand sectors such as healthcare and manufacturing. Statewide statistics show that approximately 74 percent of community college students are employed while pursuing their education, with more than half working full time. These figures underscore the importance of flexible academic pathways and workforce-aligned programming. Additional discussion noted that the organization also prioritizes professional development opportunities for trustees and institutional leaders, particularly in response to evolving legislative and policy environments. The group regularly collaborates with member institutions to provide resources, data, and coordinated support that advance community college priorities across Ohio. Trustees were encouraged to review the informational materials provided, which summarize statewide impact and the strategic role of the association in supporting community colleges.

B. 2026 ACCT Leadership Congress Call for Presentation Proposals

Dr. Dwight McElfresh announced that the window for submitting presentation proposals for the 2026 ACCT Leadership Congress is now open. The conference theme is “Driving Change where Vision Meets Compassion.” The tracks are: 1. Leading with Care, 2. Wellness, and institutional Culture, 3. Strategic AI in community colleges, 4. Collaborative work, solutions for workforce, 5. Enrollment strategies, creating inclusive student-centered pathways, 6. Effective Board Governance. Dr. McElfresh encouraged trustees to reflect on these topics and let him know about areas they think the board needs to promote. Discussion centered around the presentation on Effective Board Governance that was submitted last year but not selected and perhaps another presentation that includes AI.

C. Financial Disclosure Statement Filing Deadline is May 15, 2026

Dr. Dwight McElfresh reminded Trustees that financial disclosure statements are due soon. Trustees should take whatever action they need to ensure that they are filed by the deadline date.

D. Highlights from ACCT National Legislative Summit (February 9-10)

Ms. Elisabeth Morando shared that Trustees and college representatives participated in the National Legislative Summit in Washington, D.C., an advocacy event coordinated through the Association of Community College Trustees and supported by the Ohio Association of Community Colleges. The delegation met with members of Ohio's congressional offices to discuss the mission of community colleges, workforce partnerships, and the role of two-year institutions in supporting regional economic development. Legislators were described as engaged and receptive, offering practical guidance on how colleges can frame funding requests and policy priorities to improve the likelihood of federal support.

Dr. Dwight McElfresh highlighted productive interactions with several policymakers who have influence on workforce-related committees. Participants noted a positive shift in tone and willingness among legislators to engage in constructive dialogue about community college priorities. The meetings also reinforced the value of sharing both data and personal success stories that demonstrate how community colleges transform students' lives and contribute to workforce development.

Ms. Morando added that attendance at the summit was viewed as particularly meaningful given that only a small number of Ohio community colleges were represented. The presence of trustees and institutional leaders demonstrated a strong commitment to advocacy on behalf of students and the community college sector. Participants also noted the potential value of including students in future advocacy efforts, as legislators responded strongly to hearing firsthand accounts of how community colleges impact students' educational and career pathways.

Dr. Dorey Diab noted that the delegation also recognized Senator Jon Husted with a Community College Champion Award for leadership in advancing workforce-focused legislation and initiatives that support community colleges across Ohio. Overall, the trip was described as brief but highly productive, strengthening relationships with policymakers and reinforcing the importance of continued advocacy for community college priorities at the national level.

E. Leader Richland Commitments (May 14, 15 & 18) with 7th & 8th Grade Boys

Dr. Dwight McElfresh called for discussion on this year's events and for any Trustees who were interested in participating and could make a time commitment. Ms. Linda Nelson indicated that she could commit to Thursday, May 14th & Monday May 18th. Dr. Dwight McElfresh indicated that he was not available that first week but could commit to the Monday, May 18th date. Mr. Patrick Williams indicated that he would like to participate but would have to consult his schedule and respond back on his availability. Mr. Steve Williams will begin work on the presentation adjusted for 7th & 8th Grade Boys.

F. Employee In-Service date February 27th (Annual Ethics Training by OEC 8am-9am)

Dr. Dwight McElfresh called for a discussion on the event. Dr. Dorey Diab explained that this is an opportunity for Trustees who want to complete their annual Ethics Training to do so in a more energetic setting with Ms. Susan Willeke providing the training, in-person this year. Additionally,

there will be the Retirement Celebration for Ms. Chris Copper at 12:00pm for Trustee who are available to come help celebrate Ms. Copper's contributions to the College and the College Foundation.

G. Upcoming Events:

1. Arts for Success (Scholarships for Success) March 5, 2026 at Crawford Success Center
2. Joint Program Advisory Committee Meeting (March 19th, 7:30 am Ralph Phillips Conf. Ctr.)
3. NCO Hall of Excellence (April 16, 2026, Ralph Phillips Conference Center)

Discussion ensued regarding the establishment of a BOT Table for Trustees who want to attend. Cost is \$150 per person. Trustees discussed their interest in reserving a seat.

X. MEETING EVALUATION (IAW 02.16)

Acting Board Chair, Dr. Dwight McElfresh, called for discussion on tonight's meeting. Participants noted:

- Good Policy Governance Discussion.
- Trustees stuck to the Agenda.
- Kudos and Appreciation to Chris Copper on her recognition and upcoming retirement.

XI. TIME AND PLACE OF NEXT MEETING

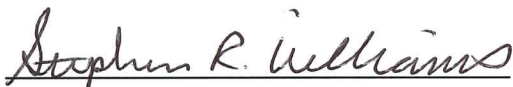
The next Regular meeting of the Board of Trustees is scheduled for Wednesday, March 25, 2026, in the Gorman Room (165-Fallerius).

XII. ADJOURNMENT

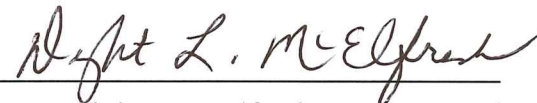
The Acting Chair called for any additional business requiring Board action.

ACTION TAKEN: As there was no further business requiring the Board's consideration, the Acting Board Chair, Dr. Dwight McElfresh, declared the meeting adjourned at 7:21 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:



Mr. Stephen R. Williams, Board Secretary



Dr. Dwight L McElfresh, Acting Board Chair