

MINUTES
NORTH CENTRAL MICHIGAN COLLEGE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
REGULAR MEETING – Library Conference Rooms 1 & 2
Tuesday, July 28, 2026 (4:00 p.m.)

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Pretty called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

2. ATTENDANCE ROLL CALL TAKEN:

PRESENT: Trustees Etienne, Fought, Keiswetter, Kromm, Pretty, Shirilla and Wozniak

ABSENT: None

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

It was moved by Trustee Etienne and supported by Trustee Shirilla that the agenda be approved as written.

AYES: Trustees Etienne, Fought, Keiswetter, Kromm, Pretty, Shirilla and Wozniak

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

It was moved by Trustee Keiswetter and supported by Trustees Kromm and Wozniak that the minutes of June 23, 2026, Special Meeting, Special Meeting Closed Session, and Regular meeting be approved as written.

AYES: Trustees Etienne, Fought, Keiswetter, Kromm, Pretty, Shirilla and Wozniak

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

5. STUDENT SUCCESS

President Finley welcomed NCMC Counselor, Dr. Joelle Drader. Dr. Drader shared a one-page summary on a capacity building partnership between North Central and the Mental Health Improvement through Community College (MHICC).

The kickoff summary highlighted North Central's strengths, including Dr. Drader as an important resource for students, strong growth and creativity in expanding mental health supports for students, a strong culture of care, and a high level of awareness across the North Central Community around mental health resources.

It also noted challenges including transportation barriers, heterogeneous student populations and needs, and resource stress that stems from our location 'north of the knuckles' including limited medical and mental health infrastructure.

Needs and recommendations included increasing in-person mental health capacity, creation of a no-wrong-door care navigation system, improved communication around available resources, continued training of faculty and staff, and addressing students' basic needs by further integrating supports for transportation, food, housing, childcare, and mental health.

6. COMMUNICATIONS

President Finley shared the following communications:

a. NCMC announces new dental hygiene associate's degree program

The Harbor Light News picked up the announcement and UpNorthLive ran a story on the launch of North Central's Dental Hygiene program. News of the first dental hygiene program 'north of the knuckles' has picked up momentum.

You may view UpNorthLive's story here: <https://upnorthlive.com/news/local/north-central-michigan-college-to-launch-dental-hygiene-program-raising-10m-to-fund-it-emmet-county-first-in-northern-michigan>

b. NCMC Powers Northern Michigan

Brett Binkley with The American Dream Network visited campus to conduct an interview with President Finley. Episode 7/26 aired nationally July 11th alongside a few other Michigan episodes. This episode spoke to NCMC's continued growth including fast track, dental hygiene and nursing programs, dormitory living, and the new 12,000 square foot tech and trades facility

The episode can be viewed at <https://americandreamnetwork.tv/>

c. Michigan budget supports NCMC workforce expansion

On July 8, 2026, North Central issued a press release that has been picked up by the Petoskey News Review, 9 & 10 News, UpNorthLive, MLive, and the American Society for Engineering Education. The Michigan Legislature has approved nearly \$6 million in funding for workforce education projects at North Central, including the proposed Skilled Trades Education Pathways (STEP) Center and the college's planned dental hygiene facility.

You may read the press release here: <https://www.ncmich.edu/community-events/news-and-press-releases/state-funding-step-center-dental-hygiene.html>

d. Michigan Reconnect offers expanded opportunities for adult learners

On July 23, 2026, North Central issued a press release noting expanded Michigan Reconnect opportunities to adults 21 and older.

As part of Michigan's newly signed fiscal year 2027 budget, adults 21 years of age and older are now eligible for Michigan Reconnect tuition assistance, lowering the previous eligibility age from 25 and expanding access to affordable higher education for thousands more Michigan residents.

North Central Michigan College is offering several opportunities for prospective students to learn more about the program and the enrollment process.

