



Board of Trustees Meeting Agenda

11:00 a.m. | Friday, April 26th, 2024

- I. Call to Order
- II. Approval February 23rd, 2024 Minutes
- III. Liaison Reports
 - College Senate
 - NCCCAP
 - CSEA
- IV. College Reports
 - Board Chair
 - Interim Vice President for Academic Affairs
 - Vice President for Marketing & Enrollment Management
 - Interim Chief Financial Officer
 - Interim Associate Vice President of Student Affairs
 - President
- V. Representative Reports
 - NCCC Association
 - NCCC Foundation
- VI. Old Business
- VII. New Business
- VIII. Public Comment*
- IX. Executive Session
- X. Adjourn

An Executive Session of the Board of Trustees may be called pursuant to Article 7 of the Public Officer's Law to discuss *the Medical, financial, credit or employment history of a particular person or corporation, or matters leading to the appointment, employment, promotion, demotion, discipline, suspension, dismissal, or removal of a particular person or corporation and collective bargaining negotiations conducted pursuant to Article 14 of the Civil Service Law. (Public Officers Law §105).*

* Public Comment: *Visitors are requested to sign in before the beginning of the meeting. Provision is made at this point in the agenda for citizens of the community to make comments regarding any agenda item to be discussed at that meeting. Citizens will not be recognized at any other time. No person, not a member of the Board, shall speak for more than five (5) minutes. The minutes shall show that privilege of the floor was granted and shall include a brief statement of the subject matter presented.*



Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes
Friday, November 17th, 2023 | 11:00am
Hybrid Meeting: HH-105 & Zoom

Board Members Present: Pete Suttmeier, Todd LaPage, Donna Wadsworth, Linda Beers, Mary Irene Lee, Dan Kelleher, and Abby Martelle

Excused: Seth McGowan

Others Present: Joe Keegan, Stacie Hurwitch, Tara Evans, Erik Harvey, Kyle Johnston, Erin Walkow, Chris Knight, Lee Susice, Allison Warner. Members of the College community joined as well.

Board Chair, Pete Suttmeier called the meeting to order at 11:00 a.m.

Minutes

- Todd LaPage made the motion to accept the November 17th, 2023, meeting minutes. Dan Kelleher seconded the motion.
- The November 17th, 2023, meeting minutes were unanimously approved pending the requested update are made to the final document (6-0-0).

College Senate

Allison Warner had no report. She requested a Board presence at the upcoming meetings. After discussion the following were selected to attend:

- March 8th– Trustee Beers
- April 12th– Trustee Kelleher
- May 10th– Trustee Lee

NCCCAP

Lee Susice reported:

- The proposed Phased Retirement Program MOA has been accepted by the Membership.
- NCCCAP leadership and the Administration continue to work on a Remote Work Policy proposal. Updates will be shared as they become available.

CSEA

No report.

Board Chair Report

Pete Suttmeier shared:

- Announcement – NYCCT will hold their April 2024 meeting in Syracuse where he plans to attend.
- Shared the NYCCT Advocacy letter related to equitably funding community colleges. All members of the Board agreed to support the message.
- Members of the Board look forward to seeing the upgrades to the nursing labs and science wing on the Saranac Lake campus following their April 2024 meeting.

Interim Vice President for Academic Affairs

Sarah Maroun reported:

- The Spring 2024 semester is off to a great start.
- The AAS Nursing expansion project garnered 29 new students for the Spring semester. The new nursing lab/facility has been a welcome upgrade to both students and faculty.
- Sarah shared with the Board the news of our Second Chance Pell program will continue to operate until 2026, after which the College will need to receive approval from several stakeholders, including Middle States, to make the program permanent.
- Members of the Board discussed the conversations around Artificial Intelligence and how it impacts academic integrity, and how our faculty could use it as a tool in the classroom.
- Sarah updated the Board on the Microcredential Policy.

Linda Beers joins the meeting at 11:21 a.m. | Board attendance is now at 7 members.

Board moved to approve the following resolutions:

Todd LaPage made a motion to the floor that the North Country Community College Board of Trustees hereby approve NCCC's Microcredential Policy as it was shared and presented. Mary Irene Lee seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved (7-0-0).

Linda Beers made a motion to the floor that the North Country Community College Board of Trustees hereby approve the changes to the admission requirements for the AAS Nursing Program. Mary Irene Lee seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved (7-0-0).

