



North Shore Community College - Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes: September 16, 2025

1.0 Official Proceedings

On Tuesday, September 16, 2025, the Board of Trustees for North Shore Community College (NSCC) convened for a scheduled meeting. The session was held in the Lynn Community Board Room (LS 328) on the Lynn Campus and was called to order by Board Chair Maria Vega.

In Person Attendees-President Bill Heineman, VP of Administration and Finance Jan Forsstrom, Senior Executive Officer Kathryn Nielsen, AVP Of Corporate and Professional Ed Jenn Price, AVP of Human Resources Loyce Brown, Provost Chris Bednar, Dean of Enrollment Jason Marsala, Deputy Chief Academic Officer and Strategic Project Manager Kristine Goodwin, AVP of Strategic Finance Eileen Gerenz, Staff Associate to the President/Board Liaison Jill Palermo, Board Chair Maria Vega, Trustee Christine Danjou, Student Trustee Dominic Tolentino

Zoom Attendees-AVP of Institutional Belonging & Employee Development Nikki Pelonia, Trustee Rich Yagjian, Trustee Barbara Heinemann, Trustee AnhDao Tran-Moseman, Trustee Andrea Gayle Bennett, Vice Chair Francesca Purcell, Assistant Director of Communications Doreen Maciak

Chair Vega officially called the meeting to order at 5:03 PM.

2.0 New Employee Introductions

Doreen Maciak, the new Assistant Director of Communications, introduced herself to the Board. Ms. Maciak brings over two decades of professional experience from both the corporate and higher education sectors, including a background in teaching undergraduate and graduate communications and business courses. She expressed her enthusiasm for joining the Marketing team at NSCC.

President Heineman introduced 8 other new employees.

3.0 Public Comments

It was noted that there were no public comments.

4.0 Student Trustee Report

Dominic Tolentino provided her inaugural report to the Board. Ms. Tolentino shared key details of her personal and academic journey:

- She is 19 years old and originally from the Dominican Republic, having resided in the United States since 2023.
- Her desire to give back to her new community was the primary motivation for joining the Student Government Association.
- She is currently pursuing a major in Sociology and serves the college as a Social Media Ambassador.
- Her long-term academic goal is to transfer to a four-year college or university to continue her education.

5.0 Education Report : The Student Journey Framework

Provost Chris Bednar presented a high-level overview of the "Belong, Navigate, Excel (BNE)" framework, which represents the core of the college's academic strategy. This initiative is designed to fundamentally enhance student retention and success by focusing on the complete student experience from entry to completion.

The primary objectives of the BNE plan, as presented by Provost Bednar, are to:

- Ensure direct alignment with the overarching NSCC Strategic Plan.
- Systematically foster students' sense of **belonging** within the college community, help them **navigate** their academic and personal pathways, and empower them to **excel** in their studies and future endeavors.
- Explicitly work to close completion gaps among student populations and improve long-term life outcomes post-graduation.

Provost Bednar clarified that this presentation was an introduction to the framework. Future Board of Trustees meetings will feature detailed education reports that directly align with and measure progress against the BNE mission.

6.0 Chair's Report

Approval of Previous Minutes

The minutes from the June 4, 2025, Board meeting were reviewed. A correction was noted to add Trustee Danjou to the list of attendees.

- **Motion 26:02:** To accept the minutes from 6/4/25 as amended.
 - *Moved by:* Trustee Heinemann
 - *Seconded by:* Trustee Danjou
 - *Outcome:* Motion Passed.

The minutes from the June 25, 2025, Board retreat were also reviewed, with no corrections cited.

- **Motion 26:03:** To accept the minutes from 6/25/25.
 - *Moved by:* Trustee Purcell
 - *Seconded by:* Trustee Yagjian
 - *Outcome:* Motion Passed.

Finance Committee: FY26 Budget Approval

Trustee Tran-Moseman introduced the finance committee report, which was presented by VP of Administration and Finance Jan Forsstrom and AVP of Strategic Finance Eileen Gerenz. The report detailed the final budget for Fiscal Year 2026. Key findings and their strategic implications include:

- **Fiscal Stability:** The budget is secure and balanced. A significant revenue increase, driven by a 20% increase over FY25 enrollment as of the freeze date, negates the need to use college reserves. This positions the college to invest in strategic priorities rather than cover shortfalls.
- **Academic Investment:** Budgets for anticipated faculty hiring remain fully funded, and allocations for FY26 tactical plan items have been clarified. **Grant Impact:** The college's proactive planning for the known discontinuance of federal Upward Bound and EOC grants mitigates operational disruption. A potential future cut to HSI (Hispanic-Serving Institutions) funding would presently affect a grant for the Nutrition program.
- **Faculty Resources:** The budget includes the addition of 10 part-time faculty positions (five approved in the spring and five in the fall) not yet reflected in comparison data. This investment in faculty resources directly supports the college's enrollment growth and academic mission.

- **Investment Strategy:** The college's investment portfolio will be monitored closely, reflecting the Board's commitment to its fiduciary duty.

Following the presentation and discussion, a motion was made to approve the budget.

