

 **North Idaho College**
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
Edminster Student Union Building
August 20, 2025
MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Brad Corkill called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and verified that a quorum was present.

ATTENDANCE

Trustees: Brad Corkill
Rick Durbin
Mary Havercroft
Eve Knudtsen
Tarie Zimmerman

Also present: Nick Swayne, President

APPROVE AGENDA

Chair Corkill suggested two minor changes to the agenda and led attendees in the Pledge of Allegiance. He then called for a motion to approve the agenda as revised. Trustee Eve Knudtsen made the motion which was seconded by Trustee Tarie Zimmerman. Chair Corkill called for the vote. The motion passed unanimously with five votes in favor.

TENURE RECOGNITION AND PHOTO

President Swayne introduced Trisha Robinson, Assistant Professor - Associate Degree Nursing. Ms. Robinson was recognized for achieving tenure with North Idaho College, and a photo was taken with the Board of Trustees to commemorate the occasion.

MESSAGE FROM BOARD CHAIR

Chair Corkill welcomed attendees to the upcoming school year, expressing confidence that it will be productive and successful. He noted the numerous graduation ceremonies held in the spring and stated that the Board takes pride in these accomplishments. The Chair reported that Trustee Mary Havercroft attended the Dental Hygiene Oath Ceremony earlier in the day, further demonstrating the Board's engagement with students and the College's various programs.

CELEBRATING SUCCESS: NIC X-LABS

Director of Innovation Marita Diffenbaugh provided an overview of the program and its positive impact on participants. She highlighted the relationships and collaboration among students, instructors, employers, and community experts. Ms. Diffenbaugh's presentation is included as an addendum to these minutes.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no requests from the public to make comments.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Accreditation

President Swayne reported that the College is finalizing its accreditation report to the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU), with a draft to be shared with the Trustees for review. The report addresses the standard mid-cycle review questions and outstanding recommendations from prior accreditation challenges. The NWCCU will conduct a site visit on October 16 - 17, 2025, deliver a draft report, and allow the College to provide feedback before a final report is issued. A follow-up meeting with the NWCCU is scheduled for January 2026.

In alignment with the President's 2025-2026 goals, Dr. Swayne reported on topics related to goals 1, 2 and 3 of NIC's Strategic Plan.

Goal 1: Student Success and Access

As staff continues to streamline the applications process, an unexpected challenge has been encountered. To date, 21 fraudulent applications generated by Artificial Intelligence (AI) bots attempting to secure financial aid have been detected. The College is collaborating across departments to balance accessibility for legitimate applicants with safeguards against fraud.

Improvements have been made in registration and financial aid processing, as well as in support for students applying for federal financial aid, the Idaho LAUNCH program and NIC Foundation scholarships. Periodic updates will be provided as these efforts continue.

The number of continuing students has increased compared to the prior year. NIC has set a goal to improve fall retention by 5% over the next two years, with a 2% increase already achieved this year. The First Year Experience (FYE) program has expanded its offerings to better equip students with skills for college success.

Faculty are being asked to use the Canvas Learning Management System (LMS) gradebook for early assessments, enabling timely intervention and additional support for struggling students. Additionally, the College has implemented a CARES Act program with a reporting system that allows faculty to flag students in need of further assistance.

While the residence hall traditionally accommodates 197 students, this fall it has accepted 8 additional students, bringing the total to 205. Staff anticipate adjustments after the first month, and, given the high demand and cost of housing in the region, estimate that up to 80 more beds could have been filled if available,

NIC's Week of Welcome is underway, featuring a series of activities designed to engage new and returning students, culminating with a lake cruise hosted by The Coeur d'Alene Resort.

Goal 2: Academic Programs and Pathways

Efforts led by Interim Provost Dr. Lloyd Duman focus on integrating Workforce Training with Career and Technical Education (CTE), eventually expanding to create pathways to connect CTE with transfer programs. The goal is to allow students to carry their progress forward rather than needing to start over when they move between program types.

NIC is responding to community interest by developing a Classical Academy pathway. With 15% - 20% of local students and families seeking this model, the Academy will build on classical literature, providing a seamless transition for students completing homeschool or charter classical programs into associate degree study. Pilot courses are expected to begin in the spring, with a full launch planned for the fall.

Instructional support and tutoring services have expanded. NIC now has dedicated tutoring centers for math, natural science, and writing. Early use this semester has been strong and the sense of belonging created in these centers has proven to be valuable.

