



Board of Governors Meeting Minutes

Board of Governors-Northeast Community College Area

11/13/2025 9:35 AM CST

@ Nielsen Community Center, 202 Anna Stalp Ave., West Point, NE 68788

Attendance

Present:

Members: Del Ames, Diane Davies, Donovan Ellis, Terry Nelson, Julie Robinson, Jeffrey Scherer, Nicole Sedlacek, Pat Wojcik

Leah Barrett, Scott Gray, Amanda Nipp, Mike Walkowiak, Lindsay Spiegel, Jerry Guenther, Diane Reikofski

Guests: Katie Graham, Nebraska Department of Education; Connie Sixta, Dean of Science, Technology, Agriculture, and Math (STAM); Gina Holtz, Director of Extended Campus; Kerry Gustafsson, Dana F. Cole & Co.; Avery Carl, *Norfolk Daily News*; Michela Keeler-Strom, Dean of Academic Outreach; Brad Ranslem, Dean, Applied Technology

Absent:

Members: Steve Anderson, Dirk Petersen, Carol A. Sibbel

1. CONVENE REGULAR MEETING (Presenters: Jeffrey Scherer)

Chairperson Scherer convened the meeting at 9:38 a.m.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE (Presenters: Jeffrey Scherer)

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

3. OPEN MEETINGS ACT (Presenters: Jeffrey Scherer)

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 at the back of the room and located on the Northeast Community College [website](#). A current copy of the [Nebraska Open Meetings Act](#) is also accessible to members of the public.

4. CONSENT AGENDA (Presenters: Jeffrey Scherer)

APPROVE the Consent Agenda including:

- **Adopt** the Agenda of the November 13, 2025 meeting. Official Notice of the meeting is posted on the Northeast Community College website, published in the [West Point News](#) and in the [Norfolk Daily News](#) on Saturday, November 8, 2025.
- **APPROVE** [Minutes](#) of the October 9, 2025 Board of Governors meeting.

📋 [Consent Agenda](#)

Motion:

MOTION to **APPROVE** the Consent Agenda as presented.

Motion moved by Del Ames and motion seconded by Diane Davies. Voting yes: Ames, Davies, Ellis, Nelson, Robinson, Scherer, Sedlacek, and Wojcik. Absent-Excused: Anderson, Petersen, and Sibbel. MOTION CARRIED.

5. BOARD EDUCATION AND INFORMATION

5.1. CTE update, Nebraska Department of Education (Guests: Katie Graham, Nebraska Department of Education)

Katie Graham presented the Career and Technical Education (CTE) update, highlighting data on student participation in K-12 and post-secondary CTE programs, as well as funding sources, including federal Perkins funds and state appropriations. She discussed the upcoming reauthorization of the Perkins Act, and emphasized the importance of program quality, labor market alignment, and data infrastructure. Katie also addressed concerns about adult education funding, noting that 93% of funding comes from the federal government and urging board members to advocate for continued support.

Katie spoke about the importance of state funding for career and technical education programs, highlighting their quality and impact on Nebraska's workforce. She emphasized the need for a long-term strategy to reduce dependence on federal funding and proposed exploring foundation support as a potential alternative. Concern was raised about the lack of data for Nebraska on a credential dashboard, noting that Nebraska does not have a public list of credentials, unlike 44 other states. Suggestion was made to examine credential lists from neighboring states to find alignment for Nebraska.

5.2. West Point Extended Campus update (Presenters: Gina Holtz, Director of Extended Campus, West Point)

Gina Holtz provided an overview of Pathways 2 Tomorrow (P2T), noting that this collaborative educational initiative serves nine area schools, fostering collaboration to enhance student career and academic opportunities. Gina presented an overview of the health science and welding programs at West

Point, detailing curriculum changes and partnerships with local businesses to improve student outcomes and increase enrollment. She also discussed the success of adaptations in the welding program, offering semester-long classes, which has doubled the number of students participating and highlighted the positive impact on students who excel in hands-on learning. Gina noted that the P2T program offers various pathways, including education and information technology, with a focus on dual credits and collaboration with Wayne State College.