- **Motion 26:04:** To accept the FY26 Final Budget.
 - *Moved by:* Chair Vega
 - *Seconded by:* Trustee Heinemann
 - *Outcome:* Motion Passed.

Board Structure and Engagement

Chair Vega introduced three proposals aimed at enhancing the Board's effectiveness and engagement.

1. **Committee Participation:** The Chair formally requested that Trustees explore the various college committees and sign up to serve on those that align with their interests, thereby deepening the Board's involvement across the institution. Following this request, a motion was passed to formalize the committee structure policy.
 - **Motion 26:05:** To accept the Committee Structure Policy.
 - *Moved by:* Trustee Gayle Bennett
 - *Seconded by:* Trustee Danjou
 - *Outcome:* Motion Passed.
2. **Rotating Vice Chair:** A proposal was made to amend the by-laws to rotate the role of Vice Chair every two years. The rationale is to provide more Trustees with leadership development opportunities and to prepare them for the potential role of Chair.
 - **Motion 26:06:** To accept the Rotating Vice Chair Amendment to the By-Laws.
 - *Moved by:* Trustee Purcell
 - *Seconded by:* Trustee Danjou
 - *Outcome:* Motion Passed.
3. **New Advocacy Committee:** The Chair proposed the formation of a new Advocacy Committee. This committee is being formed to advocate for policy that supports the interests of students and institutions. Actions that have already led to the loss of five programs and threaten future revenue and programs. The committee will work directly with the President to advocate for the college's needs at local, state, and federal levels.
 - **Motion 26:07:** To accept the creation of the new Advocacy Committee.
 - *Moved by:* Trustee Yagjian
 - *Seconded by:* Trustee Heinemann
 - *Outcome:* Motion Passed.

7.0 President's Report: FY25 Performance and FY26 Strategic Goals

FY25 Presidential Evaluation Summary

President Heineman outlined the three-part structure of his annual evaluation, which includes a self-evaluation, a Board evaluation, and a BHE (Board of Higher Education) evaluation. He then presented a summary of the college's key performance metrics from FY25.

- **Enrollment and Access:**
 - Fall 2024 enrollment saw a **19% increase**, significantly outpacing the statewide community college average of 14%.
 - Under the Free Community College initiative, **1,930 students received \$6.4 million** in aid.
 - The college maintained affordability with its **fifth consecutive year of no fee increases** and saw a **25% growth** in Early College credits, which are free to students.
- **Student Attainment:**
 - The number of credentials awarded increased, with a **1% rise in Associate Degrees** and a **3% rise in Certificates**.
 - NSCC's eight-year comprehensive student success rate rose **7 percentage points to 60%**, surpassing the national average by 8 percentage points.
 - The first-year student persistence rate reached **65%**, the highest among all Massachusetts community colleges.
- **Equity Population Success:**
 - The credential completion rate for Black students at NSCC (**33%**) exceeds the state average (32%).
 - The credential completion rate for Hispanic students at NSCC (**27%**) lags slightly behind the state average (28%).

FY26 Presidential Goals

The Board of Trustees is responsible for setting the President's annual goals. Chair Vega commended President Heineman for his leadership in positioning NSCC as a "beacon in the community."

President Heineman presented 18 proposed goals for FY26, organized under three primary themes:

- **Business Goals:** Grow Enrollment, Revenues, and Capacity.
- **Academic Goals:** Grow Student Success and Equity.
- **Value Goals:** Share Community College ROI to emphasize the value of an NSCC education.

During the discussion, Trustee Tran-Moseman requested the inclusion of baseline measurements and deadlines for the goals to improve tracking. Trustee Danjou inquired about ensuring alignment between the goals for enrollment growth and faculty hiring.

- **Motion 26:08:** To approve the FY26 Presidential Goals.
 - *Moved by:* Trustee Purcell

- *Seconded by:* Trustee Tran-Moseman
- *Outcome:* Motion Passed.

8.0 60th Anniversary Community Celebration

The upcoming 60th Anniversary of North Shore Community College represents a significant institutional milestone. .

Senior Executive Officer Kathryn Nielsen reviewed the plans for the anniversary celebration. A series of special events are scheduled for the week of October 6th on both the Danvers and Lynn campuses.

The schedule of major events includes:

- **October 6:** Luncheon Honoring NSCC Alumni Employees
- **October 7:** An Evening Honoring Nurse Education and Fire Science
- **October 8:** Breakfast Honoring NSCC Alumni Employees
- **October 9:** Scholarship Awards Celebration

9.0 Concluding Business and Adjournment

Under other business, a motion was brought forth regarding the college's alcohol policy as it pertains to one of the 60th Anniversary events.

- **Motion 26:09:** To approve the waiver of the No-Alcohol Policy for the October 7th Alumni Event.
 - *Moved by:* Trustee Danjou
 - *Seconded by:* Trustee Heinemann
 - *Outcome:* Motion Passed.

With no further business before the Board, a motion was made to adjourn the meeting.

- **Motion:** To adjourn the meeting.
 - *Moved by:* Trustee Yagjian
 - *Seconded by:* Trustee Danjou
 - *Outcome:* Motion Passed.

Chair Vega adjourned the meeting at 7:01 PM.