

NICK NISSLEY
PRESIDENT'S EVALUATION
SELF-ASSESSMENT
FALL 2025

OVERVIEW

The following two frameworks, (1) NMC's five strategic plan priorities, and (2) the nine core competencies, help frame my president's self-assessment. They describe the leadership priorities and competencies that focus my everyday actions leading the College. I have also used these to focus and frame my communication with/reporting to the Board of Trustees. In turn, when communicating with internal and external stakeholders, they have framed my communications. I have appreciated the Board's helpfulness in affording me these frameworks. They have been invaluable tools to help me prioritize, focus, and lead the College.

NMC's Five Strategic Plan Priorities

The College's Strategic Plan, *NMC Next*, has served as a means of College-wide prioritization, focusing my attention on the five strategic priorities articulated in the plan:

1. *Future-Focused Education*: Enhance offerings through flexible academic pathways, innovative instructional delivery models and relevant, hands-on educational experiences to empower global learners for the future.
2. *Student Engagement and Success*: Develop and deliver comprehensive support services, robust engagement opportunities and a vibrant collegiate experience to foster learner success, goal completion and employability.
3. *Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEIB)*: Cultivate an inclusive environment that fosters a sense of belonging and delivers equitable opportunities so all are able to thrive and succeed.
4. *Community Partnerships and Engagement*: Enhance collaborations that advance community engagement, economic and workforce development and innovative opportunities for lifelong learning.
5. *Institutional Distinction and Sustainability*: Leverage distinctive programs that strengthen institutional sustainability and expand global connections for our learners and communities.

Nine Core Competencies from The President's Evaluation Instrument

The President's Performance and Compensation Committee (PPCC) adopted an evaluation instrument that articulates nine core competencies, to be used in evaluating the President's performance:

1. *Communications* – Demonstrates ability to effectively handle routine and non-routine internal and external communication, both oral and written.
2. *Teamwork* – Willingness and ability to work for and with others to achieve a common goal.
3. *Productivity* – Refers to the amount of acceptable work to be performed as efficiently and cost effectively as possible.
4. *Dependability* – The ability to accept and complete responsibilities.
5. *Quality* – The work provided is accurate, thorough and consistent.
6. *Problem Solving* – Ability to define and resolve problems in a timely manner with little to no harm done.
7. *Ethical Behavior* – Ability to apply ethical, open, and honest behavior in interactions.
8. *Shared Governance* – The ability to engage the College shared governance process.
9. *Board Communications and Relations* – Build and maintain effective Board-President relationships.

The following is a self-assessment of my performance, organized by these two frameworks, and is intended to afford the College's Board of Trustees an overview of how I have led the College, during this past year. My self-assessment is organized into five sections (see the *Table of Contents*, on the next page):

1. Evidence/Examples of Strategic Leadership (Framed by the Strategic Plan)
2. Evidence/Examples of Nine Core Competencies from the President's Evaluation Instrument
3. Looking Ahead to 'What's on the Horizon'
4. Strategic Plan Implementation: Status Report
5. Appendix A – Positive Media Mentions

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SECTION #1: EVIDENCE/EXAMPLES OF STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP

Last year, I began my self-assessment reflection referring to the College's past year's performance as *extraordinary*. This year, I am feeling at a loss. Because, last year I couldn't imagine that the College would be *doing even better*. But, here I sit, searching for a superlative. I'll simply say, it was *another extraordinary year* for NMC. I surely don't want to sound like a braggart. But, I do believe that the results justify us feeling proud – very proud – about *our* accomplishments, which are *extraordinary*, in my opinion. So, what are those extraordinary accomplishments? The following isn't an exhaustive list, but a 'for example' sort of summary, to offer evidence for my claim. What I believe are not just 'good' but, rather 'great' accomplishments that our NMC team is realizing. And, to state the obvious, you as the Board of Trustees, play a vital role in that success, ensuring good governance and enabling the outcomes noted here.

Executive Summary

First, we have done what few organizations do – we've engaged in **strategic planning** and we've executed the plan, persevering through 3 years of implementation and actually seeing it through to its end. While doing that, we also exhibited *transparency*, reporting our progress in an open, public meeting – every month for three years – at the Board of Trustees meeting. We also exhibited a high-degree of *accountability* by not only being transparent, but also holding ourselves publicly accountable, with dashboards/metrics (See "Section #4: Strategic Plan Implementation: Status Report"). As you're probably aware, few organizations move from strategic planning to execution, let alone see their plans through to completion. NMC did that. And, now we're in the middle of the development of our *next* strategic plan.

Second, not only have we developed and executed on a strategic plan, we have done the same for our **campus master plan**, including the following major initiatives:

- Front Street Flats – We strategically acquired (for \$3.5 million) two 12-unit complexes, to increase student housing (by fifty beds) and support enrollment growth.
- Aviation Hangar Expansion – We planned for and executed a hangar renovation and expansion, including fleet expansion (adding eight new planes to our fleet of 19 total aircraft), to support enrollment growth (\$13.5

million – the total project cost for the expanded hangar is \$7 million, NMC matched a \$3.75 million state grant that went toward the project, and we also received \$550,000 in federal funding – which underscored the strong legislative support for the program). This expansion will allow us to serve more students aspiring to become pilots. Historically we enroll 30 new students each fall. This expansion – of planes and hangar space – significantly grows our capacity to enroll and train pilots (doubling our hangar space to 33,530 sq. ft., with 19 planes now in our fleet). Our NMC team has already begun delivering on that enrollment growth goal this semester – with 50 new students started this fall, for a 66% increase in the number of students we serve. This expansion demonstrates Northwestern Michigan College's responsiveness to the needs of our region and our ability to deliver results; it is a testament – a testament to our commitment to respond to our community's needs.

- Freshwater Research and Innovation Center – We've continued to shape our investment into a one-of-a-kind community partnership to grow NMC's Great Lakes Water Studies Institute programming and help shape the region's blue-tech capacity (making a \$3 million commitment, on an almost \$30 million overall investment). This fall we saw the groundbreaking and start of construction, with the building to be completed by spring 2027.
- New Power Plant – We began finance planning and construction design work on the geothermal conversion of our power plant, an almost \$20 million investment in sustainable/green energy on campus, ultimately yielding energy savings, too.
- Student Services Hub – We continue to plan and seek legislative support for renovating the Osterlin Building into a one-stop-shop for student services. We also secured a \$1 million donor gift to support this project (with an estimated overall \$8 million cost).
- Reimagining the Boardman Lake Campus – We relocated the University Partners to the Front Street Campus, with accompanying space migration moves from Beckett Building to Scholars Hall (consolidation strategy for better financial stewardship and campus vibrancy). We are also beginning to support Board decision making to optimize the Boardman Lake Campus

property as a strategic real estate asset (and a revenue source for the College).

Third, we delivered a once-in-a-generation **brand refresh** grounded in research, stakeholder engagement, and strategic alignment. We launched Phase One of the brand refresh where visibility mattered most: signage and environmental branding to increase campus vibrancy; an employee-first Opening Conference roll-out; Welcome Week presence for current students; and refreshed assets for prospective students with admissions. These choices made the launch inclusive, high-impact, and college-wide. The public's reaction to the brand refresh has been everything that we hoped, and more. Simply, it was time for our brand and brand identity to catch up to the college we've become/are becoming. This was a bold, courageous vision, led by Diana Fairbanks and the PRMC team, which is yielding the desired results.

Fourth, The NMC Foundation team had its best non-campaign year on record, with \$5.13 million in total **fundraising** activity for FY25 (the goal for FY25 was \$3.25 million, putting the final number at 157% of the goal). Additionally, Foundation fundraising events delivered outstanding results:

- *A Taste of Success* saw its highest net revenue of all time, raising \$161,000 for Great Lakes Culinary Institute (GLCI) student scholarships.
- The *Scholarship Open* is back! The relaunch of the classic event was a success. Raising \$73,000, we were very pleased to have engaged with: more than 60 sponsors, 235 golfers, and 49 volunteers – on what was an exciting day full of great energy and passion for our community's college.
- The Foundation wrapped up its *Mini-Campaign for the Aviation Hangar Expansion* project. The goal was to raise \$1 million to offset building costs for the college. The campaign exceeded that goal, raising \$1.28 million in support.

And, during this past year we have been immersed in the campaign feasibility study process, seeking to discern if we move ahead with a next fundraising campaign, and if so, determining what dollar amount we are seeking to raise. This has been a thoughtful and engaging process between the College, the Foundation, and key donors. By the end of calendar year 2025 we will be in a position to make a decision about a future campaign.

Fifth, good **leadership**, I believe, begins with *vision and plans*. Those visions and plans produce *actions* and—ultimately—our actions yield *results*. And, in the College’s case, such leadership is grounded in *values* that guide our actions. These above examples show:

- Together, we’re planning for our future: continuing to execute on the College’s strategic plans (the ‘old’ and the ‘new’) and our campus master plan, as well as delivering on our brand refresh strategy.
- We’re also taking action, living into our future. Just look to what we’re *doing*: executing the Aviation expansion/growth plan through to the ribbon cutting; groundbreaking for construction to begin on the Freshwater Research and Innovation Center; and continuing to advance a multitude of other campus master plan projects.
- We’re doing all of this while ensuring fiscal stewardship: a balanced budget, a sustainable business model, with an anticipated FY 25 General Fund surplus of \$2.3 million (with the formal audited numbers still forthcoming). We’re not only focused on fiscally responsible expense management (we initiated and completed our first year’s work on our Program Enhancement and Sustainability Review – PESR – process), but we’re also embracing revenue diversification strategies (like the reimagining of the Boardman Lake Campus as a strategic real estate asset).

How are we doing it? By remaining values-grounded and results-driven. By encouraging entrepreneurial-mindedness and innovative action. And, by always reminding ourselves, especially as we approach the College’s 75th anniversary, that we are not just a community college; *we are the community’s college*, proudly committed to serving the needs of all of northwestern Michigan, as our name demands.

Our mission helps me/the College remain focused. It’s as profound as it is simple, and it offers us leadership focus. What do we do? *We deliver lifelong learning opportunities to transform lives and enrich our communities.*

Sixth, as you can hear, I am proud of our accomplishments, and what we’ve realized together. I must also acknowledge that these extraordinary accomplishments are that much more impressive, especially given the **political climate** that we’ve been operating in this past year. You are well aware, higher education in general has ‘come under fire’: executive orders, legislative actions, budget eliminations,

uncertainty, chaos, and at times actions that feel threatening to our students, faculty, and staff. This has diverted our attention from our strategic plans, as they have required us to read, discuss, interpret, analyze, and determine actions. We have been in a somewhat constant state of monitoring the many threats being felt by higher ed. This past year we maintained regular, open communications with students and employees, helping inform and interpret acts like executive orders and the media's hyping of such orders. As you might imagine, the threatening nature, chaos and uncertainty bred heightened levels of fear within the College, which we took steps to actively manage – through regular communication. Stating the obvious, threats like what we've experienced this past year, create fear and seed student and employee uncertainty. For example, when students hear that financial aid or even the College's future is in jeopardy – when employees read about "elimination of the Department of Education" – this has an adverse effect on campus climate and could begin to adversely impact enrollment. As I said, I continue to reinforce the importance of remaining mission driven, values grounded, and focused on the work of our strategic plan - not allowing us to be distracted from the work we do serving the needs of our community. However, I'd be remiss if I didn't explicitly acknowledge that these extraordinary accomplishments are that much more impressive, especially given the challenging political climate.

Even at the State level, we've faced unprecedented challenges this past year. As you know, this year we had to develop our budget 'in the dark', as the State budget was not completed by the usual July 1 date. Instead, it was finalized a quarter of the way into the fiscal year, on October 2. Thus we budgeted very conservatively given the high degree of uncertainty. The final budget has a slight operations increase of 2%. NMC's state operational appropriation is \$11,163,900. We conservatively budgeted for \$11,100,000, so we're \$64,000 favorable. Of course, there are many other elements of the budget, some positive and others negative.

In the end, this was one of the most challenging years ever faced, given the uncertainty, with a budget not being approved until after our first fiscal quarter. I am proud of the work done by the College, especially under Troy Kierczynski's leadership, who helped us look to the future and make the best possible assumptions, despite the uncertainty.

Despite these unprecedented challenges, NMC is experiencing extraordinary successes. Thank you for your tireless volunteerism serving as trustees, and your community-minded courageousness, being ambassadors and advocates for the

community's college. The support and encouragement you show for our students and employees allows us to commit 110% to the NMC mission and continue to *deliver lifelong learning opportunities to transform lives and enrich our communities*.

As I noted earlier, the following is a self-assessment of my performance organized under NMC's five strategic plan priorities.

Strategy #1: Future-Focused Education

Innovation is one of the core values of our college. As president, I have been a constant source of encouragement in both showing what is possible and fanning the flames of the College to embrace entrepreneurial mindedness and innovative action. Creative ideas, both large and small, receive direct and timely support that are intended to create a culture where there are no barriers from trying something new for the sake of advancing our mission.

While attention is focused on the accomplishments enabled by our Office of Possibilities and specifically the successes being realized at the College-community intersection, there are also significant accomplishments being realized within the College, and specifically associated with our core work of teaching and learning. In fact, I am seeking to intentionally refocus our OOPs (Office of Possibilities) efforts, to be more College-centric and aligned with our strategic priorities. Not an 'either-or' polarity of College versus community. But, simply seeking to rebalance our OOPs efforts, focusing more on innovation *within* the College.

