



Board of Governors Meeting - June 12, 2025

Minutes

Board of Governors-Northeast Community College Area
6/12/2025 9:00 AMCDT

@ Northeast Community College, South Sioux City Extended Campus, 1001 College Way, South Sioux City, NE 68776

Attendance

Present:

Members: Del Ames, Steve Anderson, Diane Davies, Donovan Ellis, Terry F. Nelson, Jeffrey Scherer, Carol A. Sibbel, Pat Wojcik

Leah Barrett, Scott Gray, David Cone, Lindsay Spiegel, Tracy Kruse, Charlene Widener, Mike Walkowiak, Amanda Nipp, Diane Reikofski

Guests: Linda Krei, Colby Clarkson, Emily Duncan, Jen Greve, Michela Keeler-Strom, Jeff LeFavor, Jessie McCormick, Kristy Sandman, Katie Towler, Angelica Valdovinos

Absent:

Members: Dirk Petersen, Julie Robinson, Nicole Sedlacek, Jerry Guenther

1. Ownership Linkage Committee (9:00-10:30 a.m.)

The Ownership Linkage Committee conducted a roundtable discussion with constituents in the South Sioux City area. Dr. Barrett emphasized the importance of community engagement in guiding institutional priorities after which Dr. Widener detailed the college's progress on initiatives born out of the community feedback session held in 2024.

A roundtable discussion was held and a report out from each table was provided regarding the feedback received that will be considered for the college's next strategic plan.

2. CONVENE REGULAR MEETING (Presenters: Jeffrey Scherer)

The Northeast Community College Board of Governors met for its regular session Board Meeting on Thursday, June 12, 2025, in Rooms 126 A, B, C of the South Sioux City Extended Campus, 1001 College Way, South Sioux City, NE.
Chairperson Jeff Scherer convened the meeting at 10:51 a.m.

3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chairperson Scherer led the assembly in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

4. OPEN MEETINGS ACT

Pursuant to Nebraska Statute Section 84-1412, the public is advised that a copy of today's agenda and all reproducible printed material which will be discussed at today's meeting is located in Room 126 of the South Sioux City Extended Campus and on the Northeast Community College website. Also available in Room 126 is a current copy of the Nebraska Open Meetings Act which is accessible to members of the public.

5. CONSENT AGENDA

APPROVE the Consent Agenda including:

- **Adopt** the Agenda of the June 12, 2025 meeting. Official Notice of the meeting is posted on the Northeast Community College website, published in the [Dakota County Star](#), and published in the [Norfolk Daily News](#) on Saturday, June 7, 2025.
- **APPROVE** Minutes of the May 8, 2025 Board of Governors meeting.
- **SECOND READING and APPROVAL of REVISIONS** to EL-11 Land Development & Construction - Redline to combine EL-11 with EL-10 (will be renamed EL-10).
- **SECOND READING and APPROVAL of the DELETION** of BP-5260, Services for Students with Disabilities. Policy content has been incorporated into AP-5260.0, Services for Students with Disabilities.

Motion:

MOTION to APPROVE the Consent Agenda as presented.

Motion moved by Del Ames and motion seconded by Donovan Ellis. Voting Yes: Ames, Anderson, Davies, Ellis, Nelson, Scherer, Sibbel, Wojcik. Voting No: None. Absent: Petersen, Robinson, and Sedlacek. MOTION CARRIED.

6. PRESIDENT'S REPORT

6.1. ActionCOACH update (Presenters: Leah Barrett, Guests: Linda Krei)

Dr. Leah Barrett introduced and welcomed Linda Krei, ActionCOACH. Mrs. Krei provided a high overview of some of the assessments and processes she used to help strengthen the members of the President's Cabinet while onboarding new members. Her work has continued with members of the academic deans and student services leaders.

The contributions of Mrs. Krei were acknowledged, appreciating her exceptional management across demanding processes and transitions.

6.2. Monitoring Report(s) (Presenters: Leah Barrett)

EL-09, Organizational Integrity

Monitoring report, EL-09, Organizational Integrity, places an emphasis on sustaining an environment that cherishes ethics while maintaining confidential

reporting frameworks. The institution practices adherence to ethical norms and fosters organizational integrity that surpasses the industry benchmarks as per survey responses. No complaints of fraudulent acts or privacy breaches were reported during the previous year. The organization's adherence to ethical policies and its procedure facades underlines a sincere commitment to integrity. The Board of Governors assessed the monitoring report, EL-09, Organizational Integrity, and determined that there is ample evidence of compliance with a reasonable interpretation.

6.3. President's monthly update (Presenters: Leah Barrett)

Dr. Barrett provided a federal update and discussed possible implications, legislative achievements, the importance of program advocacy, and a community partnership with the Norfolk Area Child Care Collaborative. She reported that the student-built homes sold this past weekend and provided a reminder that she will be meeting one on one with each board member over the next few months. Because final data will not have been received by August 7th, and due to the important discussions that will be held as part of the August board agenda, Dr. Barrett requested that the August meeting be rescheduled to August 21, 2025.

