

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, April 16, 2025 at 6:00 p.m., in Community Hall of the Lorenzo Cultural Center, Center Campus, 44575 Garfield Road, Clinton Township, Michigan.

1.0 CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Lorenzo at 6:09 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

Absent:

Vincent Viviano, Trustee

Also present:

James Sawyer, President  
Libby Argiri, Executive Vice President, Administration  
Kevin Chandler, Vice President, College Advancement & Community Relations  
Tiffany Goliday, Executive Director, IDEA  
Carrie Jeffers, Vice President, Student Services  
William Leavens, Chief of College Police  
Deb Mende, Executive Director, Office of the President  
Marie Pritchett, Dean, Arts and Science  
Jeffrey Steele, General Counsel, Office of General Counsel  
Patsy Tannahill, Executive Assistant to the President and Board of Trustees

3.0 APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTION by Cusumano, supported by Dean, to approve the agenda as presented.

ALL IN FAVOR:

AYES:

NAYS:

ABSENT: Viviano

MOTION CARRIED.

4.0 AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

None.

5.0 REVIEW OF AGENDA ITEMS AND MATERIALS

Trustee Cusumano asked General Counsel Steele why the proposed changes to the Expressive Activity policy were necessary. General Counsel Steele explained that the change from 48 hours to two business

days was made for administrative efficiency. A mapping component was added to help requestors identify designated demonstration areas, and the option to submit requests in person was removed since the process is now fully online.

Trustee Cusumano asked whether the proposed changes might conflict with the claims made in a previous lawsuit filed against the College. General Counsel Steele responded that the changes would not pose any legal conflict.

Trustee Dean asked whether the College's business days exclude holidays and campus closures. General Counsel Steele confirmed that they do.

Trustee Dean presented an example of a 48-hour request, and General Counsel Steele confirmed that the time frame was accurate.

Trustee Cusumano asked how many expressive activities requests the college received. Carrie Jeffers, vice president, Student Services, stated there has been one request this year.

General Counsel Steele explained that, as structured, partly in response to the recent lawsuit settlement, the policy does not require students to seek pre-authorization for demonstrations. Students are allowed to demonstrate spontaneously. The authorization requirement applies only to third parties, such as outside organizations, many of whom request space to promote political candidates, religious beliefs, or similar causes.

Trustee Vitale asked if trustees are allowed to participate on college campus. General Counsel Steele noted that both citizens and board members have the right to participate in expressive activities, as long as the activity is properly authorized under the Expressive Activity Policy.

Chairperson Lorenzo shared that she received an anonymous letter expressing concerns about the dismissive tone of the meeting minutes referencing a letter received in December and discussed at the January Board meeting. The writer's concern pertained to the Counseling and Academic Advising Department. Chairperson Lorenzo stated that all feedback is taken seriously and confirmed she will provide a copy of the letter to the Board.

Chairperson Lorenzo stated there are two corrections to the meeting minutes from March 19, 2025, information session. The minutes stated Trustee Vitale made the comment, but it was Trustee Dean.

Chairperson Lorenzo stated an amendment would be needed for Agenda item 11.1 at the regular session to accept the corrected executive summary which was provided after the original board packet was distributed.

## 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 C - collective bargaining, and H - to consider material exempt from discussion or disclosure by state or federal statute.

#### Enrollment Update

APPROVED Minutes, Information Session, April 16, 2025

As of Monday, Spring/Summer, 2025 credit hours are up 9.0% compared to last year, headcount is up 4.0 %.

Financial Aid

Financial Aid started processing and packaging awards for the 25/26 academic year, and it is going well. We have not seen major disruptions because of ongoing activities at the Department of Education. We are closely monitoring the impact of the staffing cuts at the Department of Education.

“Received” Financial Assistance programs, enrollment for Winter 2025

- Macomb Tuition Advantage Program: 2154 registered for 12+, current receiving 234
- MI Reconnect: 2240 eligible, 854 receiving
- MI Reconnect 21-24: 1033 registered, 574 receiving
- Community College: Guarantee: 1364 registered for 12+, current receiving 681

Personnel

- One sabbatical leave to approve (Amine Rahmouni El Idrissi)
- Full-time Faculty - Academic Advisor
- Full-time Faculty - Dental Hygiene

Purchases

None.

Administrative – Action Items

None.

Policy Actions

The first reading of the expressive activity policy.

M3 – Michigan Maritime Manufacturing Initiative Graduation

The first graduating cohort of the M3 program was celebrated on March 20, with 21 students completing training in CNC machining or welding. Special thanks extended to Governor Whitmer, County Executive Hackel, and Trustees Vitale, Flynn, and DiMaria for attending.

Governor Whitmer later gave a speech in Washington, D.C., titled “Build America, Build,” emphasizing the importance of a manufacturing-based economy, Michigan’s leadership in the field, and the need for further investment in defense manufacturing. She specifically highlighted Macomb Community College and the M3 program as key contributors to workforce development in this area.

Faculty & Staff Engagement Survey Results

The results of the 2024 Faculty & Staff Engagement Survey, last conducted in 2018, have been compiled and reported. A summary prepared by Institutional Research is included in your packet. The data has been presented to the Strategic Planning group and at the Administrative Briefing, with a presentation planned for IDD as well. The full results are available to the College community on the portal. By the end

of the week, an email will be sent with a Dropbox link providing access to trustees with all related data and reports.

#### Vet Tech Accreditation

The Veterinary Technician program had a positive accreditation visit on March 19–20. Marianne Tear and Susan Burcham were recognized for their outstanding efforts in restoring the program to good standing. As a reminder, the program had faced accreditation probation a few years ago, but this recent visit reflected significant improvement. While there were a few minor findings—typical in such reviews—the team felt the evaluation was more objective and overall, very favorable.