That said, I continue to believe that the Office of Possibilities continues to serve the College as a sort of engine for innovation – not an actual *office*, but rather more like a 'way of thinking' or a way that we're seeking to shape our culture, to embrace entrepreneurial mindedness and innovative action. Some things we can draw a solid line of connection between OOPs and the innovation outcome (e.g., Construction Technology's entry into 3D concrete printing). Whereas, others are more of a dotted-line influence. Regardless, I am proud of the results being realized by our faculty and staff who continue to put their entrepreneurial mindedness and innovative action to work. This past year, we have continued to innovate to support future-focused education. We have both, built upon our current programs, while also creating new programs, to meet the needs of our learners and communities.

As we continue to envision and shape 'OOPs 2.0' we launched a new Strategic Change Initiative to increase our capacity to innovate and manage change while ensuring alignment with institutional priorities (e.g., brand, strategy, change). Diana Fairbanks has stepped up and stepped into a change leader role, leveraging Public Relations, Marketing, & Communications (PRMC) to support priorities like: development of the College's next strategic plan, Program Enhancement & Sustainability Review (PESR), Freshwater Research & Innovation Center (FRIC), and the 75th Anniversary. Collectively, these efforts are strengthening NMC's reputation, alignment, and momentum.

Building on Current Programs:

- **Accelerated Police Academy.** Our Accelerated Police Academy continues to be a success story for NMC. Despite the loss of critical state funding, ending at least temporarily (during the present State budget impasse), our numbers continue to grow. Our first police academy apprenticeship was established with the Muskegon Police Department, based on our strong reputation and the hard recruiting work of program coordinator, Gail Kurowski. Gail led disruptive innovation, stopping our year-long program in 2023 (which enrolled only six students in the program). In the first year of the program she innovated – the accelerated program – 16 students enrolled in the new program (with a more desirable curriculum/format). This year, our enrollment has grown to 24 students. As graduates, these students continue to realize 100% job placement.
- **GLCI Maritime-Culinary Certificate Program.** The GLCI Maritime-Culinary Certificate program was further innovated this year, to better meet the needs of our graduates. Responding to student requests for more hands-on experience, the new program provides more sea time in the kitchens and a more robust curriculum. Its first class started this fall.
- **Neurodiversity Support Center.** The Neurodiversity Support Center (NSC) expanded its services during this past year, with its partnership with Michigan Rehabilitation Services (MRS). Plans will be developed this year to transition the NSC to become a regular part of our office of Disability Services in 2026.

See:

<https://upnorthlive.com/news/local/northwestern-michigan-college-expand-s-services-for-neurodiverse-students-neurodiversity-support-center-services-autism-adhd-dyslexia-spectrum-education#>

- **Experiential Learning Institute Endorsement.** The success of the Experiential Learning Institute (ELI) in meeting our strategic plan goals led to the creation of the ELI nEXt Endorsement this past year. This transcript-based endorsement was piloted in the spring and led to our first students graduating with the endorsement at the 2025 Commencement. It is being promoted this fall through faculty and media.

See:

https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fi/upunghmroal9l1ra2knvr/30_sec_video_01_finacut.mp4?rlkey=vizvhz2iyp18pv4vew50yky9&e=1&st=sw1rqyik&dl=0

- **Construction Technology's Curricular Innovation - 3D Printing.** Thanks to the entrepreneurial leadership of the College's Carolyn Andrews, our Construction Technology Program Coordinator, we had a ribbon-cutting ceremony on July 14, celebrating the installation of a 3D Concrete Printer (the first program of its kind in the state of Michigan). We were joined by our technology partner, Build Additive (Frank Marquette and Pierre Viaud-Murat). As students enroll in the Introduction to 3D Concrete Printing course this fall, we intend to equip them with essential skills for 3D concrete printing construction, providing specialized technical skills that will enhance their job prospects and earning potential. We will also work with the construction industry to explore how this new technology might offer opportunities to address housing challenges faced by our region.

See:

<https://upnorthlive.com/news/local/northwestern-michigan-college-unveils-3d-concrete-printer-aiming-to-address-housing-and-labor-shortages#>

- **Aviation Program Expansion.** Per the strategic plan, our Aviation program has expanded its fleet to 19, with four new planes, and doubled the size of hangar facilities to address the two-year waiting list demand of new students. This expansion - of planes and hangar space - significantly grows our capacity to enroll and train pilots (doubling our hangar space to 33,530 sq. ft., with 19 planes now in our fleet). Our NMC team has already begun delivering on the enrollment growth goals this semester - with 50 new

students started this fall, for a 66% increase. This expansion demonstrates Northwestern Michigan College's responsiveness to the needs of our region and our ability to deliver results. That is thanks to the leadership of Alex Bloye, who visioned and executed this amazing endeavor.

See:

<https://www.9and10news.com/video/2025/01/28/alex-bloye-on-northwestern-michigan-college-aviation-program-expansion/>

- **Direct Connect.** NMC continued to implement our Direct Connect dual admission program, a streamlined path with University Partners: Davenport, Ferris State & Grand Valley State. It's a dual admission program creating a streamlined path between Northwestern Michigan College and these four-year university partners. The streamlined pathway affords guaranteed admission/transfer, and comprehensive support - from both NMC and the partner four-year university. Most of all, our students appreciate the efficiency and financial savings. The end goal – is to leverage this student-centered strategy and move the needle on student success. In the end, it's a seamless, efficient, and cost-effective path to a bachelor's degree.

Continuing to Innovate New Programs:

- **Dental Assistant Program.** To support the strategic plan's emphasis on credit for prior learning, Beckie Wooters acquired CODA approval for a new pathway to completion for certified dental assistants. These students will be able to earn their level two NMC certificate and registered dental assistant license by just earning 10 credits of spring classes and passing the state license exam.

See:

https://catalog.nmc.edu/programs-az/health-occupations/dental-assistant-cdatorda/?_gl=1*1o61luz*_gcl_au*MTYyMTM1OTcwMS4xNzUzNzk0OTc4

- **Expanded Funding for Electric Vehicle (EV) Curriculum.** A new partnership between Michigan Works! and our Automotive Technology Program has resulted in NMC earning grant funding of \$120,000 to continue the program's development of electric vehicle curriculum and training.

See:

<https://upnorthlive.com/news/local/training-funds-focus-on-fueling-ev-workforce-in-northern-michigan#>

- **Math Department NSF Grant Participation.** Five math instructors from NMC are participating in an NSF grant titled, “AID DCL: Collaborative Research: Institutional Mentored Partnerships Advancing Multivariable and Vector Calculus Teaching with CalcPlot3D (IMPACT-CalcPlot3D)”, with Paul Seeburger of Monroe Community College, Deborah Moore-Russo of the University of Oklahoma, Shelby Stanhope of the U.S. Air Force Academy, and Stepan Paul of North Carolina State University as Principal Investigators. We will work with other colleges around the country to develop and use class activities that use 3-dimensional surfaces and graphing.
- **New Advanced Scientific Research (ASR) Pathway from High School to NMC.** Instructors Nick Roster and Nicole Speelman have established a new pathway, highlighting experiential learning and hands-on scientific research that starts in partner high schools and links to science research at NMC.

See:

<https://www.nmc.edu/about/nmc-stories/success-stories/new-classes-plus-dual-enrollment.html>

- **Acquisition of the *Robinson Bay* and Curricular Innovation at GLMA.** In June, Great Lakes Maritime Academy (GLMA) staff traveled to Cleveland to sail the new tugboat Robinson Bay to Traverse City. And, on July 2 it passed U.S. Coast Guard inspection and became available for cadet training, the first new vessel to join the Academy’s fleet since the T/S State of Michigan in 2002. Our GLMA cadets began training the week of July 7. This both expands job opportunities for our GLMA graduates as well as reduces operating costs. This summer, up to 36 cadets will have completed a 30-day training program aboard the Robinson Bay, earning their mate of tow vessel license endorsement. It also positions the academy with the needed facility to create a new associate degree next year leading to the Designated Duty Engineer (DDE) license endorsement.

See:

<https://www.nmc.edu/news/2025/07/robinson-bay-arrives.html>

<https://radio.wcmu.org/local-regional-news/2025-09-02/tugboat-crewmembers-sorely-needed-in-michigan-us-can-trump-boost-help>

<https://seawayreview.com/glma-cadets-train-on-new-vessel-robinson-bay/>

[https://upnorthlive.com/news/local/historic-robinson-bay-tugboat-to-get-n
ew-home-with-great-lakes-maritime-academy](https://upnorthlive.com/news/local/historic-robinson-bay-tugboat-to-get-n
ew-home-with-great-lakes-maritime-academy)

- **New Early College Partnership with the Wexford-Missaukee Career Tech Center.** During the Fall 2024-Spring 2025 school year, the business faculty (Nicole Fewins, Kristy McDonald, Jane Zlojutro, and Scott Goethals), along with Kyle Ferrill from Admissions worked with the instructors and other employees from the [Wexford/Missaukee Career Tech Center](#) to create an [Early College](#) program. This program allows students studying Business courses at the Career Tech Center to receive credit for their work. Students at the Career Tech Center now have an opportunity to earn an AAS degree in [Business Administration](#) and/or the [Microsoft Office Application Specialist Certificate](#).
- **Experimenting with FRIC's Future Programming - Supporting Entrepreneurial Endeavors Through the Blue Tech Challenge.** On the heels of this fall's groundbreaking ceremony for the Freshwater Research and Innovation Center, where we gathered with our partners (Discovery Pier, Traverse Connect, 20Fathoms, and Michigan Technological University) to begin construction on the \$28.9 million collaborative effort to build our region's blue tech capacity – NMC's Strategic Initiatives Department completed the first of four Blue Tech Challenges, which will run through 2028. The Blue Tech Challenge is affording a glimpse of the kind of work that we're envisioning at the Freshwater Research and Innovation Center – the intersection of blue tech and entrepreneurial endeavor – and we're seeing that envisioned future being realized right now! The three finalist start-up companies made their final pitch at the Oceans 2025 Conference in Chicago, on October 1. Wave Lumina, the first place winner, is a Traverse City-based start-up and is currently working out of NMC lab space. Attendees learned more about what "Blue Tech" stands for and how NMC, and its partners, are contributing to Blue Tech education, industries, and the greater Blue Economy.

Strategy #2: Student Engagement and Success

Reversing a More Than Decade-Long Trend of Declining Enrollment at the College

We have seen positive enrollment growth as strategies put in place to boost overall enrollment, retention, and course success rates have shown positive results. In fact, we've seen seven consecutive semesters of contact hour increases, reversing a more than decade-long trend of declining enrollment at the College.

Fall 2023	Spring 2024	Summer 2024	Fall 2024	Spring 2025	Summer 2025	Fall 2025
+.9%	+3.1%	+8.4%	+5.4%	+8.7%	+9.4%	+8.2%

Most recently, our Fall 2025 numbers showed an 8.2% increase in contact hours. When comparing our performance with the state's other community colleges, only 9 colleges reported higher growth rates, with 14 falling below NMC's 8.2% growth rate - placing NMC solidly in the top-tier for enrollment growth in the state of Michigan. Additionally, and connected with the enrollment growth, NMC is experiencing student housing being filled to capacity: apartments are at 100% occupancy rate (with a waiting list of 84), and residence halls are at 97% occupancy.

Additionally, first semester retention of new students has reached 82.1%, meeting the strategic plan goal of 82%, and the course enrollee success rate has risen from 79.8% in Fall 2020 to 82.1% this year (the goal is 83% by Fall 2025). I'm also proud to say that, through grant funding, the college has invested in a full-time coach, as called for in Strategy #2. They will be managing the College Edge program for adult students this next summer.

The following offers an overview of the challenges we're facing, as well as our responses – the actions being taken and the results being realized.

Actions	Results
Increased engagement/belonging opportunities for students both through college planned events and growing student groups.	The college improved first semester retention from 77% from 83%

<p>Investment in Marketing focused on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New and low enrolled/high demand programs • State programs for adults and recent grads • Dual enrollment <p>The marketing effort dovetailed with changes in the Admissions office focused on improving onboarding for new students, improved connections to program areas, and forging better relationships with area schools and CTCs.</p>	<p>Seven semesters of enrollment growth with increases in each area of emphasis including a record number of high school enrolled students in spring and fall of 2025.</p>
<p>Student success initiatives to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase success coaching capacity • Embed tutors in co-requisite sections • Improve tracking of student barriers from initial enrollment • Systematic tracking of student services interactions 	<p>Three year, comprehensive success rate rose from 30.4% to 36.7% over the last three completed cohorts. The college has a team enrolled in the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) Student Success Academy that is planning our next round of student success initiatives.</p>

Future Challenges

However, there are still enrollment metrics that were heavily impacted by the aftermath of the pandemic that need to show improvement.

- Market share rose marginally to 33.7%, but short of our target. Even with the Community College Guarantee, the rate of college attendance among recent graduates remains low.
- The number of students 21+ increased from last year (from 1563 to 1586), but is short of the 2025 target of 1660. However, this metric is moving in the right direction.
- While we did not reach our completion goal of 40.4%, the completion rate has risen each of the last three years, reaching 37% this year.