7. LUNCH

At 12:08 p.m., Chairperson Scherer declared the meeting recessed for lunch. As part of the Ownership Linkage activities, staff and faculty from the South Sioux City Extended Campus joined the Board of Governors for lunch. Chairperson Scherer declared the Board back in session at 1:01 p.m.

8. BOARD EDUCATION AND INFORMATION

8.1. Educational Services Report (Presenters: Charlene Widener)

8.1.1. South Sioux City Extended Campus update (will be provided during lunch)
(Presenters: Katie Towler, Jessie McCormick)

Katie Towler, Director of Extended Campus, South Sioux City, provided an overview of the South Sioux City campus, highlighting its welcoming environment and commitment to serving traditionally underserved students. She introduced staff members and shared success stories of students. The campus offers various services including academic advising, early college programs, and career support. Upcoming initiatives include new marketing efforts and partnerships with local schools. Jessie McCormick, Early College Navigator, spoke about her experience of working with students to guide them to complete college-

level academic coursework, earn college credit, and explore career opportunities.

- 8.1.2. South Sioux City (SSC) Gateway to Learning Lease (Presenters: Leah Barrett, Charlene Widener, Scott Gray)

CONSIDER the SSC Gateway to Learning Lease

Discussion was held regarding Gateway to Learning (GTL) Program at the South Sioux City Community Schools. The GTL program is an alternative high school designed to support students who may feel challenges in a traditional high school setting. Not only does this program support student success, it also positions the program as a destination that inspires possibility and purpose for more South Sioux City High School students.

Furthermore, this will be a step to building pathways to higher education for young people who may not have been college bound and provides multiple opportunities for students to participate in dual enrollment courses from Northeast Community College or Wayne State College. This partnership will benefit students, families and the community of South Sioux City. It was also provide more exposure to Northeast Community College and Wayne State College as more people and activities are occurring on the South Sioux City Extended Campus.

Classes offered through the GTL program will not conflict with any current college classes. South Sioux City Schools will have staff on campus and additional security cameras will be installed.

Dr. Widener commended Michela Keeler-Strom for her work in helping make cultural changes at the extended campus and Katie Towler, for her work and involvement in the Gateway to Learning Program.

Motion:

MOTION to APPROVE the South Sioux City Gateway to Learning Lease.

Motion moved by Pat Wojcik and motion seconded by Diane Davies.

Voting Yes: Ames, Anderson, Davies, Ellis, Nelson, Scherer, Sibbel, Wojcik.

Voting No: None. Absent: Petersen, Robinson, and Sedlacek. MOTION CARRIED.

- 8.1.3. Program Capacity/Program Demand (Presenters: Charlene Widener, Leah Barrett)

Program capacity/program demand update

As a follow up to discussions held in January 2025, Drs. Barrett and Widener discussed the data used and many facets involved with making any decisions regarding expanding a program, starting a program, ending a program of study, wait lists and how they are maintained, etc. Data is used in making solid decisions for our stakeholders.

Inquiry was made regarding having a gap analysis completed for the O'Neill and West Point Extended Campuses. Dr. Widener advised that a gap analysis was completed for the entire Northeast Community College Service area, as well as the South Sioux City Extended Campus due to its proximity in the Siouxland area. The cost of a gap analysis deters us from completing a gap analysis for areas with lower population. The gap analysis completed for the entire service area will provide the information needed for both O'Neill and West Point.

8.2. Administrative Services Report

8.2.1. Monthly Financial Report and Paid Bills Report (Presenters: Scott Gray)

CONSIDER the Monthly Financial Report for May 31, 2025, and the Paid Bills Report for May 2025. Board members who received reimbursement during the month abstain from voting on those items only:

Ames, Del - \$106.40
Anderson, Steve - \$65.80
Davies, Diane - \$56.00
Ellis, Donovan - \$53.20
Nelson, Terry - \$61.60
Scherer, Jeff - \$50.40
Sedlacek, Nicole - \$110.60
Sibbel, Carol - \$110.60
Wojcik, Pat - \$201.60

Review was given to the Monthly Financial Report, noting the increase in the Capital Improvement column which is due to the receipt of the first property tax installment.

Within the paid bills report, payments were reviewed that were related to equipment purchases with the use of Perkins funds, exercise equipment, signage in Maclay, and training courses for students in clubs.

Motion:

MOTION to APPROVE the Monthly Financial Report for May 31, 2025, and the Paid Bills Report for May 2025, with board members who received reimbursement during the month abstaining from voting on those items only.

Motion moved by Steve Anderson and motion seconded by Carol A. Sibbel. Voting Yes: Ames, Anderson, Davies, Ellis, Nelson, Scherer, Sibbel, Wojcik. Voting No: None. Absent: Petersen, Robinson, and Sedlacek. MOTION CARRIED.

8.2.2. Preliminary Capital Fund Budget discussion (Presenters: Scott Gray)

Review was given to the preliminary capital fund budget.

