

MINUTES
NORTH CENTRAL MICHIGAN COLLEGE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
REGULAR MEETING – Library Conference Rooms 1 & 2
Tuesday, March 24, 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 (via phone), Pretty, and Wozniak

ABSENT: Trustees Kromm, and Shirilla

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

AYES: Trustees Etienne, Fought, Keiswetter (via phone), Pretty, and Wozniak

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Trustees Kromm, and Shirilla

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

It was moved by Trustee Fought and supported by Trustee Wozniak that the minutes of the February 24, 2026, Regular Meeting be approved as written.

AYES: Trustees Etienne, Fought, Keiswetter (via phone), Pretty, and Wozniak

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Trustees Kromm, and Shirilla

5. STUDENT SUCCESS

Early Childhood Education Program Coordinator and Faculty Jennifer Wixson introduced Michaela Ford. Michaela Ford, joined by her young daughter, is a student parent here at North Central. In addition to her role as a full-time nursing student, Michaela is a mother of two, a full-time medical assistant at the hospital, and runs a family business.

Michaela is a founding member of Student Parents Advisory Group (SPAG), where she offers insight and serves as a leader for other student parents. She is a great example of perseverance and determination and overall quality of our students.

Michaela shared she has worked in the medical field for ten years, starting as a CMA. She graduated with her associate's degree in general studies in April 2025 and decided to apply to the nursing program and was accepted. She really enjoyed a recent clinical rotation in the emergency department.

She noted the support system the college has in place for student parents has been very helpful. Kristin Jardine has been able to answer questions and guide her along the way. She and her family both appreciate the support they have received in this endeavor.

6. COMMUNICATIONS

President Finley shared the following communications:

a. Summer Learning Academy Returns This Year

In the February 25 issue of Harbor Light News, the return of the College's Summer Learning Academy was featured on the front page.

North Central's Summer Learning Academy will feature an exciting lineup of hands-on, interactive programs designed to inspire young minds. Running from June 22 through August 20, the nine-week academy offers engaging learning experiences for students entering grades 3-5 through 6-8. Morning and afternoon sessions are available.

The full story can be found here: <https://www.harborlightnews.com/articles/college-summer-learning-academy-returns-this-year/>

b. Applications Open for NCMC's Presidential Scholarship

In the February 25 issue of Petoskey News Review, Janis Reeser reported that North Central is again awarding a full-tuition Presidential Scholarship to one graduating senior from a homeschool within the service area.

The scholarship covers up to 20 contact hours per fall and winter semesters and up to six contact hours in the summer.

The full story can be found here:

<https://www.petoskeynews.com/story/news/education/2026/02/25/applications-open-for-north-central-michigan-college-presidential-scholarship/88726071007/>

c. Project Connect Event to be Rescheduled in April

The Project Connect event that was originally scheduled for March 18 has been rescheduled for April 22 as a result of the recent blizzard. This day of service for those in need in Charlevoix, and Emmet Counties will be connected with a range of health and human services provided by 80+ local non-profit agencies and other businesses.

More Information can be found here: <https://www.projectconnect231.com/>

d. Dr. Leaver Discusses AI

On March 4, Harbor Light News featured an article submitted by Charlie MacInnis. The article spoke to a recent Luncheon Lecture featuring Dr. Melanie Leaver, Associate Dean of Distance Learning and Instructional Design here at North Central. She gave an overview of Artificial Intelligence (or AI) on February 27. Melanie did a fantastic job and the presentation was well received.

The full article may be found here: <https://www.harborlightnews.com/articles/professor-discusses-artificial-intelligence-uses-and-cautions/>

e. Training Exercise Gives Nursing and EMS Students Real-World Skills

On March 12, Petoskey News Review's Jillian Fellows reported on a training exercise that took place with NCMC nursing and EMS students. The exercise included EMS and nursing students, and many area emergency response teams.

Details can be found here: <https://www.petoskeynews.com/story/news/2026/03/12/winter-training-exercise-gives-ncmc-nursing-ems-students-real-world-skills/89100105007/>

f. New Transfer Pathway Expands Bachelor's Options with Central Bound

On March 18, Harbor Light News picked up a North Central press release.

North Central students will soon have a clearer path to earning a bachelor's degree through Central Bound, a new partnership with Central Michigan University designed to simplify transfer and help students move efficiently from an associate degree to a four-year program.

The Central Bound program allows students to be admitted to both North Central and CMU at the same time. Students begin their studies at North Central while receiving coordinated advising and academic planning from both institutions, ensuring that coursework applies directly toward a CMU bachelor's degree.

The full press release may be read here: <https://www.ncmich.edu/community-events/news-and-press-releases/ncmc-cmu-central-bound-partnership.html>

g. Thank You Letter from Foundation

On March 6, North Central and the Board of Trustees received a letter of thanks from the North Central Michigan College Foundation:

Dear Dr. Finley and Board Members,

Thank you for your generous donation of \$1,000 to the North Central Michigan College Foundation, given in honor of Dan Rasmussen's many years of service to the College and the Board of Trustees. Your gift has been designated for the Trustee Memorial Scholarship and is a fitting tribute to Mr. Rasmussen's service to the College and greater community.

...

On behalf of the College and the Foundation Board of Directors, thank you for investing in North Central, our students, and the future of our community.