Additionally, the new three-year contract with the NMC Faculty Association and the NMC Faculty Chairs Association was approved by the Board on July 21, and

introduces an innovative new student advising initiative. Beginning in academic year 2027, every NMC student will be required to meet with an advisor until they have a My Academic Plan (“MAP”) in place. Faculty will play an active role in this process, receiving training in AY26 and advising a minimum of 12 students annually starting in AY27. We want to ensure success and provide the necessary support. On October 3, faculty gathered for a Friday Forum to review and discuss the upcoming faculty advising responsibilities. Facilitators Brandon Everest from the Faculty Association and Lindsey Dickinson from Advising shared a big picture overview of the faculty advising program and gathered faculty feedback. We’re really proud of this example of entrepreneurial mindedness and innovative action, coming out of the collective bargaining process, designed to support student success. This initial event was a first step as we seek to make the new endeavor effective for students and faculty.

Brand Assessment and Strategy Planning Process to Address Enrollment Challenges

It was two years ago that I encouraged the President’s Council, with Diana Fairbanks’ leadership, to initiate a comprehensive brand assessment and strategy planning process. Brand strategy, while often ignored by community colleges, as you know, is vitally important. Especially, in the face of declining enrollment and other challenges in higher education. Our investment in our brand strategy was intentional. Simply, we believed that a strong, clear brand is crucial for distinguishing NMC and attracting students, faculty, and partners. Our theory of change is straight forward: if we ensure a cohesive and compelling message that resonates with our key audiences and stakeholders, then we’ll positively impact enrollment (as well as positive perception in our communities and with employees).

I remain grateful for the Board of Trustees’ vision and willingness to invest in the College’s Public Relations, Marketing, and Communications staffing and brand strategy. While the strategy development was funded through a Lumina Foundation grant, we’re also leveraging the college’s investment, especially as we move into visual identity projects (e.g., new signage and environmental branding). And, I remain steadfast in my belief that the importance of this work cannot be overstated, especially given the competitive landscape of higher education, and the need to differentiate NMC from other choices. I can confidently say that this brand strategy project will benefit the College, making clear the College’s value proposition and ensuring our sustainability.

Specifically, over the past year, NMC delivered a once-in-a-generation brand refresh grounded in research, stakeholder engagement, and strategic alignment.

We launched Phase One where visibility mattered most: signage and environmental branding to increase campus vibrancy; an employee-first Opening Conference roll-out; Welcome Week presence for current students; and refreshed assets for prospective students with admissions. These choices made the launch inclusive, high-impact, and college-wide. This was accomplished thanks to the leadership of Diana Fairbanks and the PRMC Team who remained focused on the vision while also managing the tactical execution of the brand refresh. They did this while also managing the ‘other’ priorities of PRMC: our now-established enrollment marketing function kept producing results with improved efficiency; we launched a new Strategic Change Initiative to increase our capacity to innovate and manage change; and PRMC work supported college-wide priorities like PESR, FRIC, and the 75th Anniversary.

Because of this extraordinary effort and the results realized, PRMC and Diana’s leadership were recognized by their college peers when they earned NMC’s coveted “Team Excellence Award” this past spring. This college-wide recognition for strategic impact, collaboration, and professionalism was matched with recognition beyond the College, when Diana was invited to speak at the Michigan Community College Association’s Annual Summer Conference, where NMC’s brand strategy work was held up as an exemplar/benchmark among community colleges’ nationwide!

Strategy #3: Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEIB)

This year we’ve intentionally evolved our DEIB strategy, especially with our present strategic plan coming to a conclusion and a new strategic plan taking shape. As you know, the present strategic plan has a strategy titled, “Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEIB)”. As our new strategic plan has taken shape, and in light of us accomplishing the goals within that strategy, it became obvious that our DEIB strategy and goals would sunset (like many other strategies and goals in the present plan). Of course, that doesn’t mean that we’re ‘done with’ DEIB. Rather, there are new strategies (and objectives) emerging - like ‘vibrancy’, ‘belonging’ and ‘human-centered excellence’ to name a few. While these won’t ‘replace’ DEIB, you can see where the seeds of these present strategies come from and how they might support similar intentions.

With our current strategic plan concluding and the evolution of our DEIB strategy, this also included an evolution of the DEIB leadership role filled by Marcus Bennett. This past summer Marcus returned full-time to his associate dean role. We’ll

continue the shaping of our values and culture, especially belonging, inclusion, and engagement, across the college. And, Marcus will continue to support that work, from his campus life leadership role. As the new strategic plan takes shape, a focus on campus *vibrancy* is emerging and *belonging* remains a key focus. Our future direction will surely build upon the foundation we built over these last three years, thanks to the strong leadership of Marcus Bennett.

To remind you what Marcus has helped lead over these past three years, and to recognize and celebrate his contributions, let me share:

- I personally hired/appointed Marcus to serve as Special Assistant to the President for Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEIB) – a sort of Chief Diversity Officer role - when we realized that DEIB would be one of our five strategies in our then, new strategic plan (in 2022). I felt, given that strategic focus, leadership was required to help us advance the priorities. While serving in this role, Marcus also maintained his position as the college's Associate Dean of Campus Life (the DEIB role was a 50% appointment).
- Marcus intentionally shaped DEIB policy and culture at NMC over these past three years. Additionally, Marcus has been an influencer across the Michigan community colleges, throughout our community, and beyond. The challenges that Marcus faced are compounded given the geography and demographics of northern Michigan. Although, he never shied away from these challenges. Instead, Marcus showed up every day – values grounded, courageous, and focused on student success. He leads by example. And, has helped people realize that DEIB isn't threatening.
- Rather, Marcus helped expand campus/community stakeholders' understanding, inviting them to see how we're more alike than different. And, where we're different, Marcus is always seeking to respectfully leverage those differences, to make something even stronger than we might have alone. Best of all, Marcus helped the college maintain our focus on student success, and not get pulled into the politicization of DEIB.
- At the end of the day Marcus' greatest contribution has been to strategically help us align our actions with our values - in support of student success. Marcus was very strategic, ensuring alignment of the college's DEIB efforts with the institution's strategic plan. He transparently communicated

challenges and accomplishments through dashboards. Such accountability has only strengthened the degree of college-wide support for our DEIB initiatives.

- Marcus's greatest strength was how he inspired and empowered others to take initiative. While some institutions choose to have a DEIB 'czar'. NMC, thanks to Marcus's leadership, took a different approach. Given Marcus's collaborative and empowering leadership style, he supported many leaders across campus to 'own' their initiatives and not to 'centralize' DEIB. That has resulted in DEIB at NMC being woven into the fabric of the college's culture. For example, while there are many DEIB initiatives I am especially proud of:

- food pantry (for our food-insecure students)
- veterans lounge and programs (for those who've served our country)
- Disability Services and Neurodiversity Center (for those with disabilities)

See:

<https://upnorthlive.com/news/local/northwestern-michigan-college-expands-services-for-neurodiverse-students-neurodiversity-support-center-services-autism-adhd-dyslexia-spectrum-education>

- Math College Edge (summer catch up, making college accessible)
- Open Education Resources (low cost/no cost books for students)
- acquisition of off-campus apartments (ensuring that affordable housing is available for our students, and not a barrier to their enrollment)
- international study trips (affording students life-changing experiences)

Marcus' greatest contribution is in the dotted-line leadership – how he inspired, encouraged, and supported others throughout the college, shaping our culture and not simply developing programs.

The new strategic plan and the process that we're engaging in now, developing the plan, is affording us an opportunity to continue on this journey and continue to shape *belonging*, *inclusion*, and *engagement*, across the college; respecting where we've come from and embracing where we're going in the future. Simply, we will continue to focus on the *outcome* of belonging, believing: diversity is strength in differences; equity is about individualized support and removing barriers; inclusion is about intentionally inviting and incorporating diverse perspectives and being responsive to the needs of our members; and *belonging is an outcome when*

diversity, equity, and inclusion are done well. We intend to continue to leverage DEI, as we strive to positively enhance the sense of belonging experienced by students and employees on campus.

Strategy #4: Community Partnerships and Engagement

There is so much positive news to report in terms of community partnerships and engagement. Recall, this past year we reimagined the College's publication, the Nexus, refocusing it more clearly on the community-college connection. This new publication, "NMC's Community Report" clearly messages: *NMC is proud to be a partner in building a stronger, more vibrant and prosperous community.* This last year's Community Report highlighted how the College is improving lives right here in Grand Traverse – from offering high-quality education and workforce training to supporting local innovation and leadership. Guided by data and community insight, the strategy behind the publication ensured we focused on the issues that matter most to Grand Traverse County residents, while the stories themselves highlighted real people whose lives have been improved by NMC's work in education, training, innovation, and leadership. I am especially proud of Diana Fairbanks and her PRMC Team who accomplished this reimagining amidst the heavy workload of the brand strategy development. The Community Report serves as one of our broad community engagement tools, complemented by our more direct connections through 437 advisory board members, representing 250 businesses. Every one of these advisory boards meets annually and actively engages with our program leaders, ensuring we're listening and responding to community/business needs, ensuring alignment, and workforce talent solutions.

The majority of our active engagement with community partnerships this past year has focused on: 1) the Freshwater Research and Innovation Center; 2) the NorthSky Consortium; and, 3) NoMI Attainment Collaborative.

- Again, significant effort this past year has been invested in continuing development of the **Freshwater Research and Innovation Center** partnership. Specifically, focused now on: launching the construction phase, securing the Center's tenants, and closing the fundraising gap.
- Second, we have begun investing significant time and energy in the partnership development and crafting of the memorandum of understanding between the College, Traverse Connect, 20F and the Coast Guard, creating

the **NorthSky Consortium**. The MOU creating the NorthSky Consortium is a collaborative partnership focused on transforming northern Michigan and the Traverse City region into a national hub for Uncrewed Aerial Systems and Advanced Air Mobility – driving innovation, workforce development, and economic growth.

- Third, the \$1.19 million grant awarded to us from MiLEAP is allowing us to engage in the strategic partnering required to launch the **NoMI Attainment Collaborative**. This partnership will facilitate the collaboration of more than 20 organizations across all of northern Michigan, with the goal of moving the needle on the State’s “Sixty by 30” goal. The following offers a bit more detail about these three key partnering endeavors.

Continuing Development of the Freshwater Research and Innovation Center

Thanks to Jason Slade’s leadership, we continue to develop a strong partnership among all of our Freshwater Research and Innovation Center partners: Michigan Tech, Discovery Center, 20 Fathoms, and Traverse Connect. Jason has expanded his focus this year to focus on relationship building with potential future tenants. He has astutely positioned FRIC, and championed that this isn’t ‘just’ a research center; rather, he has helped our community and supporting organizations understand how FRIC can also be a driver of regional economic development (e.g., Traverse City’s wading into the new blue economy). This language has been picked up by Traverse Connect as they brand the region as the “epicenter of the new blue economy”. The amazing turnout for the recent Groundbreaking Ceremony is a testament to the partnership development that is occurring. This is truly a landmark project (and a significant investment, at \$28.9 million) – only possible thanks to this amazing partnering – with a vision of establishing Northern Michigan as the epicenter of water innovation and a globally relevant hub for the blue economy.

See:

https://www.record-eagle.com/news/local_news/freshwater-future-starts-now/image_3063c3e0-aa82-4a03-a31c-fe3963c7412c.html

Launching the NorthSky Consortium

In January of this past year, our UAS and Aviation leaders (Tony Sauerbrey and Alex Bloye) along with Scott Dennis, asked Jason Slade and I to meet with them to discuss some forward looking ideas about the future of the Yuba airport operations.

In the broadest terms, they described a vision about the future of NMC's UAS program (given the FAA's proposed regulation - Part 108 - and how it will impact 'Beyond Visual Line of Sight' operations). More specifically, they shared an idea for creating a regional initiative to connect our region to the state's Advanced Air Mobility initiatives. They imagined this work being done in collaboration with Traverse Connect and others.

I was impressed with their vision, especially, their strategic thinking, and being forward looking to the future/what's emerging in terms of UAS program opportunities. In fact, I saw their work directly responding to an opportunity, and asking questions about how we might not only continue to advance our UAS program, but also how we might reimagine it in light of the shifts occurring (e.g., BVLOS).

Then, in April of this year, in support of the vision of building a coalition, the 'NorthSky Consortium' began to take shape through the crafting of a memorandum of understanding between the College, Traverse Connect, and the Coast Guard. It was imagined that initially, the MOU would give rise to the NorthSky Consortium – the partnership that will share a vision to transform northern Michigan and the Traverse City region into a national hub for Uncrewed Aerial Systems and Advanced Air Mobility, driving innovation, workforce development, and economic growth. On May 6, “Skyline & Shoreline: West Bay Aerial Mobility Showcase” occurred, sponsored by Traverse Connect and tied to a State of Michigan air mobility grant. NMC’s drone program played a pivotal role. The live demonstration event featured three real-world drone missions over West Grand Traverse Bay including: search and rescue with the U.S. Coast Guard; water sampling using overwater drone tech; and LIDAR-enabled bathymetric mapping of the lakebed.