Vice President for Marketing and Enrollment Management

Kyle Johnston reported:

- How marketing was tailored to create a short-term offering page regarding Microcredentials, to include a piece about continuing education.
- The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) is undergoing significant changes this year, leading to slowdown in receipt of FAFSAs to higher education institutions across the country. The updates began in January, with the intention to provide more aid to students. Currently, we are anticipating an April/May receipt of Financial Aid applications from the federal government.
 - There are multiple opportunities for training and processing new aid through the FAFSA Simplification Act.
- Campus visits from prospective students are happening this week. To date the numbers are lighter when compared to this time last year.
 - We are finding families are pivoting their focus to understanding the new changes with Financial Aid opportunities.
- High School visits to campuses will be coming soon. Plans are in the works to create sessions on what it's like to be a student where they can experience a college-level course in action.
- Upcoming marketing campaigns:
 - AAS Criminal Justice and Cyber Security
 - AAS Visual Arts and Design
 - Software Bootcamp
- Members of the board discussed microcredentials and understanding how they are being used in the workforce.

Interim CFO:

Erik Harvey added to his written report:

- Shared the 5-year projection of the Fund Balance
- Discussed expectations of future high school enrollment numbers
- Reported the College's annual audit is on par with similar colleges.
 - Appreciation and thanks were extended to Brian Pelkey, Comptroller, for his exceptional work managing the books.
- Currently, we are on target with work on proposed 2024-2025 Budget. He plans to share it with the board for their review at the April meeting.

Board moved to approve the following resolutions:

Dan Kelleher made a motion from the floor that the North Country Community College Board of Trustees hereby approves the November 2023 financials as they were presented in the packet. Todd LaPage seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved (7-0-0).

Dan Kelleher made a motion from the floor that the North Country Community College Board of Trustees hereby approves the December 2023 financials as they were presented in the packet. Todd LaPage seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved (7-0-0).

President:

Joe Keegan reported:

- Extends thanks to the members of the Board for their unwavering support of the College, its students, and staff.
- Extends thanks to the College staff, faculty, and administrators for ensuring a successful Spring 2024 start for student support and success.
- Scott Harwood shared the current enrollment numbers.
 - Spring 2024 enrollment is up by 7% when compared to this time last year.
 - To date, the past three consecutive semesters has shown an increase in enrollment numbers.
- Joe updated the Board on the current arrangement for managing Student Affairs. He noted that the position will be posted and searched for soon.
- Joe reported that he continues to collaborate with other colleges and working on our advocacy message. He noted the chronic disinvestment by the State.
- Our county sponsors, Essex and Franklin County, have approved resolutions in support of the advocacy efforts to increase NYS operating aid support for community colleges.
- Important work on updating the College's Strategic Planning is underway. A proposed draft is anticipated to be shared with the college community in the coming months.
- Joe expressed his thanks to board member, Abby Martelle for her great work in advocating for our students.
- Work on the Office Civil Rights review is underway. Virtual meetings are in place for early March. It is anticipated that an in-person visit will occur in May 2024. A report will be shared as it becomes available.
- Reports there are two position searches underway using the SUNY transformational dollars: Workforce Development Coordinator and Grant Manager.

Board moved to approve the following resolutions:

Dan Kelleher made a motion to the floor that the North Country Community College Board of Trustees hereby approves the Title IX Informal Resolution Policy. Linda Beers seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved (7-0-0).

Todd LaPage made a motion from the floor that the North Country Community College Board of Trustees hereby approves temporary appointment of Renee Poirer as the Title IX coordinator. Mary Irene seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved (7-0-0).

Mary Irene Lee made a motion from the floor that the North Country Community College Board of Trustees hereby approves the Phased Retirement Pilot Program as it was presented. Members spoke of the financial impact of offering the program. Linda Beers seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved (7-0-0).

NCCC Association:

No report.

NCCC Foundation:

Erin Walkow reported:

- Foundation closed out 2023 with over \$260K dollars raised, more than doubled when compared to this time last year. This is in part thanks to the following organizations for their gifts: Franklin County, Town of North Elba LEAF fund, Stewarts, and Casella Waste.
- Starting outreach for renewed support from other foundations, with the goal to maintain first time gifts and

acquiring new opportunities.