Dr. Barrett commended Gina Holtz, Michela Keeler-Strom, and Brad Ranslem for their creativity and thoughtfulness in improving P2T. Discussion was held on the challenges of expanding the P2T model in the state, citing the levy attached to the P2T agreement.

6. PRESIDENT'S REPORT

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

[EL-06, Asset Protection](#)

Dr. Leah Barrett presented the monitoring report, EL-06, [Asset Protection](#), while highlighting the following:

- Adequate property, casualty, liability, cyber, crime, and travel insurance maintained through NCCIT and Gallagher; bonding requirements met for contractors and authorized employees.
- Property insured at industry-standard replacement cost; liability and professional coverage limits align with broker recommendations.
- Comprehensive operational procedures, emergency response plans, and annual employee training mitigate institutional risk.
- Independent audit reports show no material weaknesses; purchasing and property control protocols prevent fraud and ensure accurate reporting.
- Preventive maintenance programs and custodial standards in place; business continuity and recovery plans established.
- Contracts reviewed by legal counsel; records retention follows state schedules; intellectual property protected; investments comply with Nebraska law.
- Accreditation maintained; gift acceptance through Foundation; no political endorsements; stakeholder engagement consistent.
- No unauthorized name changes, property naming, subsidiary creation, or conflicts with Board authority.

The Board of Governors assessed the monitoring report, EL-06, [Asset Protection](#), and determined that evidence supports compliance with a reasonable interpretation.

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

[President's Monthly Update](#) 11.2025

Conferences and convenings that Dr. Barrett has participated in over the past month include:

- Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT) Leadership Congress in New Orleans, LA.
- Vistage Annual Meeting in Des Moines, IA.
- NCCA Annual Meeting in Lincoln.
- Nebraska Chamber Policy Council.
- NSWERS Strategic Planning session.

News and Notes include:

- Brandon Keller was chosen as the recipient of the 2025 ACCT Western Regional Faculty Award and received the 2025 ACCT William H. Meardy Faculty Member Award. Steve Anderson has completed his six years on the ACCT Board of Directors and Pat Wojcik was elected as a new ACCT board member.
- Northeast Community College is transitioning from regional offices in Ainsworth and Hartington to a model centered on business and community engagement liaisons. The liaisons will be the primary point of contact for businesses, non-profits, and community organizations with three defined service zones within our 20-county service area. They will collaborate closely with extended campus directors and early college navigators to ensure consistent service and act as a bridge between Northeast divisions and external partners. This transition will take place throughout the spring semester as the new liaisons are onboarded.
- Jeff Scherer was Northeast's NCCA Governors Award nominee at the NCCA Annual Conference.
- Northeast Community College was announced as a 2026 Aspen Prize Top 200 U.S. Community College.

A video message presentation was provided from the Student Leadership Association.

[From Classroom Spark to Career Path](#)

7. BOARD EDUCATION AND INFORMATION

7.1. Administrative Services Report

7.1.1. Financial Statement report (Presenters: Kerry Gustafsson, Dana F. Cole & Co.)

Review of the Northeast Community College Area [Financial Statements](#)

Kerry Gustafsson, Dana F. Cole & Co. representative reported that Dana F. Cole & Company conducted the Audit of Financial Statements for Northeast Community College as of June 30, 2025 and 2024. It is their opinion that the financial statements were presented fairly, in all material respects, and issued an unmodified report, or the highest level of assurance that they can give as auditors that the financial statements are accurately reported.

Ms. Gustafsson advised that no material weaknesses in internal controls were identified, and no significant deficiencies were identified during the audit.

She further reported that during the audit, there were no adjustments that were auditor driven. Any adjustments that were made were provided by management. There were also no incorrect or misstatements noted. No disagreements with management occurred during the audit process. There were also no significant issues discussed with the management and no difficulties encountered. Ms. Gustafsson stated that they received excellent cooperation and courtesy from the staff that they worked with, and it is very much appreciated.

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

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

Ames, Del - \$106.40
Anderson, Steve - \$131.60
Davies, Diane - \$28.00
Ellis, Donovan - \$53.20
Nelson, Terry - \$123.20
Scherer, Jeff - \$100.80
Sibbel, Carol - \$221.20
Wojcik, Pat - \$201.60

Items of note within the Monthly Financial Report included receipt of Community College Future Fund payments received in September and October are reflected under Government Appropriations in the General Fund column. An increase in property tax receipts was noted, which are cyclical and expected to continue. Mr. Gray described transfers from residence life funds for bond payments.