Warren Call’s article in this past month's Traverse City Business News highlights NMC’s visionary leadership and the value of our collaborative partnering to form the NorthSky Consortium – as a means for transforming northern Michigan and the Traverse City region into a national hub for Uncrewed Aerial Systems and Advanced Air Mobility

See:

https://www.nmc.edu/about/nmc-stories/success-stories/storm-tested.html?utm_source=Traverse+Connect+Newsletter&utm_campaign=0fa24156bc-CONNECTIO

Building a Northern Michigan-Wide Partnership to Impact 'Sixty by 30'

NMC, thanks to the collaboration and leadership of Laura Matchett and Lisa vonReichbauer, was awarded a \$1.19 million grant from MiLEAP, to form the NoMI Attainment Collaborative. We are working with Northwest Michigan Works, bringing together more than 20 organizations across all of northern Michigan. Our goal is to help move the needle on the State's "Sixty by 30" goal - where 60% of Michigan residents earn a postsecondary certificate or degree by the year 2030. We have set a goal in the grant, to raise the number from the present 49% to 55% over the 3-year life of the grant. We will bring 'navigators' and personalized support for adult students, helping them achieve industry-recognized credentials/degrees, opening the door to stable, high-earning careers. This is a 'big deal' - increasing educational attainment is a clear way that colleges can contribute to the economic health of their communities!

See:

<https://www.9and10news.com/2025/06/20/nmc-and-michigan-works-partner-to-increase-adult-education/>

https://www.record-eagle.com/news/local_news/northwestern-michigan-college-1-19m-will-launch-new-push-for-adult-learners/article_f89cc559-ddba-4067-aca5-506dc7ecc7d6.html

Day-In and Day-Out Work of Relationship Building and Partner Development

While the Freshwater Research and Innovation Center, the NorthSky Consortium, and the NoMI Attainment Collaborative are stand-out examples of community partnerships and engagement, we continue to do the day-in and day-out work of relationship building and partner development. Five examples of that type work from this past year include:

1. **Partnering with Our K-12 Schools.** It's hard to believe that we're entering our fifth year of the mentorship program between NMC and Blair Elementary School. From our new school year kick-off to the incredible end-of-year culmination, the campus tour and the students' engagement with almost a dozen different NMC programs is always a hit. Best of all, these students begin to see themselves here, as possible future students pursuing their

dreams at NMC. That's possible thanks to the caring relationships that our NMC students form with these students – with every 4th and 5th grade student at Blair Elementary matched with an NMC mentor.

2. **Partnering with Our Communities During Natural Disasters.** The ice storm that impacted northern Michigan this past winter caused much damage and created significant challenges for residents of the area. Amidst all of the ordinary day-to-day partnering that occurs between NMC and our communities, sometimes extraordinary events occur, affording us an opportunity to 'step up'. This past winter's ice storm in northern Michigan was one such instance. In the aftermath of March's devastating Gaylord-area ice storm, some 80,000 residential customers were facing a long countdown – a month or longer until their power was going to be restored. Using drones and special permission to fly them beyond visual line of sight (BVLOS), NMC worked with local electrical co-ops to make the response more efficient. In one 20-minute drone-led assessment, for instance, a drone flying BVLOS inspected 75 poles. A task which would have taken a day using traditional methods.
3. **Partnering with Our State Political Leaders.** At the end of summer, NMC played host to Senator Peters' staffers. We had well over 70 staff members on campus. Our NMC team, including Jason Slade, Jerry Achenbach, John Lutchko, and Tony Sauerbray, afforded the staffers some hands-on learning: the chance to step onboard both the Robinson Bay and the State of Michigan; to learn more about the Marine Tech program (and getting on and off the R/V Northwestern with north wind chop); and learning how they could advance our aerial mobility work at the Federal level (many of the staffers were part of the larger regional conversations and didn't realize it was Tony Sauerbray on the other end leading the charge). This was a great opportunity to allow so many staffers to see firsthand the programs that they touch. This is a great example of how our NMC teams step up to such opportunities, in this case providing an opportunity for the Senator's staffers to learn more about NMC and our distinctive programs. Rep. Roth and MI Rep. Carol Glanville from Grand Rapids also visited our Great Lakes Campus in August, as part of the Michigan Legislative Exchange (MILE).

4. **Partnering with the NMC Foundation.** The NMC Foundation does the work of partner development on a daily basis, seeking to engage supporters in meaningful ways and raise funds to support College priorities. Donors are key partners with the College. The Foundation team had its best non-campaign year on record, with \$5.13 million in total fundraising activity for FY25. Thanks to the relationships formed with donors over many years, such generosity is made possible. Additionally, the Foundation's events delivered outstanding fundraising results, and more importantly they afforded opportunities for these supporters to meaningfully engage with the College. For example:
- a. *A Taste of Success* saw its highest net revenue of all time, raising \$161,000 for GLCI student scholarships.
 - b. The *Scholarship Open* was relaunched, engaging more than 60 sponsors, 235 golfers, and 49 volunteers – a true fundraiser and *friendraiser*.
 - c. A 'mini-campaign' for the Aviation hangar expansion project was launched, raising \$1.28 million against a \$1.0 million goal. Again, this invited our supporters to partner with us – to literally build the new hangar.
 - d. And, the Foundation played a critical role in the college securing a 3D concrete printer, with Foundation staff securing approximately \$160,000 needed to purchase the equipment, while at the same time partnering with key supporters in our community, including Impact 100.
 - e. And, now we're engaging in the campaign feasibility study process, talking with 50+ key donors – seeking to discern how we can strengthen partnerships with supporters to realize campaign priorities.
5. **Partnering with Our University Partners.** Reimagining our Relationship with our University Partners. On September 23, we formally welcomed and celebrated with our University Partners, their relocation to the James Beckett Building on the Front Street Campus with an Open House event, themed "Partners in Possibility: Opening doors to stronger collaboration, greater access, and a shared future." Representatives from Central Michigan University, Davenport University, Ferris State University, Grand Valley State University, and Michigan State's Institute of Agricultural Technology spoke at the event. It marked the transition to the Beckett Building, driven by our campus master plan's goal to consolidate the former University Center

operations to main campus. The move enhances service to NMC students by bringing our University Partners to the main campus, and thus closer to our students. Collaboration between NMC and our University partners is critical to student success, with approximately half of NMC students transferring to complete a four-year degree. Since the University Partners were established in 1995, more than 10,000 area students have earned advanced degrees over those 30 years – affording students from the region an opportunity to start here, stay here.

That same day, I signed an MOU with Ferris State University’s president, Bill Pink – a formal agreement to launch “Direct Connect” - a dual admission program creating a streamlined path between Northwestern Michigan College and Ferris State University. Direct Connect provides a streamlined path for students with guaranteed admission/transfer, and comprehensive support - from both NMC and Ferris. Most of all, our students will appreciate the efficiency and financial savings. Together, we'll leverage this student-centered strategy and move the needle on student success.

We should not lose sight of the partnerships that grow with community members attending and sponsoring events like the International Affairs Forum (IAF). IAF has grown this year, to over 300 members who faithfully engage with our programming. As well, this year IAF has initiated partnering with: the State Theatre; Leland’s Old Art Building; Interlochen Public Radio; and the Economic Club of Traverse City. Similarly, the Dennos Museum Center hosted 11,700 attendees across its programs this past year – an all-time high. And, in collaboration with the Foundation, WNMC has begun hosting a "Speaker Series" featuring local CEOs and community leaders, in an effort to deepen their engagement with the Foundation and the College. The initial interviews have included leaders from Mercantile Bank and Cunningham Limp. Again, the Foundation continues to do outstanding work, assisting the College through thoughtful partnership development, and ultimate fundraising support.

Strategy #5: Institutional Distinction and Sustainability

Our NMC Strategic Plan’s 5th goal, “Institutional Distinction and Sustainability” asserts that we will, “*Leverage distinctive programs that strengthen institutional sustainability and expand global connections for our learners and communities.*”

This year, we have realized major accomplishments by leveraging our distinctive programs. For example: 1) the Aviation Hangar and Fleet Expansion ribbon cutting; 2) the Freshwater Research and Innovation Center groundbreaking; and 3) the MOU creating the NorthSky Consortium. Additionally, our brand strategy work and brand refresh is shining the light on NMC's distinctive programs. For a full accounting of the accomplishments realized, reference "Section #4: Strategic Plan Implementation Status Report".

In terms of sustainability, we also completed the initial year of our self-initiated program review process (PESR – Program Enhancement and Sustainability Review). The first three units – GLMA, GLWSI, and the Dennon Museum – developed action plans forecasted to yield \$900,000 in net income/savings by 2028. This further demonstrates NMC's commitment to continuous improvement, and long-term sustainability.

In the end, we must answer if these actions to leverage distinctive programs and strengthen institutional sustainability *are yielding results*—the answer is *yes!* Consider, this fiscal year (FY 25), we are anticipating a General Fund surplus of \$2.3 million (with the formal audited numbers still forthcoming). This surplus is *after* \$1.1million in extra, unbudgeted transfers out of the General Fund to the Strategic Fund, Plant Fund, and Fund for Transformation, to build reserves. It also afforded us to pay out of pocket for Phase 1 rebranding expenses. Simply, I am proud of how we're leveraging distinctive programs and acting according to our stewardship value to ensure institutional sustainability.

SECTION #2: EVIDENCE/EXAMPLES OF NINE CORE COMPETENCIES FROM PRESIDENT'S EVALUATION INSTRUMENT

As mentioned earlier, last year, a new evaluation instrument was developed by the PPCC. The instrument articulates nine core competencies/key leadership accountabilities:

- (1) Communications
- (2) Teamwork
- (3) Productivity
- (4) Dependability
- (5) Quality

- (6) Problem Solving
- (7) Ethical Behavior
- (8) Shared Governance
- (9) Board Communications and Relations

In this section, I share select, specific examples of how my leadership manifested results in these nine areas. They are meant to be illustrative to provide concrete examples, and are not exhaustive.

(1) Communications

Demonstrates ability to effectively handle routine and non-routine internal and external communication, both oral and written.

I am proud of my communications: with internal college stakeholders (e.g., students, faculty, and staff); external stakeholders; and specifically with the Board of Trustees, and Foundation Board. For example:

Internal Stakeholders

The following are examples of formal/regular meetings I have with internal stakeholders:

- Weekly President's Council Meetings
- Once Per Semester Meeting with PC Leaders' Teams
- Once Per Semester Meeting with the Student Government Association
- Monthly Leadership Council Meetings
- Opening Conference (August and January)
- You Made It Possible- Employee Recognition and Awards Event
- Annual Meeting with Residence Life Staff
- Annual Meeting with GLMA Board of Visitors
- Annual Meeting with Faculty Association President
- Bi-Annual College Orientation
- Bi-Monthly New Employee Meet and Greet Coffees
- Annual College Holiday Party
- Annual Budget Town Hall Meetings
- Periodic Meetings with Governance and Leadership Groups on Campus
- Periodic Meetings with Phi Theta Kappa

While these are formally/regularly scheduled meetings, *many* more informal meetings occur, as requested/needed. Also, this is not an exhaustive list, but rather illustrative of the formal/regular meetings that occur, to afford communication with

internal stakeholders. In addition, I actively engage with stakeholders through social media, to allow them to stay real-time updated on my activities/things happening at the College.

Simply, I am very actively engaged, ‘showing up’ for ‘just about everything’ on campus and in the community. In terms of campus activities, I am present and actively engaged in activities ranging from IAF to Welcome Week, and Musical Concerts to the Cherry Festival Parade, and so much more. I am most proud of my active engagement and my accessibility to our NMC family and the community.

External Stakeholders

I am also actively engaged in the local community – e.g., my board service to Traverse Connect Board of Directors, Goodwill Northern Michigan Board of Directors, Munson Medical Center Community Healthcare Council, and my regular participation in the Rotary Club of Traverse City, which afford me opportunities to communicate about NMC, as well as to listen/hear community feedback – positive and negative – about the College. In addition to these regular/formal engagement opportunities with external stakeholders, I also ‘show up’ for countless other organizations/events (e.g., from the Cherry Festival to Rotary’s Kids Free Fishing Day) – which further communicates my/NMC’s commitment to the wider community. The fact that I am so accessible to community members, communicates my willingness to listen and engage with the community. In turn, Trustees are not confronted with ‘community complaints’ or negative perceptions of the College.

I should also add that I annually participate in MCCA’s Capitol Day, as well as a handful of other times per year, meet with state legislators and local political leaders, in Lansing as well as hosting them on campus. Additionally, I have over the past five years, sustained a productive working relationship with all of our local media, and offer them regular access for interviews/coverage of NMC issues.

Additionally, I serve on a handful of national boards, like: the Community Colleges for International Development (CCID) Board of Directors and the National Association for Community College Entrepreneurship (NACCE) Board of Directors. My active engagement on these boards communicates support to faculty and staff, as well as my leadership commitment to two key areas of NMC focus: *international* and *entrepreneurship/innovation*.

A specific example of my engagement with external stakeholders that speaks to the relationships that I’ve developed over the past six years, is that I had the

privilege to attend Governor Whitmer's State of the State address on February 26, in the Michigan House Chambers, thanks to an invitation from State Representative John Roth. I was able to join him on the floor, along with Triston Cole, former Majority Leader of the Michigan House of Representatives. Both John and Triston are Northwestern Michigan College alums. It was great hearing the Governor's (and the bipartisan) support for community colleges. What I was able to communicate that evening was a message that cuts across party lines – that community colleges are an engine for driving socioeconomic mobility.

Regarding my communication with Board of Trustees, please see Competency #9, *Board Communications and Relations*, at the end of this section, where board communications is specifically addressed. I will share, specific to my communication with the Foundation Board and donors/supporters, this past year, I have had more than 30 meetings with donors/supporters and Foundation Board members, engaging in both stewardship and cultivation. Most of these meetings are held at my home and formally engage these individuals over a meal or social gathering.

(2) Teamwork

Willingness and ability to work for and with others to achieve a common goal.