- Recently submitted funding requests to:
 - LEAF for funding upgrades to the Sparks Athletics Complex.
 - Adirondack Foundation for funding non-credit pathways, including UpNCoding, Child Development Associate and direct support for professional microcredentials.
- Annually, there are approximately \$47,000 in scholarship dollars made by generous gifts to the NCCC Foundation.
- Members of the Board extended their thanks and appreciation to Erin for her hard work in establishing and increasing scholarships. They highlighted her work and the importance of assisting students with financial hardship.

Old Business

None

New Business

Board member, Abby Martelle, shared with her fellow board members the appreciation she has with her regular meetings with Joe. In addition, she shared her experiences representing the College during the Winter Carnival, where she was crowned Princess.

Public Comment

None

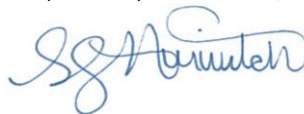
Executive Session

Mary Irene Lee made the motion to enter Executive Session at 12:25 p.m. in relation to collective bargaining negotiations conducted pursuant to Article 14 of the Civil Service Law; and the medical, financial, credit or employment history of a particular person or corporation, or matters leading to the appointment, employment, promotion, demotion, discipline, suspension, dismissal or removal of a particular person or corporation. Dan Kelleher seconded the motion. The motion was passed unanimously (7-0-0). Joe Keegan was invited to attend the meeting at 12:25 p.m.

Adjourn

Mary Irene Lee made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Dan Kelleher seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously (7-0-0). The Board meeting was adjourned at 1:27 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Stacie G. Hurwitch
Assistant Secretary, NCCC Board of Trustees

Date: April 26th, 2024

Resolution #: 2023-24 | **XX**

Motion:

Seconded:

Action: Pending (x-x-x)

Witness: Stacie G. Hurwitch, Asst. Secretary to the NCCC Board of Trustees



Interim VPAA Report to the Board of Trustees

April 26, 2024

Please find the following report from the Academic Area.

Academic Planning, Programs and Policies:

Spring 2024:

Progress Reports: Faculty submitted progress grades on March 8th instead of midterm grades this semester in order to assist retention efforts and earlier outreach to students. Preliminary feedback from faculty indicate that the earlier intervention was helpful. We will continue this practice for the Fall 2024 semester.

Fall 2024:

Fall 2024 registration is underway for continuing and new students. Enrollment trends look similar to the previous year at this time.

New York State Education Department Regulations—Distance Learning Classes:

New York State Department of Education has not extended distance learning flexibility for the 2024-2025 academic year. Programs without distance learning approval require students to take at least 50% of their classes on campus. For those programs who wish to apply for distance learning approval (allowing for more than 50% of courses to be taken online), those proposals must go through the College's internal governance process before submitting to SUNY and NYSED for approval.

College Bridge Faculty Development Session:

On April 23rd from 3:00-4:30 we will host a virtual gathering for College Bridge instructors in our liberal arts programs. In past years, we hosted these gatherings at the Saranac Lake Campus, but have not done so since the pandemic. This will be the first virtual gathering, so we hope this format will allow for greater participation.

Advisory Boards: The Human Services and Business departments hosted successful advisory board meetings on Friday, March 8th and Thursday March 28th respectively. This concludes our advisory board meetings for the 2023-2024 academic year. We appreciate all of the time and energy put into these meetings as they are critical to providing and receiving information from our local community members.

Scholarship Awards for Chemical Dependency Counseling:

NCCC was awarded nearly \$270K in funding from the NYS Office of Addiction Services and Supports (OASAS) "to support efforts to expand and diversify the addictions workforce." Congratulations to Human Services Department faculty and Kathleen Dowd-Maloney, who applied for the funding. The scholarships will be available for the Fall 2024 semester.

SUNY Notification regarding Prior Learning Assessment:

On March 15th, Ram Ramasubramanian, Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and Provost issued an MTP (memorandum to Presidents) regarding the implementation of the Prior Learning Assessment Policy passed by the SUNY Board of Trustees in February of 2023 (also known as the Award of Academic Credit by Evaluation). NCCC has a current Prior Learning Assessment Policy draft that was revised with the input of the Chairs/Directors as well as the Academic Policy and Standards Committee. With this specific guidance from SUNY, we will work with faculty, the Registrar and other offices across the College to align the current draft with the guidance in the MTP. These policies and guidelines affect almost all areas of the College including Academic Affairs, Financial Aid, Enrollment, Records, Veterans Services, and Workforce Development. Final policies must be presented to SUNY by December 31, 2024.

