

APPROVED MINUTES OF INFORMATION SESSION OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE COMMUNITY  
COLLEGE DISTRICT OF THE COUNTY OF MACOMB

An open information session of the Board of Trustees of the Community College District of the County of Macomb was held Wednesday, March 19, 2025, at 6:00 p.m., in Room 125 of the University Center, Professional Development Center, Center Campus, 44575 Garfield Road, Clinton Township, Michigan.

1.0 [CALL TO ORDER](#)

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Lorenzo at 6:00 p.m.

2.0 [ROLL CALL](#)

Present:

Katherine Lorenzo, Chairperson  
Shelley Vitale, Vice Chairperson  
Kristi Dean, Secretary  
Roseanne DiMaria, Treasurer  
Frank Cusumano, Trustee  
Joan Flynn, Trustee  
Vincent Viviano, Trustee, arrived at 6:57p.m.

Also present:

James Sawyer, President  
Libby Argiri, Executive Vice President, Administration  
Joe Asperger, Senior Vice President, Plante Moran Realpoint  
Kevin Chandler, Vice President, College Advancement & Community Relations  
Tiffany Goliday, Executive Director, IDEA  
Carrie Jeffers, Vice President, Student Services  
Leslie Kellogg, Provost, Vice President of the Learning Unit  
William Leavens, Chief of College Police  
Deb Mende, Executive Director, Office of the President  
William Simonson, Executive Director, Facilities & Plant Operations  
Jeffrey Steele, General Counsel, Office of General Counsel  
Patsy Tannahill, Executive Assistant to the President and Board of Trustees  
Paul Wills, Partner, Plante Moran Realpoint

3.0 [APPROVAL OF AGENDA](#)

MOTION by DiMaria, supported by Flynn, to approve the agenda as presented.

ALL IN FAVOR:

AYES: DiMaria, Flynn, Cusumano, Dean, Vitale, Lorenzo

ABSENT:

NAYS:

MOTION CARRIED.

4.0 [AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION](#)

None.

## 5.0 REVIEW OF AGENDA ITEMS AND MATERIALS

President Sawyer stated that the word "tentative" will need to be removed from agenda item 9.3, as the contract was ratified by the bargaining unit on March 17, 2025.

Trustee Flynn provided an updated list of the elected officials from Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG). Chairperson Lorenzo thanked Trustee Flynn for sending out the survey questionnaire from SEMCOG.

Trustee Vitale asked when the lecture for Todd Mitchell's sabbatical report would take place. Marie Pritchette, dean, Arts and Sciences, explained that the art show serves as the lecture and that there will be no formal lecture.

Trustee Vitale asked how far behind the college is on accessibility features for students. Provost Leslie Kellogg stated that the college is up to date but is transitioning to a new vendor.

Trustee Vitale asked what SharePoint is. Michael Zimmerman, CIO, stated SharePoint is a web-based collaboration and document management platform developed by Microsoft. It allows employees to store, share, and manage files, as well as collaborate on documents in real time. We are no longer using this feature.

Trustee Dean asked if agenda item 11.3 is a renewal. M. Zimmerman confirmed.

Trustee Dean asked for clarification on the statement from agenda item 11.3 regarding the contractual commitment to a 99.5% uptime target for Macomb's environment. Specifically, she inquired whether the college has ever fallen below the 99.5% uptime threshold and how "working days" are defined. M. Zimmerman stated that the college has not had to levy a financial penalty and that working days are Monday through Saturday.

Trustee Cusumano asked what the projected revenue is for the increase proposed in agenda item 7.3. Libby Argiri, executive vice president, Administration, stated that it is approximately \$1 million.

Trustee Cusumano asked whether any funds were returned to the general fund in the previous year's budget. President Sawyer replied that he includes that information in his annual evaluation but does not have it available tonight.

Trustee Cusumano asked what the anticipated budget is for fiscal year 2025-2026. L. Argiri stated that the unofficial projected budget, which was provided in January, is around \$165 million, with expenditures estimated at \$164.5 million.

Trustee Dean asked what a resolution of appreciation for retirees is. Chairperson Lorenzo showed Trustee Vitale a copy of the certificate given to each retiree.

APPROVED Minutes, Information Session, March 19, 2025

Trustee Dean asked if the locker rooms in the proposed renovation plan for South Campus Building P are large enough. William Simonson, executive director, Facilities and Plant Operations, stated that the plan was approved by the Athletic Director.