My primary team is the President's Council. And, I consider the team to be 'high performing' (just look at the results being realized through the execution of our strategic plan). I also spend time with our Leadership Council, the 'next level' of leaders – e.g., PC's teams – meeting with them monthly, to communicate and help grow their leadership talent. I'm keenly aware that as President I must be focused on the development of *my team's teams*, our bench strength, and the need for ensuring the capability of others to *step up* when needed. I continue to invest in leadership development of our College's leaders – e.g., supporting their participation in MCCA's Leadership Academy, and Leadership Grand Traverse.

Considering the definition of this competency – *working with others to achieve a common goal* – just look at the results being realized across the College. From student success, to fiscal well-being, and enrollment growth, not to mention positive labor and media relations, and the fact that we've had another record-setting year of fundraising. There's an optimism and hopefulness about the College's future, being felt both internally and externally. Our teams are building trust and confidence through values-grounded and results-driven leadership. Of course, conflict is a natural (and healthy) part of any team. I continue to support

our teams to manage and transform conflict, mindful that *the relationship is the delivery system of anything we try to accomplish*. To that end, I've invested in a multi-year-team development process, engaging with an outside facilitator, to help us, as President's Council, grow together. Especially, considering the magnitude of the challenges that we're facing in the next five years, as we go about executing: the College's and Foundation's strategic plan (as well as a refreshed one for the College, next year), the campus master plan, the branding refresh, and beginning a new fundraising campaign – I must ensure that we're a high-functioning team. This multiyear-long process with the President's Council is designed to help us grow so we can deliver on these big goals.

Four examples of my personal investment in the development of our NMC leaders, include:

1. Craig Hadley - Craig Hadley, Executive Director & Chief Curator of the Dennos Museum, successfully defended his dissertation this past month, earning his Doctorate in Educational Leadership from Central Michigan University. His dissertation was titled, "The Application of Bolman and Deal's Four Frame Model to Organizational Leadership in Academic Museums".
2. Troy Kierczynski - Troy Kierczynski was recognized by the Record-Eagle in their annual publication, "Leaders of Northern Michigan". Troy has contributed to so many of our NMC achievements this past year: execution of year #1 of our campus master plan; a major reorganization of the facilities department, ending the decades-long contract with Sodexo and bringing the work back in-house, as well as the hiring of a stellar new team including Garrett Croon, Ben Herman, and Tom Caswell; the reimagining of our Security function; acquisition and renovation of the new Front Street apartments; leading the PESR program review process (realizing nearly \$1 million in cost savings and new revenue); not to forget, the on-time and under-budget Aviation Expansion project! And, as you know there was so much more: continuing to execute on the Safety and Security Assessment; planning for Osterlin renovation and the Boardman Lake Campus's future; as well as the Geothermal Project planning.
3. Kristy McDonald – Business Instructor and Co-Director of the Experiential Learning Institute, Kristy McDonald was awarded this past year's Outstanding Faculty Award from MCCA. This is a really big deal - being

honored as the best from more than 2000 full-time faculty in Michigan's 28 community colleges.

4. Laura Stevens – Laura Stevens, Director of Extended Educational Services, has been named one of the top twenty continuing educators in the country for 2026 by LERN (the largest lifelong learning association in the world). The recognition is for her pioneering research and work in documenting new financial contributions to the college, including continuing education student alumni donations. Her work will be showcased in a session, Know Your Value to the Institution, at the LERN 2025 Annual Conference Nov. 17-20, the country's largest conference in continuing education, with 1,500 attendees.

Also, thanks to the leadership of Hollie DeWalt (AVP HR) we initiated a New Leaders Learning Community (NLLC). We have done this in the past when we have had a number of new hires entering supervising/managing roles at NMC, to help support them in their development as leaders. Lori Hodek (Talent Development Coordinator) coordinated the NLLC, and together, they covered HR policies and practices, discussed NMC culture, answered questions, and helped remove barriers for new supervisors. Our intention is that the participants form a support network with their fellow employees, and grow together as college leaders.

(3) Productivity

Refers to the amount of acceptable work to be performed as efficiently and cost effectively as possible.

I consider myself to be a highly productive leader. This morning, before sitting down to work on this self-assessment, I received an email message from an executive leader from Traverse City, who shared (referencing the past week's Freshwater Research and Innovation Center groundbreaking and the Aviation Hangar and Fleet Expansion ribbon cutting), "I'm glad you're leading the growth in the direction you've been going - unthinkable progress ..." His comments are similar to the positive feedback that I hear from many in our community: they appreciate how engaged I am on campus and in the community, as well as the overall direction of the College, especially the growth. They also comment upon the positive change(s) and 'progress' being made. As you're well aware, such results are made possible thanks to many factors, including my productivity. Simply, I'm 115% committed to NMC!

(4) Dependability

The ability to accept and complete responsibilities.

I bring an action-oriented bias to NMC and the President's role. Thus, I've embraced this competency's charge to 'complete' responsibilities. And, I don't shy away from difficult challenges. Rather, I steadily push through challenges, in a calm, steady way – seeking to *finish what I start*. This year, we completed many initiatives, for example:

- Aviation Hangar and Fleet Expansion – growing our fleet, hangar space, and ultimately enrollment
- University Partners Relocation – to Beckett Building during summer 2025, per the Campus Master Plan consolidation strategy for the Boardman Lake Campus (allowing us to advance our effort to reimagine the Boardman Lake Campus as a strategic real estate)
- Front Street Flats Apartments Remodeling – where now, available units are 100% full, and current waiting list has increased to nearly 100 students, after adding 50 beds in April 2024
- Faculty Association Collective Bargaining Agreement – my second negotiated contract in the past six years), and we role modeled a values grounded, collaborative, and solution-minded approach, producing a mutually agreed upon contract, affording investments in our people/faculty, so they may continue to deliver on our strategic initiatives, while also maintaining good fiscal stewardship of the College

(5) Quality

The work provided is accurate, thorough and consistent.

There are a number of examples from around the College that one can look to as data points that speak to my championing of 'quality'. Let me offer four:

1. Surveying Program. This past year, the National Council of Examiners for Engineering and Surveying (NCEES) announced the winners of the 2025 NCEES Surveying Education Award: Penn State University College of Engineering and Northwestern Michigan College. NCEES awarded the

Northwestern Michigan College Surveying program the \$25,000 grand prize in the two-year program category. The award jury praised the program for being industry driven and providing a variety of professional pathways to students. Our NMC Surveying program uniquely affords students experience not just in land surveying, but also aerial and underwater surveying. I am especially grateful for Ryan Deering who has done an outstanding job recruiting for the program, as well as our faculty who deliver the high-quality instruction that has earned us this distinction.

See:

<https://www.traverseticker.com/news/nmc-surveying-program-named-best-in-the-country/>

2. Police Academy Pass Rate. NMC remains at a 100% pass rate for the Police Academy licensing exam. Simply, our students are graduating and realizing their goals/dreams 'getting to work' as police officers.
3. Instructor/Teaching Excellence. Already mentioned above, instructor Kristy McDonald was awarded this past year's Outstanding Faculty Award from MCCA. This is a really big deal - being honored as the best from more than 2000 full-time faculty in Michigan's 28 community colleges.
4. National Science Foundation Grant. This past month we were notified that John Lutchko (Director of NMC's Great Lakes Water Studies Institute) successfully partnered with Grand Valley State University (GVSU) in submitting - and landing - a National Science Foundation (NSF) grant. I am sure you know, NSF grants are highly competitive and difficult to earn. In fact, we believe that this might be a 'first ever' for the College (we're still trying to determine). The \$873,634 grant will provide the Great Lakes Water Studies Institute autonomous underwater vehicle capacities, and expands GVSU's role in northern Michigan, creating greater alignment with the Freshwater Research and Innovation Center. This grant will allow us to enter into an alliance with Grand Valley State University and the University of Notre Dame to develop a first-of-its-kind training program focused on artificial-intelligence-enabled deployment of autonomous underwater vehicles. The partnership is made possible by this three-year, \$873,634 grant from the National Science Foundation, and represents a level-up for NMC in multiple ways.

See:

<https://www.traverseticker.com/news/nmc-partners-with-grand-valley-notre-dame-for-groundbreaking-new-marine-technology-program/>

(6) Problem Solving

Ability to define and resolve problems in a timely manner with little to no harm done.

While my daily work as president is focused around problem solving and decision making, let me share an overarching example of problem solving – ensuring that the college is sustained in (near) perpetuity. I pride myself on shaping a high-performing team – our President’s Council – who together are able to develop and execute strategies in support of our mission – strategies that ultimately support student success, and do so in a way that ensures institutional financial viability. I have helped shape a narrative within the College that helps us solve the perennial problems related to financial well-being by not focusing simply on the problem of balancing the budget – e.g., trying to answer the question, *How are we going to survive [insert]?* Rather, I’ve helped us reframe this challenge, and shift our attention from mere survival to *thriving*. In other words, embracing entrepreneurial mindedness, innovative action, revenue diversification, and growth possibilities – so we might not merely survive, but rather thrive. The narrative I’ve embraced and share is:

- (1) The Higher Ed Landscape Remains Challenging – While we are in a stronger position than many colleges, the industry continues to face shifting demographics, funding uncertainties, and increasing competition.
- (2) We Must Stay Focused on the Future – Our long-term financial health depends on maintaining discipline, reinvesting in key priorities, and making strategic choices that support sustainable growth.
- (3) Responsible Stewardship and Staying Focused on Our Priorities is Key – While we have some financial flexibility, it’s important to stay focused on our priorities and ensure resources are used wisely to continue building a strong future for NMC.
- (4) We Must Align and Focus Our Efforts on Execution of Our Strategic Plan – The College faculty and staff (with support from the Board of Trustees,

Foundation, and our many community partners) must align and focus our efforts on execution of our strategic plan, recognizing that ‘we can do it’ – we have proven ourselves over the past three years, so we know that the future realization of our *next* strategic plan is possible.

(5) Our Collaborative Effort is Yielding Real Results – We’re producing real results, including for example: a financially sustainable outlook; enrollment growth (for 7-straight semesters); entrepreneurial-minded endeavors/growth plans being initiated; a growing sense of vibrancy on campus – fueled by excitement for our 75th Anniversary Celebration, as well as a new Foundation Campaign taking shape. The College is also executing what might be the largest campus revitalization ever (e.g., large, capital intensive initiatives), including: consolidation of the Boardman Lake Campus; the purchase of new apartments to support growing demand for student housing; the largest investment ever in expansion of our Aviation program; leadership in creation of the Freshwater Research and Innovation Center, to help drive regional economic development through growth of the blue-tech sector; commitment to investing in a one-stop-shop student services hub (Osterlin renovation); and the building of a new geothermal energy power plant, aligned with our commitment to sustainability; as well as future campus housing growth.

(6) Thrive! This reimagining of the College – our vision to make NMC a vibrant campus and workplace, a place where we (students and employees) *thrive* – is being enabled by our values in action. As we live our *brand*, as we leverage community *partnerships*, as we commit to *stewardship and sustainability*, and as we embrace *human-centeredness* – we believe that a thriving NMC culture will allow us to live into this vision of who we’re becoming and our desired future.

(7) Ethical Behavior

Surely, you have come to realize, over these past five years, that I am a ‘man of integrity’ (e.g., I act with the highest degree of ethics, personal responsibility, and match my actions with my words). The value of this to Trustees and the reputation of the College cannot be overstated. Simply, trustees are not required to deal with drama, scandal, ‘bad press’ or anything else that could threaten their personal reputation or the College’s institutional reputation. As already noted throughout this document, the media has carried many positive stories of NMC this year, which

reflect positively upon the Trustees. Simply, the College and Trustees were held in the most positive light, with NMC having an unprecedented year of positive media sentiment in news coverage. See Appendix A for a listing of positive media mentions.

As you know, this doesn't 'just happen'. It happens because you have a President who acts with the highest degree of integrity and ethical behavior. A President who is a role model for the rest of the College, encouraging those same high standards from everyone – e.g., shaping a culture of ethical behavior.

I am authentic and I believe wholeheartedly in the promise and possibilities that community college – and NMC – offer to students. My leadership, day-in and day-out is grounded in this belief: a belief in the importance of community colleges to serve the dreams of the students we serve:

- the students who serve their community and support their local economies
- they include veterans, single parents, and students with disabilities
- and they come from economic classes that give otherwise inaccessible opportunities to hardworking and ambitious people

They are looking to community college to:

- serve as an onramp to important lifelong careers
- for their community college education to qualify them for career opportunities that provide family-sustaining wages

Thus, my promise to our NMC stakeholders: to make students' lives better. My ethics are guided by my belief that students make a bet on higher education, a bet that they will earn a return of social and economic mobility. That they will get from their present 'here' to their desired 'there'. That we will make their lives better. They come to college to change their lives. There's no more meaningful and fulfilling job than mine – to do everything I can to enable that hope, so they win on that bet! We're a 'dreams factory'. The added benefit of being a community college, as you well know, is that we don't only transform students' lives, we also seek to 'enrich our communities' – community/regional prosperity is a part of our equation. How I behave – my ethics – are guided by this belief and this desire to help fulfill our promise to these students and the communities that we serve.

(8) Shared Governance

The ability to engage the College shared governance process.