Non-Credit Offerings:

Pottery Classes: May 7th-June 13th.

UpNCoding Software Engineering Bootcamp: June-August (change in dates)

Child Development Associate Certificate Training: May 21st-August 13th

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah Maroun

Interim Vice President for Academic Affairs

**NORTH COUNTRY COMMUNITY COLLEGE
RESOLUTION**

WHEREAS The use of the title of *Community Residence Aide* has shifted,
and

WHEREAS the industry more commonly uses the title of *Direct Support Professional*, and

WHEREAS NCCC has recently developed three levels of Direct Support Professional microcredentials that align with the current title in the field, and

WHEREAS the Human Services faculty concur, and

WHEREAS the Curriculum Committee and College Senate have given approval to change the name to the Direct Support Professional Certificate, and

WHEREAS the President has reviewed the proposal and endorses the recommendation;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT

RESOLVED that the North Country Community College Board of Trustees approves NCCC to submit a request to change the name of the Community Resident Aide Certificate to the Direct Support Professional Certificate SUNY and NYSED.

####

MOTION:

SECOND:

ACTION:

Yeas:

Nays:

Abstentions:

DATE:

CC approved: 2.5.2024

Senate approved: 2.9.2024

BOT approved:

Revised

VPAA: lm:

Effective

Date:

**NORTH COUNTRY COMMUNITY COLLEGE
RESOLUTION**

- WHEREAS The regional demand for online program offerings, and
- WHEREAS input from regional employers, NCCC's Enrollment Department, and SUNY indicate need and interest among traditional and non-traditional students to pursue online options in education, and
- WHEREAS NCCC has recently developed three levels of Direct Support Professional microcredentials that can be applied toward a Direct Support Professional Certificate, and
- WHEREAS the Human Services faculty concur, and
- WHEREAS the Curriculum Committee and College Senate have given approval to add a distance learning modality for students pursuing a Direct Support Professional Certificate, and
- WHEREAS the President has reviewed the proposal and endorses the recommendation;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT

RESOLVED

that the North Country Community College Board of Trustees approves NCCC to submit a request for distance learning approval for the Direct Support Professional Certificate to SUNY and NYSED.

####

MOTION:

SECOND:

ACTION:

Yeas:

Nays:

Abstentions:

DATE:

CC approved: 2.5.2024

Senate approved: 2.9.2024

BOT approved:

Revised

VPAA:

Effective

Date:

Vice President of Marketing & Enrollment

Report to the Board of Trustees

Created April 22, 2024

Enrollment and Financial Aid Updates:

- **Major project updates:**
 - **SEM PLAN PROJECT:** Recently, we submitted a grant application to SUNY for their “Phase 2 SEM Plan Implementations” and we were fortunate to be granted \$20,000 for some of the newer initiatives that we’re just launching at the college. This will mostly assist with the marketing of our short-term offerings as they’re fairly new and have never had a budget to tap in to. We will put together new campaigns for this summer pushing fall start and next fall pushing spring semester.
 - **SLATE CRM (Customer Relationship Management):** Slate has been utilized recently to create a new RSVP process for students to sign-up for one-on-one sessions with our Director of Financial Aid. Our director has always taken appointments, but this gives students the power to select days/times themselves and they’ll now benefit from automated confirmations and reminders.
 - **North Country Navigator:** The primary www.nccc.edu/navigator landing page has recently been re-launched and includes our first ten animated “How-To” videos. These first ten are designed for students to make quick work of many of the processes that they need to complete to become an enrolled and well-prepared student at North Country. The remaining ten videos are in the production stage and will be made available to everyone by June 1st.
- **The Enrollment Team:** Application volume for the Fall semester continues to track ahead of previous year. The team has been busy with their Spring travel season which is starting to wrap up. The next major event is the “Explore NCCC Day” which is coming up next week and it appears that we will be welcoming around 125-150 students to campus that day. I’ll provide more concrete numbers at the Board of Trustees meeting as we are waiting to hear back from a few schools this week.
- **The Financial Aid Team:** So far, the Better FAFSA that launched back in January has proved to be much simpler for students and their contributors to submit. We have started receiving student submissions from Federal Student Aid and have been preparing to begin awarding. Testing is already happening, and we will officially start the awarding process once testing is complete. This has been a lot of preparation for our Financial Aid Office and the IT Department who have been working together to completely overhaul our systems. We anticipate that it will take 4-6 weeks to clear out the backlog as soon as processing starts.

