

**NORTHWESTERN MICHIGAN COLLEGE
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
STUDY SESSION MINUTES
Monday, September 28, 2026
Timothy J. Nelson Innovation Center
Room 106/107**

CALL TO ORDER—Chair Mark Keely called the regular meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Trustees present: Mark B. Keely, Jody N. Lundquist, Laura J. Oblinger, Pamela T. Horne, Kennard R. Weaver, Andrew K. Robitshek

Trustees absent: Kenneth E. Warner

Also present: President Nick Nissley, Lynne Moritz, Terri Gustafson, Ryan Bernstein, Troy Kierczynski, Hollie DeWalt, Todd Neibauer, Stephen Siciliano, Jason Slade, Diana Fairbanks, Molly Norville

REVIEW OF AGENDA—The agenda was accepted as presented.

PUBLIC INPUT—There was no public input offered.

DISCUSSION: Artificial Intelligence at NMC – President Nick Nissley noted that the college's strategic plan has artificial intelligence (AI) in strategy one, objective one.

In reviewing three tensions the college is navigating, Nissley noted that AI offers opportunities in teaching and learning, academic operations, and administrative productivity. First, moving too slowly risks leaving students and employees behind, but moving too quickly raises issues around cybersecurity, academic integrity, and unreliable AI outputs. To avoid both extremes, Nissley noted the college must move quickly enough to learn, and carefully enough to maintain confidence. Secondly, the college is balancing efficiency with human connection. Third, Nissley noted the college must navigate employee readiness and student preparedness—ensuring workforce relevance to develop AI literate and fluent graduates who are workforce ready and prepared to meet the demands of the region's employers.

Dr. Terri Gustafson, Director of Academic Affairs and Educational Technology, and Ryan Bernstein, Curriculum & Instructional Designer, are the champions of the college's strategy one objective one: strengthen student outcomes, institutional performance, and workforce readiness by embedding responsible and effective use of AI across teaching, learning, and operations. Gustafson and Bernstein presented on the people, policies, and projects the college is currently engaging in around AI. Gustafson and Bernstein reviewed the action steps planned to support this objective. Action steps include surveying employers and university partners, developing an AI decision-making framework to apply when considering AI platforms for adoption. Trustees shared perspectives from regional networks and community partners, including a roundtable held by Traverse Connect in July 2026.

Bright spots of AI at NMC include AI Navigators, an incoming Executive Director of Information Technologies, recognizing the spectrum of adoption, and continuing ongoing training for employees. Gustafson also emphasized that a scan of MCCA member institutions regarding AI showed that NMC is far ahead in policy, training, and working with partners.

In closing, Gustafson emphasized supporting AI innovation at the college by providing bumpers, and not guardrails, to encourage experimentation while minimizing risk. The Board expressed confidence and pride that the college is assertively engaging in AI.

REVIEW OF FOLLOW-UP REQUESTS—Confirmed requests made by the Board that require administrative follow-up for information to be provided to the Board at a later date.

- Responses to AI, policy, programs, querying of educational and industry partners, etc. would be a good conference session for next summer MCCA and next fall ACCT

ADJOURNMENT—The meeting adjourned at 4:32 p.m.

Recorded by Lynne Moritz, Executive Director of the President's Office and Board Operations.

SIGNED _____



Mark B. Keely, Chair

ATTESTED _____



Pamela T. Horne, Secretary