8.2.3. Review of Board of Governors budget (Presenters: Scott Gray)

A brief review of the Board of Governors budget was provided.

8.2.4. Use of cash on hand to continue operations of the College (Presenters: Scott Gray)

CONSIDER authorizing the use of cash on hand to continue operations of the College pending final approval of the 2025-2026 budgets in September 2025.

Once the new fiscal year begins on July 1st, Northeast does not have an official budget in place. Allowing the use of cash on hand allows Northeast the ability to continue to pay bills until the budget is officially approved in September.

Motion:

MOTION to AUTHORIZE the use of cash on hand to continue operations of the College pending final approval the 2025-2026 budgets in September 2025.

Motion moved by Terry F. Nelson and motion seconded by Diane Davies. Voting Yes: Ames, Anderson, Davies, Ellis, Nelson, Scherer, Sibbel, Wojcik. Voting No: None. Absent: Petersen, Robinson, and Sedlacek. MOTION CARRIED.

8.2.5. NCCA membership (Presenters: Pat Wojcik, Nicole Sedlacek)

CONSIDER membership in the Nebraska Community College Association (NCCA) in 2026.

Nebraska's community colleges are required to notify the Nebraska Community College Association (NCCA) by July 1 if they decide to not be a member the following year. Discussion was held regarding evaluating the executive director versus evaluating the NCCA Board of Directors. Continued work on the NCCA by-laws is encouraged. Membership in NCCA does provide value to Northeast and four other community colleges that would not otherwise be affordable.

Motion:

MOTION to recommend continued membership in the Nebraska Community College Association (NCCA) in 2026.

Motion moved by Pat Wojcik and motion seconded by Donovan Ellis.
Voting Yes: Ames, Anderson, Davies, Ellis, Nelson, Scherer, Sibbel, Wojcik.
Voting No: None. Absent: Petersen, Robinson, and Sedlacek. MOTION CARRIED.

8.2.6. President's Contract (Presenters: Jeffrey Scherer)

CONSIDER the President's Contract

Members of the Board of Governors expressed their satisfaction of Dr. Barrett's visionary leadership.

Motion:

MOTION to APPROVE a five-year contract with Dr. Leah A. Barrett, effective July 1, 2025.

Motion moved by Diane Davies and motion seconded by Carol A. Sibbel.
Voting Yes: Ames, Anderson, Davies, Ellis, Nelson, Scherer, Sibbel, Wojcik.
Voting No: None. Absent: Petersen, Robinson, and Sedlacek. MOTION CARRIED.

9. PUBLIC COMMENT on Monitoring Reports or Board Education and Information

Individuals commenting on Monitoring Reports or Board Education and Information are allowed three minutes each. Any member of the public wishing to address the Board of Governors may sign in and comment to the Board at this time.

No constituents were in attendance to address the Board of Governors with a public comment.

10. COMMITTEE REPORTS

10.1. Governance Committee (Presenters: Donovan Ellis)

The Governance Committee met on May 19, 2025 via Zoom.

Content review was held on the following:

- EL-01, Treatment of Students. Content was reviewed and there were no suggestions for revision. The evidence and interpretation that Dr. Barrett and her team provides in the monitoring report were clear and aligned.
- EL-03, Treatment of Employees. Content was reviewed and there were not suggestions for revision. Communication improvements and opportunities for voicing opinions were acknowledged, as well as building trust with administration.

Board Self-Evaluation was completed on the following:

- GP-05, Role of Vice Chair. Discussion revolved around formalizing the President's evaluation committee. Suggestions included forming an ad hoc committee, bringing the proposal for membership to the April meeting each year, and adding discussions to governance notes for further review.
- GP-06, Role of Board Secretary. The policy was acknowledged, with the Board Self-Evaluation confirming no items requiring follow-up.

Informational Items:

- The Board Self-Evaluation Action plan was reviewed and updated.
- The Monitoring Report Summary was reviewed and updated. It was suggested to include the report summary in the Board meeting agenda to acknowledge acceptance or rejection of the monitoring report and recommendation for any part not in compliance, as well as the plan to bring it into compliance.

10.2. Ownership Linkage Committee (Presenters: Del Ames)

Nothing new to report.

11. PUBLIC COMMENT on Committee Reports:

Individuals commenting on Committee Reports or Items for Decision are allowed three minutes each. Any member of the public wishing to address the Board of Governors may sign in and comment to the Board at this time.

No constituents were in attendance to address the Board of Governors with a public comment.

12. OTHER

Other announcements and birthdays for the month.

Chairperson Scherer acknowledged staff members observing birthdays during the month of June.

13. Meeting Self-Evaluation (Presenters: Jeffrey Scherer)

Board Meeting Self-Evaluation-June 12, 2025

Board members reviewed, discussed, and completed the meeting self-evaluation for the June 12, 2025 meeting.

14. ADJOURNMENT

At 3:17 p.m., there being no further business to discuss, it was UNANIMOUSLY PASSED BY VOICE VOTE to ADJOURN the meeting.