Marketing and Web Updates:

- Recent and currently running marketing campaigns include: Criminal Justice & Cybersecurity Programs, Digital Arts, Advertising, & Graphic Design programs, Environmental Science and Wilderness Leadership, Software Engineering Bootcamp, Child Development Associate, and the Summer Registration Push.
- Upcoming campaigns currently in development include: Business & Entrepreneurship Programs, Scholarships-4-Everyone, Gateway 2 Plattsburgh Dual Admissions, and a more generalized “Short-Term Programs” campaign.
- The program video and animation video projects are starting to wrap up as the last days of video capture happened earlier this week. We’ve been sharing frequently for feedback and folks at the college seem to be happy with them. We have started sharing them publicly and will continue to do so throughout the summer.
- We’ve continued to work on fine-tuning our website as we were able to start using a new “Insights” tool a few months back. This feature helped us greatly in our preparation for the OCR visit as it scores us on many metrics regarding accessibility, search engine optimization, and various site errors.



EXPLORE NCCC DAY!

April 30, 2024

AGENDA

- ✓ 9:00am - Arrival
- ✓ 9:45am - Welcome & Admissions
- ✓ 10:00am - Workshop #1
- ✓ 11:00am - Lunch or Campus Tour
- ✓ 11:45am - Lunch or Campus Tour
- ✓ 12:30pm - Workshop #2
- ✓ 1:30pm - Wrap-up & Departure

Lunch is provided!

**CALLING ALL
10TH-12TH
GRADERS!**

REGISTER NOW



11 WORKSHOPS TO CHOOSE FROM!

- Hand X-ray
- Be a Forensic Investigator
- Crime Scene Investigation
- Publishing, Playwriting, Poetry & Possibilities
- Expressing Creativity through Computer Graphics/Digital Arts
- Hunting for History: How do we learn about the past?
- The 21st Century Business Professional
- Massage Therapy: The Healing Side of Healthcare
- What's next? Life After High School - Skills to Survive
- Bird Conservation in the ADKs/ADK Raptors
- Nursing Careers & Modern Simulation Technologies

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Help to protect others in need and impact people's lives in a meaningful way. North Country's degrees in Criminal Justice and Cybersecurity & Digital Forensics are designed to prepare you for in-demand career opportunities in our communities, across the region, and throughout the country!

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Law Enforcement Degrees [Learn more](#)

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Learn about criminal law, law enforcement procedures, and investigative techniques in the Criminal Justice and Cybersecurity & Digital Forensics degrees at North Country!

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Protect Others [Learn more](#)

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Calling all digital art and design fans! North Country's Digital Arts, Advertising & Design programs are gateways to exciting careers in fields such as animation, publication creation and character/game design!

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Fuel Your Design Passion
Reach Higher at NCCC [Learn more](#)

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Get hands-on graphic design experience in the Digital Arts, Advertising & Design programs at North Country while pursuing your degree or preparation for transfer to a four-year college.

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Software Coding Bootcamp

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The software engineering industry is growing! Don't miss out on your chance to enroll in North Country and UpNCoding's Software Engineering Bootcamp.



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Full-Stack Training
Reach Higher at NCCC

[Learn more](#)

NC North Country Community College
Sponsored · 🌐

North Country's comprehensive Child Development Associate training focuses on all aspects of child growth and development. The next session starts in May!



EARN YOUR CHILD DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATE CREDENTIAL

NCCC EVERY TUESDAY
May 21 - Aug. 13, 6-8 pm
Saranac Lake, Malone & Ticonderoga
In Person and Online

888-TRY-NCCC
www.nccc.edu/child-development-associate

nccc.edu
Get Started Today at North Country!

[Learn more](#)

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Interested in working within the early childhood education field? Complete the required 120 hours and the exam preparation needed to earn the CDA credential starting this May!