Sincerely, Chelsea Platte, VP for Advancement and Exec. Dir., NCMC Foundation

7. SCHEDULED PUBLIC COMMENT

Dr. Ben Crockett, President of Association of Faculty Professional Association and Biology faculty, provided updates from the faculty:

- Noted this is a busy time for faculty as they balance instruction, committee work, and program responsibilities. He noted that with the recent winter weather, there have been some delays and cancellations, which were the right call for the safety of our students and employees. Faculty have been flexible with maintaining the continuity of their instruction during these times.
- Dr. Crockett has maintained regular and productive communication with Dr. Finley and Dr. Strom, collaborating around ongoing work and future projects.
- Thanked Professors Kim Drury, Rod Anderson, and Breann Wozniak for supporting the college at the HLC Conference this past weekend, ongoing work of accreditation for the college.

8. FINANCIAL REPORT

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

9. PRESIDENT'S REPORTS

a. NCMC Hosts International Day

On March 4, North Central hosted its second International Day event here in the Library. This event featured art, food, film, and conversation. The North Central Dining and Conference Services team served a delicious array of international cuisine as part of a fundraiser. Several guest speakers presented an array of topics including a summer biology studies opportunity. There were nearly 100 participants.

b. LPN to RN Bridge Pathway Approved

On March 5, 2026, North Central received notification that the State Board of Nursing has approved North Central's new LPN to RN Bridge Pathway. This will allow LPN's to take key 'bridge courses' during the summer and then step directly into semester three and four of the Associates of Applied Science in Nursing degree program. Upon successful completion of all courses, these 'bridge' students will also be eligible to take the Registered Nurse (RN) licensure exam. Ten recent LPN graduates are planning to pursue the Bridge Pathway this summer!

c. Three Basketball Student-Athletes Earn MCAA Northern Conference Recognition

On March 11, the Michigan Community College Athletic Association (MCCAA) released the 2025-26 Basketball end of season awards, and three Timberwolves earned recognition for their efforts during the year.

- Evelyn VanTol earned 2nd Team All-Northern Conference honors. She was named to the MCCAA Northern Conference All-Freshman women's team.
- Ceara LeBlanc was named to the All-Northern Conference Honorable Mention women's team.
- Camari Keller earned Honorable Mention All-Northern conference men's team recognition.

d. NLEA BOD – NCMC's Role in Strengthening the Regional Economy

On Thursday March 19, I was invited to present to the Northern Lakes Economic Alliance (NLEA) on North Central's role in strengthening the regional economy. I was able to provide an update on the college's enrollment trends, recent developments, and planned growth, highlighting the role of the college in helping to tackle workforce shortages in our area.

e. North Central received a grant of more than \$30K to restore our stormwater wetland area (on the south side of HESC) from the Petoskey Harbor Springs Area Community Foundation!

10. COMMITTEE REPORTS

a. Finance & Facilities Committee

Trustee Fought provided a brief report: the Finance & Facilities Committee met on Thursday, March 19 to review February Financials, receive CATEE construction updates, dental hygiene program and clinic location progress. There are no motions at this time.

b. Personnel Committee

Trustee Wozniak reported that the Personnel Committee met virtually on Thursday, February 19 to review one recommendation to hire for a Full-Time Instructor of Welding Technology & Fabrication.

Background: Trustee Wozniak asked President Finley to provide a brief background on the recommended candidate for the position of full-time Instructor of Welding Technology & Fabrication.

President Finley noted that a committee consisting of Dr. Jerry Brusher, Cassandra Hernandez, Karen Drake, Rico Breznau, and Jeff Montgomery reviewed ten applications for the full-time Instructor of Welding Technology & Fabrication position. On-campus interviews and teaching demonstrations were conducted with three finalists. It a pleasure to recommend Keith Proctor for this position with unanimous support from those involved in the search process.

Keith completed advanced welding coursework at Mid-Michigan College and holds a Bachelor of Science in Education from Central Michigan University and a Master of Science in Career & Technical Education from Ferris State University. He is also an American Welding Society (AWS) Certified Welding Inspector. Keith has more than ten years of full-time teaching experience as a welding instructor at Bay College and Delta College. He also has industry experience as a welder and welding inspector.

Trustee Wozniak motioned and Trustee Etienne supported that the College hire Keith Proctor for the position of Full Time Instructor of Welding Technology & Fabrication, starting August 31, 2026.

AYES: Trustees Etienne, Fought, Keiswetter (via phone), Pretty, and Wozniak

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Trustees Kromm, and Shirilla

11. OLD BUSINESS. None.

12. NEW BUSINESS. None

13. UNSCHEDULED PUBLIC COMMENT.

Erick Haight, Psychology Faculty, inquired where the welding instruction will be located. President Finley noted that it will be in one of the lab spaces located in the new Technology Center.

Trustee Keiswetter stated that as she has joined the most recent meetings remotely, she's happy to hear of all the positive things happening and forward progress being made.

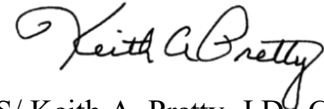
14. ADJOURNMENT.

There being no further business, Trustee Etienne motioned, and Trustee Fought supported the meeting be adjourned at 4:24 p.m.

AYES: Trustees Etienne, Fought, Keiswetter (via phone), Pretty, and Wozniak

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Trustees Kromm, and Shirilla



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



/S/ Melissa Keiswetter, Secretary