You may view the full press release here: <https://www.ncmich.edu/community-events/news-and-press-releases/michigan-reconnect-expands-tuition-assistance-adults-21-older.html>

7. SCHEDULED PUBLIC COMMENT. None.

8. FINANCIAL REPORT

Dr. Tom Zeidel, Vice President for Finance & Facilities, was asked by Chair Pretty to provide a financial report for June 2026. Tom certified that the financials as of June 2026 are within the adopted amended budget for 2025-26.

9. PRESIDENT'S REPORTS

a. Early College MOUs Renewed with Five Local School Districts

I'm happy to report that Director of Admission Chelse Hawkins-Olivo, Dual Enrollment Coordinator Cara Deschermeier, and I recently met with the Superintendents of Public Schools of Petoskey, Boyne City Public Schools, Cheboygan, Inland Lakes and Gaylord Community Schools. We have renewed the Early College Memorandum of Understanding with each district. These MOUs are the agreements that outline our partnerships with each district allowing their students to earn college credits by completing coursework at their home high school and the North Central campus using on-campus, online, hybrid, distant learning and/or field experiences. Thank you to Chelse and Cara for your efforts to keep these partnerships strong.

b. Office Management Certificate Program

In accordance with our approval process, I concur with the recommendation of the Curriculum Review and Academic Policies (CR/DAP) Committee to authorize the establishment of a new Office Management Certificate program.

I would like to thank Dean Michele Andrews, professor Jane Bowe, CR/DAP Committee Chair Kim Drury, and the committee members for their diligent work in developing a strong and well-considered program proposal.

c. HLC Approves Dental Hygiene AAS Program

On June 26, 2026, we received formal notification from the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) that the Institutional Actions Council (IAC) have officially approved the Dental Hygiene AAS program. Congrats to all who have had a hand in this achievement.

We are still seeking approval from the Commission on Dental Accreditation (CODA), so we cannot yet accept applications to the planned program. However, we may now discuss the preprogram requirements and what the planned program will look like once we've received CODA accreditation. The CODA Accreditation process can take 12-18 months to complete. (Students are able to take prerequisite courses prior to CODA approval.) The application to CODA was submitted 3-4 months ago, and we are anticipating a Fall 2028 program launch.

d. Spartan Writing Camp

The Top of the Mitt 2026 Spartan Writers' Camp North was hosted at the College over the past few weeks. The writing camp started Monday July 6 and students grades K-8 attended through this past Friday, July 24.

10. COMMITTEE REPORTS

a. Finance & Facilities Committee

Trustee Fought shared that the Finance & Facilities Committee met on Tuesday, July 21. Actual revenues and expenses for fiscal year 2025-26 were compared with the amended balanced budget for that fiscal year adopted during the board's June regular meeting. That comparison is found in the board packet.

The Committee also reviewed the favorable report received from the Personnel Committee regarding President Finley's 2025-26 performance, and its recommendation of a 3% salary increase for him for fiscal year 2026-27. This percentage increase is consistent with the percentage increase received by other full-time college personnel for fiscal year 2026-27.

The Finance Committee agreed with this percentage increase. The committee also agreed with a three-year extension to President Finley's contract as recommended by the Personnel Committee.

Trustee Fought motioned and Trustee Keiswetter supported that the board approve a 3% increase in salary for President Finley for the fiscal year July 1, 2026 – June 30, 2027, based on his favorable performance review and that his contract be extended through fiscal year 2030.

AYES: Trustees Etienne, Fought, Keiswetter, Kromm, Pretty, Shirilla and Wozniak

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

11. OLD BUSINESS. None.

12. NEW BUSINESS. None.

13. UNSCHEDULED PUBLIC COMMENT. None.

14. ADJOURNMENT.

There being no further business, Trustee Fought motioned, and Trustee Kromm supported the meeting be adjourned at 4:29 p.m.

AYES: Trustees Etienne, Fought, Keiswetter, Kromm, Pretty, Shirilla and Wozniak

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None



/S/ Keith A. Pretty, J.D., Chairman



/S/ Melissa Keiswetter, Secretary