EARN YOUR CHILD DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATE CREDENTIAL

NCCC EVERY TUESDAY
May 21 - Aug. 13, 6-8 pm
Saranac Lake, Malone & Ticonderoga
In Person and Online


888-TRY-NCCC
www.nccc.edu/child-development-associate

nccc.edu
Child Development Associate Program

[Learn more](#)

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Take your learning to the next level. North Country is ready to help you reach your career goals.



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Expand Your Knowledge
Enroll Now for Summer

[Learn more](#)

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Summer registration is now open! From the arts to the sciences, North Country offers a wide range of summer courses to elevate your learning.



nccc.edu
Discover a New Passion
Enroll Now for Summer

[Learn more](#)



Below is the latest report card for:

<https://www.nccc.edu/>

Site Score

98

Site Grade

A

SEO

99

Accessibility

99

Links

95

Spelling

98

**North Country Community College
President's Report to the Board of Trustees
April 26, 2024**

Greetings to you all,

...on this final Friday of April. The *Great Adirondack Eclipse* has come and gone and was, in a very real sense, a “once in a lifetime” event that will be spoken about for years to come. Many thanks to Seth McGowan, President of the Adirondack Sky Center and Observatory (and member of the NCCC Board of Trustees), for a riveting presentation to the NCCC community in early March 2024. He not only fired up our imagination about the event but helped bring to our attention the impact that it could have for the College.

With less than two weeks of instruction remaining, the spring semester is quickly drawing to a close, signaling the end of the academic year and the arrival of our annual commencement ceremony. We look forward to your joining us on Saturday, May 11th, 2024, when we celebrate the accomplishments of our students.

Meanwhile, faculty members are putting the finishing touches on their courses, while students are preparing to wrap up their end of the learning agreement through final projects, final papers, and final exams. Fall 2024 registration is underway, with the faculty completing Priority Registration of continuing students earlier this month and new student registration following in its wake.

During today's board meeting, you will be receiving a preliminary draft of the 2024-2025 budget from Erik Harvey, updates on Fall 2024 enrollment, marketing and financial efforts from Kyle Johnston, and some good news from Sarah Maroun on the College's rollout of its first microcredential.

Late last week, the NYS FY 2025 budget was finalized (see below for more details). The collective efforts of members of our community, including members of the Board of Trustees advocating for increased operating aid, is much appreciated. Without a doubt, the community college profile and the need for additional operating aid was received by our state elected officials and will give us something to build upon for the new year.

That's all for now. I look forward to seeing you at the meeting.

Joe

★ **Board Matters**

Updates for you include:

- *Board Appointments:*
 - *County:* No updates. Our county appointments are filled.

- *Student:* Abby Martelle will be completing her term through June 30th, 2024. This week, students are voting on their trustee for the 2024-2025 year, so we may have a student trustee in place when Abby's term ends.
- *Governor's:* With the NYS FY 2025 Budget finalized, NYCCT has turned their attention to advocating for Governor's appointments. They canvassed community colleges to identify the vacancies as well as Governor's appointees who continue to serve beyond their appointment time.

Other updates include:

- *New York Community College Trustees (NYCCT):* were quite active in their budget advocacy once again this year, working closely with the New York Community College Association of Presidents (NYCCAP) in their efforts. While buoyed by the impact their efforts have had in raising the profile and funding concerns of community colleges, they remain focused on addressing the disparity in community college funding by securing additional operating support for the community colleges.

* **Budgeting and Planning**

- **24-25 Budget:** Erik Harvey has been fine-tuning the budget as it worked its way through our shared governance process (i.e., college wide-open forum in December 2023, a joint meeting of the Senate's Long Range and Strategic Planning Committee and President's Council in March 2024, and the College Senate earlier this month). He will share the preliminary draft with you today, with an expectation to bring a final draft to you at your May 30th, 2024 meeting.
- **24-25 Budget Advocacy:** As noted above, NYCCT worked collaboratively with NYCCAP and others to advocate for an equitable, fair, and sustainable funding model for community college and the students we serve. The notion that community colleges receive less than one-third of direct tax support (including state and county funding) than their four-year counterparts continue to galvanize the trustees and presidents. The NYS FY 2025 Budget passed over the weekend. Of particular interest to the community colleges was that the NYS FY 2025 Budget:
 - retains the funding floor, and
 - adds \$8M for operating services and expenses pursuant to a plan approved by the Director of the Budget.

While we don't know the exact details of the additional \$8M, we are assuming they will emerge in the coming weeks and will share them then.