Trustee Vitale asked whether the bullet points listed under "New Programs and Initiatives" in agenda item 7.3 are funded by the student service fee. L. Argiri confirmed that they are.

**6.0** ISSUES AND UPDATES

**6.1** President's Report

Closed Session

We do need to have closed session with the BOT pursuant to MCL 15.268 A – personnel matter, C - collective bargaining, and H - to consider material exempt from discussion or disclosure by state of federal statute.

Enrollment Update

As of Monday Winter, 2025 credit hours are up 2.4% compared to last year, headcount is up 2.7 %.

Financial Aid

Financial Aid started processing and packaging awards for the 25/26 academic, pulling in nearly 8000 FAFSAs. We are closely monitoring the impact of the staffing cuts that just occurred at the Department of Education last week.

Personnel

- Associate Vice President for Human Resources
- Two new instructors for the M3 Project (1 CNC, 1 Welding)
- FT faculty (Nursing)
- Director of Center for Teaching & Learning

Supervisory/Technical (STA) Collective Bargaining Negotiations

STA ratified the tentative agreement on Monday, March 17, 2025. President Sawyer thanks the negotiating teams.

Administrative – Information Items

Sabbatical leave report for Todd Mitchell.

Purchases

- 11.3A – Accessibility Software, 2 -year contract with YuJa Panoramic for \$93,535.00 (from San Jose California).
- 11.3B – Ellucian Colleague and Microsoft database (SQL) Managed Services, 3-year contract with Ferrelli (Haddonfield, NJ) for an amount not to exceed \$504,000.

Administrative – Action Items

South Campus P Building Major Renovation - As previously discussed with the Board, this much-needed renovation will address aging infrastructure in Building P, which was constructed in 1974. Key improvements include replacing the failing HVAC system and ensuring compliance with Title IX requirements for athletic locker rooms. Additionally, the renovation will create dedicated study and tutoring spaces to support student success. The Sports and Expo Center, located within Building P, is the largest expo space in Macomb County and the second largest in Southeast Michigan, spanning over 100,000 square feet and utilized more than 90% of the time. This renovation is essential for maintaining the building's infrastructure, supporting athletics, and continuing to serve the community effectively.

General Fund Planning and Tuition and Fee Recommendation for 2025/2026

There is no tuition increase being proposed; however, we are considering small increases in the student services and facility technology fees. These fees have not been raised in over 10 years. This adjustment is critical to sustaining our innovative initiatives. If it does not pass, it will significantly impact our ability to move forward with new programs and could force us to reevaluate our current plans. Additionally, 65% of our students receive financial aid or scholarships, and several grants depend on our institutional support. Without the necessary funding, we may face sustainability challenges that could affect these programs.

Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Access (IDEA) Update

Executive orders and a dear colleague letter have been issued by the federal government targeting diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) programs. While these directives are framed as prohibiting illegal discrimination—which has never been an issue for us in admissions or employment—they take an overly broad approach that appears to restrict all DEI-related activities.

Colleges have responded in different ways. Some have chosen to ignore these orders, assuming they won't hold up in court. Others are immediately eliminating all DEI-related activities. The College is taking a cautious and balanced approach, ensuring compliance while preserving the valuable work that has been done.

The College's concern stems from the potential impact on funding. We have 9,000 students who rely on federal financial aid, totaling \$30 million, along with \$32 million in contracts and grants. Non-compliance could put these funds at risk. The Office for Civil Rights has already launched investigations into 50 colleges, including two in Michigan.

We are proud of the meaningful progress we've made in the past two years, and we want to maintain the initiatives that benefit both students and employees. Our goal is to navigate these changes carefully while preserving the programs that contribute to a welcoming and supportive environment.

To ensure compliance, Tiffany Goliday, executive director, IDEA, has done an excellent job creating a matrix identifying all activities that could be considered DEI-related. The President's Council reviewed each item to determine whether it should be revised, maintained, or discontinued. We have also removed certain content from our website and communicated updates to the college community.

APPROVED Minutes, Information Session, March 19, 2025

This remains a fluid situation, with new developments emerging daily in the news and from regulatory agencies. We are closely monitoring these changes and will continue to assess our approach.