Items of significance within the Paid Bills Report include payment for furniture in the Vet Tech building, battery backups, e-textbooks, and

software implementations for travel reimbursements and Human Resource systems.

Inquiry was made regarding dollars spent on software. Mr. Gray reported that software expenses can be sorted by account code and an annual cost for the institution overall can be provided.

The possibility of revising statutes to allow use of capital funds for software expenses was mentioned for future consideration.

📌 [Monthly Financial and Paid Bills Report](#)

Motion:

MOTION to APPROVE the Monthly Financial Report and Paid Bills Report for October 31, 2025. Board members who received reimbursement during the month abstain from voting on those items only.

Motion moved by Julie Robinson and motion seconded by Pat Wojcik. Voting yes: Ames, Davies, Ellis, Nelson, Robinson, Scherer, Sedlacek, and Wojcik. Absent-Excused: Anderson, Petersen, and Sibbel. MOTION CARRIED

7.1.3. Review of current year/budget comparison

[Current year/budget comparison](#)

Scott Gray provided a review of the current year budget, highlighting a snapshot four months into the fiscal year.

7.2. LUNCH

Chairperson Scherer declared the meeting recessed for lunch at 11:56 a.m.

West Point Extended Campus employees, along with Katie Graham, Nebraska Department of Education, joined the Board of Governors for lunch.

Chairperson Scherer declared the meeting back in session at 12:39 p.m.

7.3. Educational Services update

7.3.1. Consider new program of study (Presenters: Conni Sixta, Dean of Science, Technology, Agriculture, and Math (STAM), Jill Heemstra, Director of Ag Programs)

Consider new program of study: [Agriculture Communications AAS](#)

📌 [New Program of Study](#)

Connie Sixta, Dean of Science, Technology, Agriculture, and Math (STAM), presented proposal for a new Agriculture Communications program, designed to integrate media, business, and agriculture disciplines. The program aims to prepare students for careers across diverse industries, including opportunities for self-employment.

The concept originated from Jill Heemstra, Director of Agriculture Programs, who identified a market gap in Nebraska for associate degrees in Agriculture Communications. Research indicates strong demand for graduates with interdisciplinary skills in agriculture and communications, with employers expressing readiness to hire such graduates.

The program will not require new courses; it will utilize existing classes, making it a cost-effective addition. Students will gain practical, industry-relevant skills appealing to both traditional and non-traditional learners. The proposal was considered and approved by the Academic Affairs Standing Committee on September 15, 2025, and by President's Council on October 22, 2025.

Board members commended the initiative, noting its appeal to a broad student base and the advantage of introducing a new program at minimal cost.

Motion:

MOTION to APPROVE the Agriculture Communications AAS program at Northeast Community College for submission to and consideration by the Nebraska Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education.

Motion moved by Nicole Sedlacek and motion seconded by Donovan Ellis. Voting yes: Ames, Davies, Ellis, Nelson, Robinson, Scherer, Sedlacek, and Wojcik. Absent-Excused: Anderson, Petersen, and Sibbel. MOTION CARRIED

7.4. Student Services update

7.4.1. Enrollment update (Presenters: Amanda Nipp)

- As of today, Northeast is up 34 applications compared to Spring 2025.
- Efforts are focusing on encouraging students who previously stopped out of their studies to return and complete their degrees.
- Early college enrollment numbers remain similar to last year.

7.5. Development and External Affairs update

7.5.1. Foundation Board of Directors' report (Presenters: Terry Nelson)

[Quarterly Foundation Board meeting update](#)

Meeting highlights included:

- The Foundation Board of Directors met on October 28, 2025.
- Foundation's assets increased from \$51 million to \$58 million.
- Foundation Board meetings will now offer a virtual option for remote participation.
- Michela Keeler-Strom, Dean of Academic Outreach, and Emily Duncan, Director of Adult Education, provided the board with an overview of the college's workforce development initiatives.
- Kerry Gustafsson, from the auditing firm of Dana F. Cole, attended the Foundation Finance and Board of Directors meetings to present and review the audited Consolidated Financial Statement of June 30, 2025 and 2024. The Foundation received the highest rating of an unmodified opinion.
- The Board approved the release of funds from the Quasi-Endowment Manufacturing Scholarship & Equipment Fund 2025.01 to support the purchase of equipment to expand the welding program at the West Point Extended Campus.