* **Enrollment**

- **Fall 2024 Enrollment:** With additional support from SUNY for the College's Strategic Enrollment Management plan initiatives, and scholarship funding from the NCCC Foundation, Essex County, Franklin County, and New York State, our Admissions team has some additional tools to help students find a place at NCCC. The last three semesters of enrollment growth coupled with positive signs in application volume are hopeful signs, though much work remains between now and the start of the new academic year.

* **Other Items of Interest**

- **Office of Civil Rights Review**
 - The interview portion of our Office of Civil Rights review occurred in mid-March, with two days of interviews with members of our faculty and staff. It

will conclude after commencement with a walk-through and assessment of our physical plant. Following that, we expect to receive a report with recommended areas for improvement. The review is seeking confirmation of compliance with federal legislation prohibiting discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability and age. Their focus is on our career and technical education (CTE) programs.

□ **Student Affairs**

- After review of the Associate Vice President (AVP) for Student Affairs responsibilities, interviews with staff members and departmental leaders in the area, discussions with administrative team members, and the experience gleaned from overseeing the area, I am recommending we retain the AVP for Student Affairs leadership model and search for the position this semester.

In 2020, the College undertook an internal review of the leadership needs of the Student Affairs area. The outcome was to elevate the leadership role to an Associate Vice President (AVP) from a Dean of Student Life position. The rationale for doing so included the following considerations:

- A desire to have an advocate for the non-academic side (student affairs) of the student experience as part of the College's administrative team.
- Balancing out the Academic Affairs (AA) administrative load by moving Athletics from AA to Student Affairs, in line with the practice adopted by the majority of our sister institutions.
- Compliance responsibilities were increasing and were distributed across the administration. With this change, the bulk of compliance would fall under the AVP for Student Affairs, including elements in the Verification of Compliance required by Middle States.

These considerations remain relevant today and helped inform the decision to keep the position at the AVP level.

□ **Strategic Plan Update**

- *2024-2027*: Last week, the update to the strategic plan was presented to the college community in a college-wide meeting. Members of the committee(s) that helped develop the plan shared the goals developed as well as the rationale behind it. We will be formally presenting it to the Senate at their May 10th, 2024, meeting.
- *2020-2023*: The College and Foundation are in the final stages of planning a strategic dialogue to discuss the state of higher education in the region and better understand how the College can serve the region's needs and remain vibrant and viable. In the words of our Board Chair, Pete Suttmeier, "...*this "summit" of our stakeholders will contribute to the kinds of new thinking, "inside" and "outside the box," needed to guide the College going forward in ways that will further enhance the value of NCCC in confronting the challenges and opportunities facing our region.*" That meeting will take place on Tuesday, June 4th, 2024, from 9:00 am until 3:00 pm, and will feature panel presentations and a broader planning session to follow.
- *Modernization of Nursing Labs*: the SimCapture system, which will enable the Nursing Department to leverage the simulation equipment even further

by recording audio and video performance of students to simulated scenarios as a tool to support student learning and skill development has been installed and training on it has begun as well. Many thanks to our IT department for their support in the installation of the system.

□ **Grants and Opportunities**

- *Perkins*: The Community Local Needs Assessment (CLNA), which is required of Perkins-funded institutions, was completed earlier this month. The assessment examines how the College's programs align with employment needs in career and technical education (CTE) areas, as identified by the NYS Department of Labor. We'll expect to receive our 2024-2025 Perkins allocation and opportunity to apply soon.
- *Congressionally Directed Spending*: The federal government announced the opportunity to apply for Congressionally Directed Spending funding. The College once again submitted a grant to complement the recently completed science lab renovations, with a request for new equipment to support science instruction.

□ **Campus Advisory Boards**: given the Community Leaders Day in Fall 2023 and the "educational summit" planned for June 2024, we opted to not hold the campus advisory boards this year. We will look to resume them in the next academic year.

□ **Information Technology (IT)**: An IT Steering Committee was formed in the wake of a recommendation from the Senate related to forming an IT Task Force. The administration requested the Senate hold that recommendation in abeyance while the administration addressed the concerns raised related to IT support. Since then, the committee has been helping support Scott Harwood and the IT team's efforts, including cataloging known issues, triaging them, and determining what can be addressed within our budget. Scott and his team have done a yeoman's efforts over the last several years. As IT has increasingly taken on vital importance in every facet of our operations, the support needs have continued to grow as have the costs related to IT. The Steering Committee will help Scott with prioritization, including financial/ considerations, as he and his team continue their good work.