My actions show that I recognize the importance and value of the representative involvement of all members of the College community in College-wide planning, policy formulation, and decision-making. My leadership actions have shown that I invite others to have a voice in how decisions are made. At NMC our governance councils provide the formal representative structure for articulating that voice. I personally lead two of our four college governance councils: President's Council and Leadership Council; Planning/Budget Council is chaired by Stephen Siciliano; and, Policy Council is currently chaired by a faculty member. However, I go beyond the formal councils, to also informally engage with faculty and staff – e.g., through conversations with them during my daily campus walkabouts, to informal pizza parties and cookouts to just ‘connect’ with them as colleagues. My personal engagement with the President's Council is weekly, and I meet monthly with the Leadership Council. As mentioned earlier, I initiated, this past year, a multiyear-long ‘team development’ process to further enhance the working relationships and effectiveness of the President's Council.

In addition, as you know, the Faculty Council is another representative body at the college, serving as a faculty senate, Faculty Council serves to represent faculty as part of shared governance. There is a formal practice of the President of the Faculty Association and/or the Chair of Faculty Council being invited to attend a minimum of two President's Council meetings per semester. Again, this minimum expectation is adhered to, with many more informal meetings with faculty occurring throughout the year. I am regularly invited into faculty member's classrooms and field trips to engage with their classes/students. This past year, I paid more than 20 visits to faculty in their classrooms, engaging with them and their students.

I also have an annual meeting with the President of the Faculty Association, simply designed to afford open, two-way communication. Obviously, it has helped build rapport and trust between us.

(9) Board Communications and Relations

Build and maintain effective Board-President relationships.

My communications with the Board of Trustees occurs in multiple ways, including:

- the monthly Board of Trustees Meeting
- my written Mid-Month Update
- monthly check-in/update meetings with the Chair of the BOT
- bi-annual lunch/check-in meetings with each trustee

- participation in all Committee Meetings (Audit, Building and Site, Executive, Fellows Nominating, Policy, and Presidential Performance and Compensation; as well as all Foundation Board and committee meetings)
- bi-annual Study Sessions and biennial Retreats with the BOT
- Special Alerts (e.g., the Hamburg’s visit to the Great Lakes Campus Harbor)
- Educational Materials (e.g., my sharing of “Trends in Higher Education Articles” in my Mid-Month Update)
- emails, phone calls, and face-to-face communications
- as well as an annual ‘Back to School’ gathering of the Board of Trustees and Foundation Board Executive Committee members
- additionally, special events afford informal communication opportunities, for example:
 - the Michigan Community College Association (MCCA) Board of Directors fall and spring board meetings, as well as the Summer Conference
 - MCCA Capital Day
 - the Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT) Annual Conference
 - NMC’s Opening Conferences (August and January), Annual Retiree Recognition Celebration, and many more events on campus
- and, lastly, informal connections occur regularly, for example:
 - Rotary meetings
 - Welcome Week Move In
 - International Affairs Forum
 - Northern Michigan Policy Conference and Traverse Connect Annual Celebration Gala
 - and, simply seeing folks ‘around town’

SECTION #3: LOOKING AHEAD TO ‘WHAT’S ON THE HORIZON’

What’s on the horizon? While much has been accomplished over these six years of my presidency, I am equally excited about the possibilities that lie ahead on the horizon. To that end, last year’s “Five Year Focus (2025-2029)” document will continue to inform my priorities. As we look ahead the following will be my ‘front and center’ priorities in this next year:

1. Continuing development and finalization of the College’s **next strategic plan** (due in January 2026), and then the execution of that three-year plan. Giving

special focus to our vision to make NMC a more vibrant campus and workplace, a place where we (students and employees) thrive.

2. Continuing implementation of our **campus master plan**, with special attention to:
 - a. Supporting the board's decision making process in reimagining the **Boardman Lake Campus**.
 - b. Continuing the conversion of our **power plant** to green/geothermal energy.
 - c. Deciding the financing plan for the **Osterlin renovation**/development of our new student services hub.
 - d. Continue to advance development of **student housing** growth plan.
3. Continuing to advance our **brand strategy** work, Phase II and Phase III.
4. Advancing the Foundation's **fundraising campaign** feasibility study conversation and decision making, followed by engagement with planning phase and transition into quiet phase.
5. Supporting **75th Anniversary** planning, and events execution.
6. Supporting the reimagining of NMC's **Office of Possibilities**, and the intentional refocusing of our OOPs efforts, to be more College-centric and aligned with our strategic plan priorities. Not an 'either-or' polarity of College versus community; but, simply seeking to rebalance our OOPs efforts, focusing more on innovation *within* the College.

See:

<https://www.traverseticker.com/news/how-nmcs-office-of-possibilities-became-a-key-driver-of-local-innovation/>

SECTION #4: STRATEGIC PLAN IMPLEMENTATION STATUS REPORT

This is Year 3, the final year of our present strategic plan, *NMC Next*, and affords us the opportunity to summarize the progress. Below is a list of each objective, status as of the close of Year 3, points of pride, and a summary of *NMC Next*, below:

- Year 1:
Year 1 of the Strategic Plan was completed on June 30, 2023. Metrics were added in September 2022 and updated three times a year (Fall and Spring enrollment, end of fiscal year). End of Year 1 resulted in two of the 24 objectives being closed.
- Year 2:
The development of Year 2 action steps began in November 2022 with preparation of a rough draft of action steps to support the objectives based on performance metrics. New and updated actions were finalized with the adoption of the FY24 budget, Year 1 Strategic Plan Actions were archived, and Year 2 Actions began to be implemented as of July 1, 2023. In addition to tracking the progress of the action steps, the performance of the metrics are also monitored.
- Year 3:
Year 3 planning began in November 2023 with feedback from champions occurring in December and January. Finalization of the Year 3 action steps occurred in spring 2024, with adoption on July 1, 2024, based on progress. The focus has been on the remaining open and lagging objectives, while monitoring performance of closed objectives. The current strategic plan came to a close on June 30, 2025, and a status of each objective is given below. Final metrics and lagging indicators will be updated late-2025.

As you know, the *next* Strategic Plan 2026 - 2029 is currently being developed.

Strategy 1: Future-Focused Education (Champion: Stephen Siciliano)

Enhance offerings through flexible academic pathways, innovative instructional delivery models, and relevant, hands-on educational experiences to empower global learners for the future.

Objective 1: Increase the annual number of students who receive prior learning credit from 236 to 270, using flexible academic pathways, by December 2024.			
Baseline	Target	Results	What's Next?
Students receiving credit for prior learning: 236 (3-year avg.)	Students receiving credit for prior learning: 270 by 12/31/2024	Students receiving credit for prior learning: 2022-23: 241 2023-24: 264 2024-25: 318 <i>GOAL MET</i>	Continue to work with regional career tech centers and Extended Education Services to identify more opportunities. Streamline process.
Objective 2: Increase the proportion of online courses in Fall semester to 30% and in Spring semester to 35%.			
Baseline	Target	Results	What's Next?
Proportion of online courses 28% (Fall 21) 30% (Spring 22)	Proportion of online courses 30% (Fall 24) 35% (Spring 25)	Proportion of online courses 27% (Fall 22, 23, 24) 33% (Spring 23) 32% (Spring 24) 33% (Spring 25) <i>INTENT MET</i>	Percentage of online and face-to-face classes continues to be determined by demand, advisor input, and instructor qualifications. Department chairs oversee this process.
Objective 3: Increase student success and completion rates in online courses from 87% to 90% and hybrid courses from 92% to 95% by developing additional teaching strategies by December of 2024.			
Baseline	Target	Results	What's Next?
NMC Completer Success Rates: Online 87% Hybrid 92%	Student Success Rates: Online 90% Hybrid 95% by 12/31/2024	Success Rates: F22: online 87%, hybrid 93% S23: online 88%, hybrid 91% F23: online 86%, hybrid 91% S24: online 88%, hybrid 91% F24: online 88%, hybrid 90% S25: online 87%, hybrid 88% <i>TARGET NOT MET,</i> performance aligns with face-to-face classes	Hybrid continues to match our face-to-face success rates with online similar. Shifted resources to the conversion to Canvas LMS software. Student success strategies aligned with our HLC work will be implemented in the next strategic plan.
Objective 4: Create six shortened course pathways (two courses in one semester) in multiple academic disciplines by May 2024.			
Baseline	Target	Results	What's Next?
Shortened pathways not tracked	6 shortened pathways by 5/15/2024	F22: 2 pathways F23: 11 pathways (23 courses) S24: 12 pathways (26 courses) F24: 8 pathways (23 courses) S25: 8 pathways (21 courses) <i>GOAL MET</i>	Continuing to monitor student success. Department chairs can offer accelerated pathways based on demand.
Objective 5: Every NMC credential will have at least one experiential learning opportunity (ELO) to ensure every credential seeking student will have an opportunity to experience at least one ELO at NMC by May 2025.			
Baseline	Target	Results	What's Next?
Experiential Learning Opportunities: not tracked	Current: Curricular mapping ensuring ELO in each credential	% of credential seeking students having an ELO experience: F22: 54% S23: 66%	The NMC Experience Transcript, or nEXt, endorsement will demonstrate ELI competencies. Debuting as a pilot in Spring 25, nEXt will roll out college-wide in Fall 25.

	Previous: ~ 100% of students by 9/15/2024	F23: 92% S24: 83% → 100% Audit of credential pathways: All have ELO experiences embedded. <i>GOAL EXCEEDED</i>	
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Strategy 1 Points of Pride and Celebration: The future-focused education strategy, led by Stephen Siciliano and our Educational Services Instructional Management Team (ESIMT) met the goals or the intention for each objective. Significant areas of pride include:

- Development of short-course sequencing, online and hybrid learning models that can be used by program coordinators and chairs to expedite learning where appropriate. Examples include law enforcement (1 semester academy) and marine technology (2-week intensive courses in partnership with industry).
- Pivoting to the Canvas LMS software by our Educational Technology team. All courses will use Canvas in Fall 2025.
- Experiential learning grew from providing an experiential learning opportunity (ELO) for each student to a robust endorsement entitled [the nEXt Endorsement](#), customizable based on student and program. The endorsement pilot was successfully launched in Spring 2025 and will move to scale in Fall 2025.
- Expanded our university and career tech center articulations and met our targets for increasing the number of students benefiting from prior learning assessment. Model will be used for more articulation agreements with our Extended Education and Training Services offerings.

Strategy 2: Student Engagement and Success (Champion: Todd Neibauer)
Develop and deliver comprehensive support services, robust engagement opportunities, and a vibrant collegiate experience to foster learner success, goal completion, and employability.

Objective 1: Increase student sense of belonging through participation in extra and co-curricular activities for first semester students to increase 1st semester persistence from 77.7% in Fall 2019 to 82% by Fall 2025.			
Baseline	Target	Results	What's Next?
77.7% 1st semester persistence (Fall 2019)	82% (Fall 2025)	F22 cohort: 78.2% F23 cohort: 83.1% F24 cohort: 82.1% <i>GOAL MET</i>	Student success and belonging will be aligned with HLC student success project and incorporated into the next strategic plan
Objective 2A: Implement new enrollment marketing plans to increase the percentage of area high school graduates attending NMC by 3 percentage points (from 41% to 44%) by Fall 2024.			
Baseline	Target	Results	What's Next?

41% (‘20 grads)	44% (Fall 2024)	‘21 grads: 37% ‘22 grads: 32.7% ‘23 grads: 32.7% ‘24 grads: 33.6% <i>TARGET NOT MET</i>	7 consecutive semesters of enrollment growth (including F25). Updated data will be available Feb 2026. Enrollment targets and initiatives will be included in the next strategic plan.
Objective 2B: Implement new enrollment marketing plans to increase enrollment in age categories 21* from 1,510 to 1,660 (10%) by Spring 2024. (Will continue through Spring 2025)			
Baseline	Target	Results	What’s Next?
1,510 (Spring ‘21)	1,660 (Spring ‘24)	S22: 1,601* S23: 1,401 S24: 1,428 S25: 1,549 F22: 1,475 F23: 1,445 F24: 1,560 F25: 1,586 <i>TARGET NOT MET</i>	7 consecutive semesters of enrollment growth (including F25). Enrollment targets and initiatives will be included in the next strategic plan. <i>* Spring ‘22 includes the first - and largest - cohort of MI Reconnect and Futures for Frontliner students completing their studies.</i>
Objective 3: Enhance student completion supports to increase the three year completion success rate from 38.9% to 40.4% by Spring 2025 (<i>Original, includes Yellow River cohorts</i>)			
Revised: Enhance student completion supports to increase the three year completion success rate from 35.1% to 40.4% by spring 2025. (<i>Updated, excludes Yellow River cohorts</i>)			
Baseline	Target	Results *	What’s Next?
35.1% (‘17- ‘18) (updated, excludes Yellow River cohorts)	40.4% (no change)	‘18-‘19: 34.4% ‘19-‘20: 30.4% ‘20-‘21: 33.9% ‘21-‘22: 36.7% (updated, data excludes Yellow River cohorts)	More recent data is showing an upward trend. The ‘21-‘22 cohort has the highest completion rate on our dashboard. <i>*Lagging data sets. Additional cohort data will continue to be pulled.</i>

		TBD - lagging data*	
Objective 4: Increase percentage of students using success coach services to increase College-level Course Enrollee Success Rate (2.0 and above) from 79.8% in Fall 2020 to 83% by Fall 2025.			
Baseline	Target	Results	What's Next?
79.8% (Fall '20)	83%	F21: 80.6% S22: 84.5% F22: 81.2% S23: 83.3% F23: 81.2% S24: 82.1% <i>INTENT MET</i>	Two permanent success coaches were added based on the Strategic Plan. Will continue to support students.