8. PUBLIC COMMENT on Monitoring Report or Board Education and Information

Individuals commenting on Monitoring Report 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.

9. COMMITTEE REPORTS

9.1. NCCA Report (Presenters: Nicole Sedlacek)

- NCCA Annual Meeting was conducted on November 2-3, 2025, in Lincoln
- During the NCCA board meeting, the main focus was on the upcoming legislative sessions, particularly due to the expected state budget deficit. The board voted not to pursue any legislation that involved financial requests during the upcoming session, opting instead to focus on relationship-building with legislative champions for future initiatives.
- NCCA's Community College Legislative Day is scheduled for Wednesday, February 25, 2026, with an invitation for members of the Board of Governors to attend.

9.2. Governance Committee (Presenters: Donovan Ellis)

- Governance Committee [Notes](#)-October 29, 2025.
- **FIRST READING** for the **DELETION** of [BP-5227](#), Alcoholic Beverages and Controlled Substances Policy. Policy content has been incorporated into the [Student Code of Conduct](#) and is also covered by [AP-3233.0](#), Alcoholic Beverages and Controlled Substances-Employee.

The Governance Committee met via Zoom on October 29, 2025.

- Content review was conducted on EL-02, Access to Education. The Governance Committee reviewed a redlined version of the policy that removed the outdated reference to 'property tax levy', replacing it with 'taxpayer funds' per recommendation made in the President's monitoring report in October 2025. The Governance Committee suggests no additional revisions to the policy. This policy will be brought forward in December for FIRST READING of REVISIONS consideration.
- Board Self-Evaluation was conducted on GP-16, Handling Alleged Policy Violations. Wording in 1.1 was revised to improve clarity. Item 3 was also revised, adding that the President will work with the Board member who was contacted with the complaint. GP-16, Handling Alleged Policy Violations will be brought forward in December for FIRST READING of REVISIONS consideration.
- The next Governance Committee meeting will be held on November 25, 2025 via Zoom.

9.2.1. Discuss Board of Governors officers for 2026.

[GP-14-Special Rules of Order](#)

Discussion was held regarding officers for 2026:

Chairperson, Donovan Ellis

Vice Chairperson, Nicole Sedlacek

Secretary, Del Ames

Mr. Ellis reported that during their last Governance Committee meeting, Dirk Petersen requested the opportunity to remain as the Chairperson. Board members expressed their appreciation for Mr. Petersen resuming this responsibility.

10. PUBLIC COMMENT on Committee Reports:

Individuals commenting on Committee Reports 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.

11. OTHER

Other announcements and birthdays for the month.

Chairperson Scherer extended birthday wished to board and staff members observing birthdays during the month of November.

12. CLOSED SESSION for the purpose of discussing strategy with respect to collective bargaining as authorized by Nebraska Revised Statute §84-1410. The closed session is necessary to protect the public interest.

📌 [Closed Session](#)

Motion:

At 1:44 p.m., MOTION to enter into Closed Session for the purpose of discussing strategy with respect to collective bargaining as authorized by Nebraska Revised Statute 84-1410, and to return to the regular meeting after business is discussed.

Nicole Sedlacek departed the meeting at 1:55 p.m.

Reconvened to the public meeting at 2:45 p.m.

Motion moved by Terry Nelson and motion seconded by Julie Robinson. Voting yes: Ames, Davies, Ellis, Nelson, Robinson, Scherer, Sedlacek, and Wojcik. Absent-Excused: Anderson, Petersen, and Sibbel. MOTION CARRIED

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

Board Meeting [Self-Evaluation-November 13, 2025](#)

14. ADJOURNMENT

At 2:46 p.m., there being no further business to discuss, it was UNANIMOUSLY PASSED by VOICE VOTE to ADJOURN the meeting.