In summary, our commitment to providing students with a high-quality, comprehensive education remains unchanged. We do not believe that our work conflicts with these executive orders or guidance letters, and we remain dedicated to fostering an inclusive and supportive environment for both students and staff.

The Board will be updated as the situation evolves but rest assured the College is taking the necessary steps to comply with federal mandates while upholding our core values.

Athletics

The Men's Basketball team had an outstanding season, winning the MCCA Eastern Conference Championship for the second consecutive year and finishing the regular season ranked #9 in NJCAA Division II. They also secured the Great Lakes District Championship, earning their third straight trip to the National Tournament as one of only 20 teams nationwide. Several players received individual recognition and awards for their performances. The team won their first tournament game on Monday night and will be competing again tonight.

April Board of Trustee's Meeting

- Raisers Edge renewal (Foundation)
- IT Security training content
- CISCO Telephony Managed Services
- IAM (Identity Access Management) Architect bid award
- Panopto (Learning Unit video management platform)

Discussion:

Trustee Cusumano asked if the college would be prepared to have a rapid response if the funding from the Department of Education was jeopardized. President Sawyer stated we would need to respond quickly, but we are confident that we have taken the necessary steps to prevent such action. That was the primary reason for our thorough analysis—carefully evaluating what we should continue, what needed revision, and what should be discontinued. As a result, we believe we are well prepared to withstand an audit.

Trustee Cusumano asked if the College is receiving guidance from the Michigan Community College Association (MCCA)? President Sawyer stated MCCA is very involved, but colleges across the state are responding in very different ways. Some institutions are choosing to do nothing, believing these measures won't hold up in court, while others, like Jackson College, have completely halted their DEI initiatives. Most colleges, including Macomb, are taking a balanced approach, adjusting where necessary but not eliminating everything. We recognize the significant value that many of these initiatives bring to our students and staff, and unless a program directly conflicts with the new DEI restrictions, we see no reason to change it.

Trustee Cusumano asked if anyone has determined the legal authority that allows President Trump to issue an executive order affecting funds that have already been appropriated by Congress and signed into law? General Counsel Steele noted that legal challenges are occurring nationwide, but he is not aware of any instance at the College where an executive order has stopped allocated funding.

President Sawyer mentioned that the Navy representative supporting the Michigan Maritime Manufacturing Initiative (M3) was instructed to review the College's DEI compliance, and the College was found to be in compliance.

#### Presentation

Joe Asperger, Plante Moran Realpoint, will present the Facility Utilization study.

#### 6.2 Presentation

Joe Asperger, Senior Vice President, Plante Moran Realpoint & Paul Wills, Partner, Plante Moran Realpoint presented the Facility Utilization study.

Trustee Dean asked if the study revealed any significant "WOW" moments for Macomb. J. Asperger responded that Macomb faces the same challenges as most colleges nationwide, including declining enrollment, shifting demographics, and changes in course delivery. He noted that there were no standout findings specific to Macomb compared to other institutions.

Trustee Vitale asked if the Deans or any of the faculty were asked for their input. J. Asperger stated the deans, associate deans and faculty were a part of the stake holder meetings.

Trustee Flynn asked for clarification on what "waitlist sections" means. President Sawyer explained that some courses have waitlists because there is not enough space or resources to support adding an additional section.

Chairperson Lorenzo asked about the key factors driving space utilization and whether future changes have been considered. J. Asperger responded that space utilization is driven by academic and strategic initiatives, much like technology serves as a tool to support the institution's mission. He explained that factors such as online, hybrid, or in-person instruction, as well as lab space requirements, all influence space needs. He emphasized that academic programs determine how space is used and should guide future planning. This ties into the recommendation for a comprehensive campus master plan aligned with an academic strategic plan to assess and address future space requirements.

7.0 CLOSED SESSION

MOTION by Dean, supported by Vitale, to go into closed session pursuant to MCL 15.268 A, C and H to discuss personnel matters, collective bargaining and material exempt from discussion or disclosure by state of federal statute.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

AYES: Dean, Vitale, Cusumano, Flynn, Viviano, Lorenzo

NAYS:

ABSENT: Trustee DiMaria stepped out during this vote

MOTION CARRIED.

8.0 ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Dean, supported by Cusumano, to adjourn the meeting.

MOTION CARRIED.

The meeting adjourned at 7:51 p.m.

COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT OF THE COUNTY OF MACOMB BOARD OF TRUSTEES

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Secretary