Strategy 2 Points of Pride and Celebration: This strategy, led by Todd Neibauer and our admissions and student success teams, in collaboration with PRMC, pushed the college forward on specific enrollment targets and student support initiatives. Highlights include:

- Development of the college's first aligned enrollment strategies, linking marketing to admissions around key programs.
- PRMC developed strategic integrated marketing campaigns for key NMC initiatives and programs resulting in increased inquiries and data tracking leading to increased contact hours and enrollment in GLCI, GLWSI, and other programs.
- While the lofty enrollment targets listed in the plan were not met, the college experienced 7 semesters of increased enrollment over the life of the plan, outpacing peer institutions.
- Three year increase in completion success rates.
- Dual enrollment tuition was restructured to encourage higher participation, with an increase of over 70 dual enrolled students for Fall 2025. Spring 2025 was the college's highest enrollment of high school students.
- Two permanent student success coaches have been added, as part of the plan, better supporting student success and encouraging persistence.

Strategy 3: Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (Champion: Marcus Bennett)

Cultivate an inclusive environment that fosters a sense of belonging and delivers equitable opportunities so all are able to thrive and succeed.

Strategy 3 - Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging			
Objective 1: Create a college DEIB statement of definition and purpose; receive President's Council approval, and share with the NMC Board of Trustees.			
Baseline	Target	Results	What's Next?

0%	100%	100% <i>GOAL MET</i>	Definitions completed Nov '22. Purpose Statement completed May '23. The next strategic plan will include vibrancy and belonging elements.
Objective 2: Implement staffing and resourcing for DEI efforts with the creation of at least a .5 FTE (Full-Time Equivalent) position by end of FY 2022.			
Baseline	Target	Results	What's Next?
0%	100%	100% <i>GOAL MET</i>	Objective completed July '22. The next strategic plan will include vibrancy and belonging elements.
Objective 3: Provide onboarding training and regular training opportunities on diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging for all NMC employees by August 15, 2023.			
Baseline	Target	Results	What's Next?
0%	100%	100% <i>GOAL MET</i>	Training has been implemented for new hires and current employees. A DEIB component was incorporated into our goal planning process for FY25. Looking at vibrancy and belonging related goals moving forward.
Objective 4: Address the barriers to entry and success of vulnerable student populations to improve application to enrollment statistics from 28% to 35% for BIPOC (Black, Indigenous , and People of Color) students and improve 12-month retention of all vulnerable populations by 3 percentage points by Fall 2025.			
Baseline	Target	Results	What's Next?
Application to Enrollment: 28%	Application to Enrollment: 35%	Application to Enrollment: F22: 26% F23: 22% F24: 21%	This goal resulted in barriers affecting all students being addressed as part of student success. Broad strategies will become part of our comprehensive student enrollment plan.
Retention: 77% (12 month retention)	Retention: 80% (12 month retention)	Retention: F22 to S23 = 77% F23 to S24 = 78% F24 to S25 = 78% <i>GOAL SUNSETTED</i>	Specifics related to application-to-enrollment targets were sunsetted due to limited community college data available.
Objective 5: Review and revise NMC systems, policies, and procedures for inclusive and equitable language and processes across college systems by Dec. 2025.			
Baseline	Target	Current Percent Complete	What's Next?
0%	100%	85%	As policies and procedures are brought forth for review, they will be viewed through an inclusion/belonging/equity lens in compliance with federal mandates.

Strategy 3 Points of Pride and Celebration: Strategy 3 led to Marcus Bennett serving as Special Assistant to the President for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI), the college's first position dedicated to DEI. Marcus' leadership resulted in many "firsts" including:

- A college wide DEIB statement and definitions that allow the college to create a better sense of student belonging resulting in better student experiences and retention.
- An HR goal model that can be used to allow the college employees to customize their own professional growth.
- Identification of barriers affecting student success and the implementation of process improvements to reduce these roadblocks including reduction in “holds” limiting registration, guest student procedure improvements, increased lactation spaces, residency policy reform, diversified repayment plans, auto awarding of certificates, and more.
- Mobile food pantry that resulted in a total of 57,639 pounds across 1,234 households supporting 3,725 individuals (including 1,716 children, 421 seniors, and 68 veterans) of which 61% were NMC-affiliated households.
- Development of an on campus Neurodiversity Support Center (led by faculty member Nancy Gray) and a partnership with Ready for Life, a nonprofit focused on inclusive communities and cultivating opportunities for people with disabilities to grow, learn, and achieve.
- A wide range of vibrancy-related events to better understand our college needs including the following over the past academic year:
 - Food for the Soul offerings were offered to the NMC community in January and February with a total of 499 participants.
 - Tax Preparation events: 31 NMC students or employees participated in free tax assistance.
 - Celebrating Inclusion: Employment and Disability event on April 22, 2025, collaboration with Disability Support, DEIB Advisory, and Michigan Rehabilitation Services.
 - NMC Pow Wow for graduates held on Saturday, April 26, 2025.
 - NMC Campus Block Party held on April 26, 2025.
 - We will continue our efforts with:
 - Veterans student group and support
 - Blair and Traverse Heights Elementary School partnerships
 - Mobile Food Pantry and the on-campus food pantry
 - Continued cultural events
 - More student life groups and events including Fall Welcome Weekends, Pine Palooza, and student groups

Strategy 4: Community Partnerships and Engagement (Champion: Jason Slade)

Enhance collaborations that advance community engagement, economic and workforce development, and innovative opportunities for lifelong learning.

Strategy 4 - Community Partnerships and Engagement*

** CAAS Methodology: In 2018, responding with “don’t know” was automatically scored as a “3.” For the 2025 survey, the methodology was updated to a new standard encouraging participants to give a numerical ranking. “Don’t know”*

was the last option offered. This has resulted in across-the-board reductions for median values and

<i>requires comparison across all scoring categories. EMC has seen this with other clients.</i>				
Objective 1: Leverage and enhance existing partnerships, and identify new key partnerships, in order to increase NMC’s overall job performance in responding to the “community’s learning needs” by 2.5% (3.87 to 3.97) in Grand Traverse County by 2024 using the Community Attitude and Awareness Survey (CAAS).				
CAAS 2018 (baseline)	Target	CAAS 2025 (results)*	Analysis	What’s Next?
5=Excellent, 1=Poor (5) = 23% (4) = 34% (3) IDK = 34% (2) = 4% (1) = 4% Mean = 3.87	Mean = 3.97	5=Excellent, 1=Poor (5) = 22% (4) = 37% (3) = 31% (2) = 6% (1) = 3% IDK = 1% Mean = 3.69 <i>INTENT MET</i>	The perception remained steady between 2018 and 2025. While the mean decreased due to methodology,* the above average ratings remained consistent.	The objective is aligned under “Expanding Partnerships” in the Foundation’s Strategic Plan which includes the 75th anniversary. Community partnerships are being considered as a component of the next strategic plan.
Objective 2: The community believes providing skilled trades instruction is the highest priority for NMC (8.86 CAAS, 2018), but rates NMC’s performance in this area lower (8.21 CAAS, 2018.) NMC will increase performance rating by 8% by Spring 2024. (<i>Leading indicator: Workforce offerings and associated enrollment</i>)				
CAAS 2018 (baseline)	Target	CAAS 2025 (results)*	Analysis	What’s Next?
10=Excellent 1=Extremely Poor (10) = 26% (8,9) = 29% (4-7) / IDK = 41% (2,3) = 2% (1)= 1% Mean = 8.21	Mean = 8.86	10=Excellent 1=Extremely Poor (10) = 21% (8,9) = 40% (4-7) = 34% (2,3) = 1% (1) = 1% IDK = 2% Mean = 7.73 <i>INTENT MET</i>	The perception remained improved between 2018 and 2025. While the mean decreased due to methodology*, the above average ratings increased, especially in the 8, 9 ranking.	Work will continue through the MiLEAP 60 by 30 grant spearheaded by Extended Education, Admissions, and MiWorks!
Objective 3: Providing personal enrichment has become more important for the community with scores increasing from 7.11 to 7.80 over the last three CAAS surveys. NMC will align lifelong learning opportunities to the community’s needs resulting in a less than 17% cancellation rate and be net revenue positive by June 30, 2025.				
Baseline	Target	Results	What’s Next?	

<p>Baseline (net loss FY21): (-\$485,000)</p> <p>Baseline (FY19 cancellation): 19.4%</p>	<p>Target: net revenue positive</p> <p>Target (cancellation): <17%</p>	<p>Net loss FY22: (-\$368,000) Net loss FY23: (-\$291,000) Net loss FY24: (-\$201,000) Net loss FY25: (-\$46,994) + \$118k back to academic areas for joint enrollment</p> <p>FY22 cancel: 17.1% FY23 cancel: 15.5% FY24 cancel: 20.2% FY25 cancel: 19.8% <i>INTENT MET</i></p>	<p>This objective becomes part of A3 process (department level) and is monitored.</p>	
<p>Objective 4: NMC will increase access to four year college programs by improving the “Providing access to other college programs” performance metric by 2.5% (from 8.29 to 8.50) in Grand Traverse County by 2024 as measured by the Community Attitude and Awareness Survey (CAAS). (<i>Leading indicator: *Next term transfer rate (Fall) for all institutions. Students who transfer to another college/university after NMC.</i>)</p>				
CAAS 2018 (baseline)	Target	CAAS 2025 (results)*	Analysis	What’s Next?
<p>10 = Excellent 1 = Extremely Poor</p> <p>(10) = 29% } 57% (8,9) = 28% } (4-7) / IDK = 40% (2,3) = 2% (1)= 1% Mean 8.29</p>	<p>Mean = 8.50</p>	<p>10 = Excellent 1 = Extremely Poor } 58% (10) = 24% } (8,9) = 34% (4-7) = 37% (2,3) = 2% (1) = 1% IDK = 2% Mean 7.73 <i>INTENT MET</i></p>	<p>The perception remained steady between 2018 and 2025. While the mean decreased due to methodology,* the above average ratings remained consistent.</p>	<p>Objective falls into our process with university partners and student & employer feedback.</p>

Strategy 4 Points of Pride and Celebration: Community partnerships resulted in a number of growth areas including workforce development, better collaboration with the NMC Foundation, alignment with our university partners during a critical transition to main campus, and a revamping of the Extended Education and Training offerings. Led by Jason Slade, and key leaders from student success, Extended Education, and the Foundation, successes included:

- Securing a 3D concrete printer, one of the first of its kind in Michigan, for our construction technology program through grants, donor support, and innovation initiatives
- Development of a workforce and professional training arm of EES to meet the needs of employers and industry partners and to serve as an onramp to academic pathways (“blurring the lines”). This was an area that had previously been led by “Training Services” which became Michigan Manufacturing Technology Center (MMTC). As of FY25, we have had over 594 workforce training participants enrolled in our noncredit and professional workforce training.
- EES was awarded a \$1.19M grant from the MiLEAP Office of Sixty by 30. Led by EES, the grant is a shared initiative with Northwest Michigan Works! and is

responsible for the creation of the Prosperity Region 2 NoMI Attainment Collaborative - comprised of community leaders, local government, nonprofit organizations, educational providers, employers, and industry partners - with the goal of providing an additional 2,000 people with post-secondary certificates or degrees.

- EES successfully launched two international tours and brought back a reimagined Campus Day on the Front Street Campus (generating over \$45K in net revenue) and connecting to the community.
- EES presented its first annual report in Fall 2024, bringing to light three critical areas of impact: 1. Fundraising & Recruitment (estimated value of \$3M+ since 2020), Employee Engagement & Retention (17% of employees take EES classes), and Academic Department Support (\$75K+).
- A significant financial turnaround by EES as they focused on operational efficiencies, a revamped pricing structure, “tiered” offerings, and expense reductions. The result was a \$300K improvement and an additional \$118k for academic areas through joint offerings (academic classes filled with noncredit enrichment students).
- Development of “Direct Connect” dual admission and similar programs with our university partners, creating seamless pathways from NMC to a four year degree program including joint advising and better alignment of financial aid services.
- Launch of a revised career and majors fair model that better integrated industry partners, academic programs, and community partners.
- Revision of our student resources for transfer, including decision-making guides, multimedia resources, and a new landing page and updated transfer guides.

Strategy 5 - Institutional Distinction and Sustainability (Champion: Troy Kierczynski)
Leverage distinctive programs that strengthen institutional sustainability and expand global connections for our learners and communities.