The College is focusing on increasing dual credit registrations to support student matriculation and degree completion. Partnerships with local high schools, charter schools, private schools, and homeschool students are providing pathways for accelerated degree progress. Additionally, the College is expanding 2+2 programs and assisting with financial support, allowing students to complete an affordable four-year degree locally.

Federal accessibility requirements are being implemented for all online courses and presentations. The Information Technology (IT) department is utilizing YuJa Panorama, a tool that assists in making instructional materials easily accessible. Faculty was trained on the platform during the Fall 2025 Faculty Convocation.

The faculty convocation included a new workshop entitled “Recruiting for Your Program.” The workshop was designed to engage faculty as successful partners in student recruitment.

Senate Bill 1198, aimed at eliminating Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) and related initiatives on campus has not posed issues as none of NIC’s programs required exemption. To ensure faculty remain in compliance, the College’s attorney provided a workshop during convocation.

Goal 3: Community Partnerships and Engagement

Administration and staff continue to regularly attend community activities, fundraisers, and events. During fall convocation, a workshop was held to support faculty in exploring ways to engage with the community.

The American Indian Studies program, developed in collaboration with the Coeur d’Alene tribe, has shifted from a history and social science focus to environmental science and sustainability, providing clearer career pathways while retaining tribal history and culture for context. A new faculty member has been hired to strengthen tribal partnerships and support program growth.

The NIC Workforce Training Center (WTC) hosted its first graduation ceremony in May, with approximately 120 participants eligible in trades such as HVAC, electrical, and plumbing. The WTC provides academic instruction, documented work experience, and preparation for the journeyman exam.

President Swayne concluded this section of his report by stating that strategic plan goals 4 and 5 will be addressed at the next regular Board of Trustees meeting.

General Updates

NIC student Jeff Shark was selected as the inaugural 2025 Chime Workforce Scholar, receiving a \$1,000 award through the Phi Theta Kappa (PTK) program. This is a prestigious national recognition, as the Chime Scholars Foundation awards approximately \$20,000 annually.

Enrollment growth is projected to be 1-2% over last year, with a notable increase in credit production as more students are taking full time course loads. This builds on last year’s increase of 15.3%. Additional gains are expected with late start and dual credit enrollments.

The NIC Foundation has committed to a record \$1.5 million in scholarships for the coming year, up from the prior record of \$1.3 million.

Since May 2025, the College has hired 61 new employees, including 19 faculty. Many of these positions drew over 20 applicants, with one search attracting 65 applicants.

Cardinal Central has been relocated from Lee-Kildow Hall (LKH) and is now fully operational in the Bob and Leona DeArmond (DARM). The move provides easier access for students, with ample parking compared to the former location.

Over the summer, 26 major facilities projects were managed under the leadership of Dan Adams, Assistant Director of Facilities Operations. These included new roofs on the library and residence hall, as well as new heating, ventilation, air conditioning (HVAC), and windows in LKH. The work was completed efficiently, reflecting excellent collaboration across departments.

Two director positions in IT were recently filled, allowing for quicker movement on key projects, including Coursedog and Element451. Coursedog integrates course scheduling, space utilization and faculty load tracking. Element451 streamlines student communication by consolidating messages from multiple sources. The use of these platforms contributes to goals 1, 2, 4, and 5 of NIC’s Strategic Plan.

The Communications and Marketing (MarCom) department has launched a new student focused newsletter to be distributed twice monthly and made available to the Board. The newsletter will

feature NIC related stories, press releases and NICNow announcements. Graphics were shared and are attached as an addendum to these minutes.

Over the past year, MarCom has worked with the City of Coeur d'Alene and Avista to obtain approval for the installation of approximately 30 NIC banners along Northwest Boulevard. The banners, placed on Avista light poles on both sides of the street, have been designed within Avista's size and format requirements and will enhance the College's visibility in the community.

Upcoming Events

On September 13, 2025, the Coeur d'Alene Fire Department and the City of Coeur d'Alene will gift NIC a retiring ladder truck for use in the fire service training program. The donation reflects the longstanding partnerships and will also provide opportunities for diesel mechanic students.

Trustees are invited to attend the NIC Booster Club Cruise on September 4, 2025, and the Rathdrum Rumble Car Show being held at the Parker Technical Education Center on September 27, 2025.

The ACCT Leadership Conference is scheduled for October 20 - 25, 2025 in New Orleans, LA with Trustee participation anticipated.

The Lightcast Economic Impact Report has been released and is available online. Recent media coverage has highlighted the Geological Engineering program and the Culinary Arts Sous Chef Apprenticeship program.

The Governor has announced a 3% budget holdback for the current fiscal year. Administration is reviewing potential adjustments and will bring recommendations to the Board of Trustees if budget revisions are required.