#### Health Care Apprenticeship

The College continues to make strong progress on the career pathways in health care through an apprenticeship model project, supported by the U.S. Department of Education.

Currently, 99 students have been hired as apprentices, and the College is actively partnering with 11 employers. Plans are underway to expand the portfolio of apprentice occupations to include Sterile Processing, Veterinary Assistant, and Emergency Medical Technician programs.

#### First Giving Day May 1

The Macomb Community College Foundation is hosting its first-ever Giving Day on Thursday, May 1—a 24-hour fundraising event to support students, college programs, and resources. First State Bank is serving as the event’s matching sponsor.

#### Adjunct Faculty Appreciation Dinner

The College hosted its 44th Annual Adjunct Faculty Recognition Event, celebrating the valuable contributions of our adjunct instructors. Service awards were distributed, and Timothy Sassanella was honored as the Outstanding Adjunct Faculty Member, nominated by student Shaeleigh Penzak. Special thanks to Trustee Vitale for attending the event.

#### Haas Naming MTEC Lab

The College is exploring a potential \$1 million donation to name the interior M-TEC lab the “Gene Haas CNC Lab.” As with all naming opportunities, Board of Trustees approval is required. The administration recommends moving forward with the offer. Notably, the lab already houses several Haas machines.

#### Athletics

- Men’s Basketball placed 5th at the NJCAA National Tournament, marking an impressive three-year run with national finishes of 2nd, 7th, and 5th.
- Josh Hines made history as the first Macomb basketball player named NJCAA First Team All-American.
- In Baseball, Vincent Cowdrey has already broken the single-season home run record (13), with nearly half the season remaining.
- Nathan Fidelino was named NJCAA National Pitcher of the Week on April 2.
- Dominic Miller pitched a no-hitter against Bryant & Stratton (OH).

Student Life & Leadership Activities

- Pi Day drew 192 students who celebrated math with fun activities and pie.
- The Women's History Month Celebration had 123 students in attendance.
- The Self-Defense Event attracted 20 students, with a RAD-certified trainer providing confidence-building and practical techniques.
- Food Pantry usage has reached 82 visits so far this semester.

May BOT Meeting

- Non-Bargaining Unit contracts and salary grids will be presented. The inclusion of salary grids is a new requirement under the Michigan Office of Retirement Services (ORS).
- Administrative Items
  - ADA-compliant theater handrail upgrades at the Macomb Center for Performing Arts
  - Apparatus bay expansion at East Campus, partially funded by the State
  - Nursing Skills Lab renovation in the Center Campus E Building, supported by grant funding
- Presentation: Gerri Pianko, Executive Director of Budget and Grants, will present the initial 2025–2026 budget.

Presentation Tonight

Transfer and Articulation - Carrie Jeffers, vice president, Student Services and Marie Pritchett, dean, Arts and Science

Discussion:

Trustee Cusumano asked whether the College's naming policy allows for unlimited terms or if naming rights are typically time-bound. President Sawyer responded that it depends on the situation, but in this case, a defined term is anticipated. He added that the current policy grants the Board the authority to change naming rights if circumstances warrant. Trustee Cusumano confirmed that any such change would require a Board vote, and President Sawyer agreed.

Trustee Cusumano inquired whether the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) requires DEI initiatives. President Sawyer clarified that while DEI is referenced in current HLC standards, it is not a formal requirement. He noted it was a widely discussed topic at the recent HLC Convention and invited Tiffany Goliday to elaborate. Goliday explained that institutions are still expected to report evidence of past diversity or cultural programming, but there have been no changes to HLC's formal requirements. The College will continue to provide such documentation. President Sawyer stated that the next HLC review is expected during the 2026–2027 academic year, though no visit date has been set.

Trustee Dean asked for a brief explanation of sabbatical leave. President Sawyer explained that sabbaticals are one-semester leaves during which faculty receive full compensation and benefits, but are responsible for any personal expenses, such as travel. Sabbaticals can serve various purposes, including professional development or curriculum enhancement. In the case discussed, the faculty member will travel to Egypt and the Middle East to deepen his expertise in Arabic and Middle Eastern culture, with plans to revise related course content upon return. Faculty must apply through the Sabbatical



Committee, which is composed of faculty members. The committee makes a recommendation to the provost, and final approval is granted by the Board of Trustees.

6.2 Transfer and Articulation - Carrie Jeffers, vice president, Student Services and Marie Pritchett, dean, Arts and Science

Trustee Cusumano noted that Michigan State University was not listed on the spreadsheet of articulation agreements and asked whether some four-year institutions are less compliant with the Michigan Transfer Agreement (MTA), particularly when the 30-credit block is not accepted. Vice President Jeffers clarified that the spreadsheet reflects Macomb's articulation agreements, not MTA compliance. She explained that when a receiving institution does not accept the MTA credit block, there is a formal complaint process through the MiTransfer (formerly MACRAO) organization, which includes a review committee. Jeffers emphasized that Macomb supports its students in these cases. When she served as Registrar, she often contacted the receiving institution to resolve the issue directly. If necessary, she filed a complaint through MiTransfer, and this support continues through the current Registrar and the Director of Records and Registration.

7.0 CLOSED SESSION

MOTION by Cusumano, supported by Dean, to go into closed session pursuant to MCL 15.268(c) and MCL 15.268(h) to discuss collective bargaining and material exempt from discussion or disclosure by state of federal statute.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

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

NAYS:

ABSENT: Viviano

MOTION CARRIED.


8.0 ADJOURNMENT

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

MOTION CARRIED.

The meeting adjourned at 7:48 p.m.

COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT OF THE COUNTY OF MACOMB BOARD OF TRUSTEES

  
Secretary