Objective 1: Aviation will execute its multi-phase expansion plan in an effort to increase enrollment by 25% and annual net revenues by 33% from June 30, 2021 to June 30, 2024.						
Baseline	Target	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25	What's Next?
June 30, 2021	June 30, 2025	June 30, 2022	June 30, 2023	June 30, 2024	June 30, 2025	Student enrollment ramp up is beginning.
Headcount: F140, S118	Headcount: F175, S175	Headcount: F143, S145	Headcount: F164, S147	Headcount: F173, S154	Headcount: F171, S143	
Contact hrs: 1,818	Contact hrs: 2,300	Contact hrs: 2,093	Contact hrs: 2,298	Contact hrs: 2,337	Contact hrs: 2,385	

Net Rev: +\$248,167	Net Rev: +\$330,062	Net Rev: +\$189,155	Net Rev: +\$517,352	Net Rev: +\$454,714	Net Rev: +\$723,864 GOAL MET	
Objective 2: The Great Lakes Water Studies Institute (GLWSI) will leverage its assets and geographical position on the Great Lakes to become a leading center for marine and geospatial programs, providing academic pathways, training and professional development, and other innovative technical services which generate positive net revenue by June 30, 2025.						
Baseline	Target	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25	What's Next?
June 30, 2021	June 30, 2025	June 30, 2022	June 30, 2023	June 30, 2024	June 30, 2025	Has been transitioned to the college's Program Enhancement and Sustainability Review (PESR) process. Will be shared with the BoT.
Headcount: F57, S53	Headcount: F75, S75	Headcount: F53, S49	Headcount: F49, S50	Headcount: F59, S50	Headcount: F50, S51	
Contact hrs: 460	Contact hrs: 600	Contact hrs: 468	Contact hrs: 426	Contact hrs: 593	Contact hrs: 534	
Net Loss: (-\$340,080)	Net Rev: \$1	Net Loss: (-\$303,698)	Net Loss: (-\$344,708)	Net Loss: (-\$339,308)	Net Loss: (-\$296,855) TARGET NOT MET	
Objective 3: The Great Lakes Culinary Institute will execute its "Reimagining" plan, which is to modernize curriculum, increase enrollment, and maximize utilization of the current Lobdell's space to achieve a net deficit no greater than \$150,000 by June 30, 2023.						
Baseline	Target	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25	What's Next?
June 30, 2021	June 30, 2023	June 30, 2022	June 30, 2023	June 30, 2024	June 30, 2025:	Objective becomes part of A3 process (department level) and is monitored
Headcount: F76, S62	Headcount: F90, S80	Headcount: F79, S63	Headcount: F74, S75	Headcount: F91, S76	Headcount: F99, S84	
Contact Hrs: 1,904	Contact Hrs: 2,750	Contact Hrs: 2,563	Contact Hrs: 2,270	Contact Hrs: 2,637	Contact hrs: 2,814	

Net Loss: (-\$375,967)	Net Loss: (-\$150,000)	Net Loss: (-\$362,698)	Net Loss: (-\$27,659)	Net Rev: +\$85,220	Net Rev: +\$43,136 <i>GOAL MET</i>	
<p>Objective 4A: The Dennon Museum Center will execute the key financial stewardship initiatives from the DMC Strategic Plan 2020–2025 by June 30, 2025. <i>Note: The full dashboard of actions are captured in the DMC Strategic Plan. The metrics below are key performance indicators and takeaways from their comprehensive plan.</i></p> <p>Status of Action Steps: 7 Completed, 3 On Schedule, 1 Behind Schedule, 1 Not Yet Started, 3 Deferred/Discontinued</p>						
Baseline	Target	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25	What's Next?
FY20 federal and state grant funding: 1 state grant @ \$15-20k avg.	Secure at least 2 federal or state grants each FY to support collections & accreditation progress	FY22 federal and state grant funding: 4 grants @ \$88,700	FY22 5 grants @ \$83,610	FY24 federal, private, state grant funding: 4 grants @ \$58,599	FY25: 8 @ \$82,489	
FY20 <i>Annual Giving (gifts <\$25,000)</i> # donors: 237 Revenue: \$83,049 <i>Appeal Perform:</i>	Increase Annual Fund performance 25% over baseline	FY22 <i>Annual Giving (gifts <\$25,000)</i> # donors: 403 Revenue: \$137,210 <i>Appeal Perform:</i>	FY23 <i>Annual Giving (gifts <\$25,000)</i> # donors: 398 Revenue: \$143,037 <i>Appeal Perform:</i> # appeals: 5	FY24 <i>Annual Giving (gifts <\$25,000)</i> # donors: 311 Revenue: \$120,557 <i>Appeal Perform:</i>	FY25 <i>Annual Giving (gifts <\$25,000)</i> # donors: 260 Revenue: \$60,345 <i>Appeal Perform:</i> # appeals: 2	Annual Giving activity has been generated by a successful fall appeal letter (110 donors gave \$19,470) and a successful #GivingTuesday campaign (20 donors gave \$17,750). On track to meet or exceed last year's annual giving totals.

# appeals: 4		# appeals: 6	# donors: 140	# appeals: 5	# donors: 237	
# donors: 153		# donors: 301	Revenue: \$68,193	# donors: 81	Revenue: \$48,945	
Revenue: \$26,660		Revenue: \$72,973		Revenue: \$52,100	*all revenue numbers are tentative	
FY20: Members: 857 Revenue: \$73,968	Encourage more members to join at higher levels to ↑ revenue	FY22: Members : 875 Revenue: \$81,955	FY23: Members: 896 Revenue: \$84,980	FY24: Members: 1,063 Revenue: \$90,430	FY25: Members: 1,062 Revenue: \$94,722 <i>GOAL MET</i>	Increased the number of memberships. Seen an increase in lapsed rejoins, most after a recent visit or attendance of a program.
Baseline: average \$7,500 net revenue from previous FYs	↑Artist Market performance 25% over baseline	FY22: Net: \$12,102 Attendance: 1,915	FY23: Net: \$17,875 Attendance: 2,226	FY24: Net: \$19,670 Attendance: 2,688	FY25: Net: \$21,427 Attendance: 2,733	Has been transitioned to the college's Program Enhancement and Sustainability Review (PESR) process.
Objective 4B: The International Affairs Forum will execute the IAF Business Plan for Strategic Growth to create a sustainable business operation by June 30, 2025.						
Baseline	Target	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25	What's Next?
FY20: Members: 203	FY25: Members : 300	June 30, 2022 Members :	June 30, 2023 Members: 238	June 30, 2024 Members: 265	June 30, 2025 Members: 317	Objective becomes part of A3 process (department level) and is monitored

Net loss: (\$2,979)	Net rev: \$50,000	218 Avg attendance: 76 in-person 111 virtual Net rev: +\$24,462	Avg attendance: 167 in-person 81 virtual Net rev: -\$21,229	Avg. attendance: 181 in-person 75 virtual Net rev: \$115,091 (includes \$70k gift)	Avg. attendance: 236 in-person 81 virtual Net rev: \$25,000 est. <i>GOAL MET</i>	
Objective 4C: WNMC will execute the action steps defined in the report “Refocusing WNMC: A 5-Year Plan” to increase engagement/listenership and sustain WNMC's operations by June 30, 2025.						
Baseline	Target	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25	What's Next?
June 30, 2021:	June 30, 2025:	June 30, 2022:	June 30, 2023:	June 30, 2024:	June 30, 2025:	Objective becomes part of A3 process (department level) and is monitored
Net Loss: (\$5,679)	Net Zero: \$0	Net Loss: (\$35,028)	Net Rev: +\$30,925	Net Rev: +\$11,567	Net Rev: +\$15,833	
Spots Filled: 28%	Spots Filled: 85%	Spots Filled: 72%	Spots Filled: 75%	Spots Filled: 80%	Spots Filled: 75% <i>GOAL MET</i>	
Objective 5: The GLMA and GLCI will leverage existing expertise and resources to develop and offer a maritime culinary certificate by Fall 2023, which will expand opportunities for students in this niche, high-demand area.						
Baseline	Target	Results				What's Next?
N/A - new program	100%	100% <i>GOAL MET</i>				Certificate modified (June 2025)

					Objective becomes part of A3 process (department level) and is monitored
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Strategy 5 Points of Pride and Celebration: Often referred to as the “plan within the plan,” the distinctive program and sustainability strategy resulted in growth and stabilization for many of our most critical programs. Highlights include:

- An expansion of our aviation program to accommodate 33% more students, reducing our waitlist and better serving the aviation industry. This objective includes a \$7.5M hangar renovation and expansion project (including a 50% increase in cold and warm storage capacity) that remains on time and under budget, an expansion of the fleet from 14 to 21 airplanes, and a revamped staffing model.
- Great Lakes Culinary Institute completely “reimagined” their educational approach resulting in a financial improvement of over \$400k annually!
- The Freshwater Research and Innovation Center, a 38,000 sf, \$28M facility focused on “blue” technology research, innovation, education, and economic development was seeded by this strategy.
- The International Affairs Forum not only stabilized but thrived through this strategy including a record number of members, increased attendance per event, a stronger relationship with the Foundation and financial stability.
- WNMC developed a sustainable funding model and is becoming more integrated into the college including highlighting community members, sharing program updates and live broadcasts from new student orientations.
- The Dennon Museum Center recently launched a rebranding effort in conjunction with the NMC campus rebrand–this will represent the first major refresh of the DMC identity since 2009. The new DMC brand identity should roll out during the museum’s 35th anniversary in 2026 and will align with the museum’s mission to build community, spark conversation, and inspire change for our campus and community.
- NMC developed and launched a Culinary Arts certificate with Maritime emphasis, a specialty field with high industry demand and high salaries.

APPENDIX A: POSITIVE MEDIA MENTIONS

Future Focused Education

[NMC unveils 3D concrete printer, aiming to address housing and labor shortages](#)
UpNorth Live, July 16, 2025

[First class: How NMC's long-in-the-works BSN degree changes the lives of its inaugural graduates](#)
TCBN, March, 2025

[Historic Robinson Bay tugboat to get new home at Great Lakes Maritime Academy](#)
UpNorth live, January 17, 2025

[Big Little Hero Race marks 10 years of fun, community and experiential learning](#)
Record Eagle, April 10, 2025

Student Success & Engagement

[MiLEAP Launches Advisory Council on Transfer Success](#)
MiLEAP, September 12, 2025

[NMC helping pioneer Esports industry at the collegiate level](#)
UpNorth Live, July 3, 2025

[Accelerated course for child care workers open](#)
Record Eagle, July 2, 2025

[From boat engines to forensics: Michigan teens explore careers](#)
News Review, June 11, 2025

[Pride Month celebrations in northern Michigan](#)
Northern Express, May 31, 2025

[NMC ramps up efforts to secure state funding for long-planned student service hub](#)
Ticker, March 20, 2025

[NMC enrollment numbers on the rise again after years of decline](#)

Ticker, November 7, 2024

DEIB

[NMC to unveil new pilot program for college-aged individuals with intellectual disabilities](#)

Ticker, May 18, 2025

[Pow wow at NMC will celebrate Native American graduates](#)

Interlochen Public Radio, April 26, 2025

[NMC providing free tax preparation assistance to students and staff](#)

Ticker, February 27, 2025

[Observing Native American Heritage Day](#)

WNEM5, November 29, 2024

[NMC expands services for neurodiverse students](#)

UpNorth Live, November 5, 2024

Community Partnerships

[NMC Partners With Grand Valley, Notre Dame For Groundbreaking New Marine Technology ...](#)

The Ticker, September 14, 2025

[Cherry Capital Airport conducts emergency simulation exercise](#)

9&10, September 2, 2025

[How NMC's Office of Possibilities became a key driver of local innovation](#)

Ticker, July 13, 2025

[Freshwater Innovation Panel at TC NewTech](#)

Record Eagle. July 9, 2025

NMC and Michigan Works! partner to increase adult education -
9&10, June 20, 2025

NMC partners with Michigan Works! to expand EV program
9&10, June 11, 2025

NMC's Scholarship Open returns from hiatus Aug. 6
Record Eagle, June 8, 2025

NMC: \$1.19M will launch new push for adult learners
Record-Eagle, May 31, 2025

Annual NW MI Art and Culture Summit scheduled for this weekend
Ticker, May 29

Big Little Hero Race marks 10 years of fun, community and experiential learning
Record Eagle, April 10, 2025

Featured on the Four: March 17 - Big Little Hero Race
9&10, March 18, 2025

First class: How NMC's long-in-the-works BSN degree changes the lives of its
inaugural graduates
TCBN, March 2025

10 Colleges With Winemaking Programs
US News, February 25, 2025

Change is needed' Crowd walks for Hunger & Homelessness
Record Eagle, November 21, 2024

North Ed Foundation launches with \$400K in college commitments
Record Eagle. November 14, 2024

Institutional Distinction & Fiscal Stewardship

[NMC Partners With Grand Valley, Notre Dame For Groundbreaking New Marine Technology ...](#)

Ticker, September 14, 2025

[FRESHWATER FUTURE STARTS NOW](#)

Record Eagle, September 13, 2025

[NMC aviation program soars to new heights](#)

Record Eagle, September 10, 2025

[The push for more merchant mariners](#)

WDET, September 9, 2025

[NMC surveying program named best in the country](#)

Ticker, September 5, 2025

[This Traverse City-Based Startup Wants To Revolutionize PFAS Testing](#)

Ticker, August 24, 2025

[NMC International Affairs Forum Features Experts On U.S.](#)

Ticker, August 21, 2025

[Historic tugboat donation boosts training at Great Lakes Maritime Academy](#)

UpNorth Live, July 9, 2025

[NMC official adopts 'Boardman Lake campus' as new name for University Center](#)

Ticker, May 24, 2025

[NMC proceeds with geothermal project](#)

Record-Eagle, May 11, 2025

[The Legacy of Student Activism: International Affairs Forum to host event featuring NMC student leaders and guest speakers](#)

Northern Express, April 12, 2025

[The Blue Economy in Traverse City](#)

Northern Express, March 15, 2025

[10 Colleges With Winemaking Programs](#)

US News, February 25, 2025

[Blue Tech Challenge aims at gathering business solutions to Great Lakes problems](#)

Interlochen Public Radio, January 26, 2025