The Trustees offered comments and President Swayne responded to their questions.

At Chair Corkill's request, President Swayne announced that he was recently appointed by the ACCT to serve on the President's Advisory Committee representing the Pacific Region.

INFORMATION ITEMS

ACCT Consultant Debrief

Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT) Consultant Ken Burke, reporting on behalf of himself and fellow consultant Dr. Debbie DiThomas, expressed appreciation for the opportunity to meet with the Board of Trustees.

All Trustees were present at a facilitated discussion during the afternoon. The President's evaluation was conducted in alignment with best practices. While the evaluation remains confidential, the process, facilitated by ACCT and completed by an external agency, was positive and demonstrated effective collaboration.

The Board of Trustees conducted its annual review of the President's contract. President Swayne provided the Trustees with copies, a summary of his compensation package, and presented his goals for 2025 – 2026, which were discussed in detail. The Board also completed a brief self-evaluation and has engaged ACCT to conduct a more comprehensive review, with results and updated Board goals expected to be finalized in November.

Governance related accreditation recommendations were reviewed, with most action items already completed. The Trustees were commended for their progress in addressing prior concerns, including the withdrawal of previous votes of no confidence by the constituency groups, and were acknowledged for their consistent engagement and partnership with President Swayne.

Finance Q4 Prior Year Summary (Apr-Jun)

Sarah Garcia, Vice President for Finance and Business Affairs, presented a summary for the prior year's Q4 Fiscal Year (FY) 2025 results. Her presentation is included as an addendum.

Strategic Plan: Goal 2 Metrics

Interim Provost Duman gave an overview of the metrics associated with Goal 2 of the College's strategic plan. He noted that while the focus was on Goal 2, all five strategic goals are closely inter-connected. Dr. Duman's graphics are included as an addendum to these minutes.

Retention

Holly Edwards, Associate Dean of Academic Support, and JoSann Lien, Assistant Professor - English, presented an overview of NIC's student retention initiatives, with emphasis on the FYE programs. Ms. Edwards responded to questions from the Trustees and Dr. Swayne offered comments. The presentation is included as an addendum to these minutes.

CONSENT AGENDA

Tab 1: Approve Board Regular Meeting Minutes for May 25, 2025

Chair Corkill requested a motion to approve Tab 1 as presented. Trustee Knudtsen made the motion which was seconded by Trustee Havercroft. Chair Corkill called for the vote. The motion passed unanimously with five votes in favor.

Tab 2: Approve Changes to regular board meeting dates October (from 10/22 to 10/15) and January (from 01/28 to 01/21)

Chair Corkill requested a motion to approve Tab 2 as presented. Trustee Knudtsen made the motion which was seconded by Trustee Havercroft. Following an explanation from Dr. Swayne, Chair Corkill called for the vote. The motion passed unanimously with five votes in favor.

NEW BUSINESS

Tab 3: Approve President's Annual Evaluation

After providing background information, Chair Corkill requested a motion to approve Tab 3 as presented. Trustee Zimmerman made the motion which was seconded by Trustee Durbin. Following comments from the Trustees, the Chair called for the vote. The motion passed unanimously with five votes in favor.

Tab 4: Approve President's Annual Goals

Chair Corkill reported that the Board conducted a first reading of the President's annual goals. The goals will be posted on the College website for public review, with formal approval scheduled for the regular September Board of Trustees meeting. Trustee Zimmerman stated that based on the Board's discussion earlier in the afternoon, and in connection with the President's performance review, it was recommended that Section 4 of the President's annual goals be emphasized in the coming year. This emphasis will focus on continuing to expose the Trustees to the wide range of programs offered by the college. The President's 2025 - 2026 Goals are attached as an addendum to these minutes.

Tab 5: Approve Board's Annual Goals

Chair Corkill stated that discussion of the Board's annual goals is ongoing. Trustee Havercroft noted that the Board will first complete a self-evaluation to establish a baseline, after which appropriate goals will be developed, including those that emerge directly from the evaluation process. The revised goals will be brought forward for consideration at the regular November Board of Trustees meeting.

TRUSTEE REMARKS FOR THE GOOD OF THE ORDER

There were no remarks for the good of the order.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:43 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Suzy Scura, Board Clerk

Addenda:

- 1) NIC X-Labs Presentation
- 2) President's Report - NIC In the News Presentation
- 3) Finance Q4 Prior Year Summary (Apr-Jun)
- 4) Strategic Plan Presentation: Goal 2 Metrics
- 5) Student Retention Presentation