□ **Facilities**: The Facilities staff have been active in keeping our campuses clean and operating. Most recently, they turned their attention to sprucing them up for end of the year events and celebrations, among the many other and varied responses they undertake. Recently, Rick Heath and his folks completed an exhaustive accessibility assessment of our buildings as part of the OCR review.

- *Sparks Athletic Complex*: With the recent upgrades to the nursing and science labs, we are now turning our attention to the Sparks Athletic Complex. As some of the Board may recall, the \$1.1M DASNY grant that helped with science lab upgrades was originally designed to be used to improve the athletic facility *and* the science labs in Mulholland Hall. Each project would receive 50% of the \$1.1M. Athletics deferred those dollars earmarked for Athletics to the Science Department, so they could complete the upgrades to the science wing.

Given that little has been done to upgrade the facility in decades, and the role that it plays not only for the College, but our community, we are looking to leverage capital funding from several sources to update it including entryways, doors, plumbing, locker rooms and the like. We reached out to JMZ Architects, Inc. to begin the process of assessing the need and the realm of possibilities within our budget. As we know more, we will share a more formal proposal with the Board and our community.

- **NCCCAP:** This semester, we have worked with NCCCAP on two proposals: a Phased Retirement proposal that the Board approved at its last meeting, and a Remote Work policy, which is anticipated to be brought to the Board at your May 30th meeting.
- **CSEA:** similarly, we discussed the possibility of a Phased Retirement with CSEA. They have expressed interest, and the administration will work with CSEA to explore it further.
- **Middle States:** There are no updates.
- **SUNY: Transformational Initiatives:** Three searches are underway:
 - *Grant Manager*
 - *Academic and Career Advisors*
 - *Workforce Development Coordinator (tech focus)*
- **NYSED** – Other than the Office of Civil Rights (OCR) review that NYSED is undertaking, there are no updates.
- **Second Chance Pell to Prison Education Program**
 - The Second Chance Pell program, which the College has been offered since 2017, will be sunsetting permanently by 2027. In its place is a new program, referred to as a Prison Education Program, but one that requires registration with the US Department of Education and Middle States. In March 2024, I shared a separate document with the Senate that provides a greater level of detail and some of the benefits and potential risks that come with continuing with program.

That's all for now. Gratefully yours,

Joe

Joe Keegan
President
North Country Community

Introduction

In 2016, NCCC was selected to participate in the Second Chance Pell experiment, an initiative of the Obama administration to selectively restore federal financial aid through Pell grants to individuals incarcerated in state and local correctional facilities participating in the experiment. At the time, the experiment was predicted to last between 3-5 years. In 2020, the Trump administration approved legislation moving beyond the experimental phase to the full restoration of Pell to incarcerated individuals. That legislation called for the wind down of the Second Chance Pell experiment (hereafter referred to as Second Chance or SCP) by July 2023. Programs that were part of the experiment, including NCCC's, were permitted to continue operating while the rulemaking was being ironed out.

In July 2023, new rules for Prison Education Programs (PEP), which will replace SCP and allow colleges/universities to offer prison-based higher education to individuals using federal Pell grants, were released. To be approved to offer a PEP, colleges/universities are required to submit an application to the US Department of Education, and a request to participate to one's regional accreditor, in NCCC's case, the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE). SCP demonstrated what advocates had predicted and hoped for, namely that prison-based higher education helped improve reentry of incarcerated individuals to their communities when released and, as importantly, reduced the likelihood of returning to prison because they possessed a degree, certificate, and/or credential that increased their chances for employment.

At the same time, SCP programs, like the one that NCCC has, were allowed to apply for a waiver to continue SCP while completing their PEP application. The waiver, which is good for three years, has progress markers to be met and prohibits expansion of the current program, either in the academic programs offered or in locations where they operate. Thus, NCCC is limited to offering the SCP program in the four correctional institutions as it has since launch of SCP in Spring 2017 semester, three which are part of the NYS Department of Corrections and Community Supervision (Adirondack CF, Bare Hill CF, and Franklin CF) and one federal facility, the FCI Ray Brook.

The College is proposing to continue to offer higher education in our area prisons and make the transition from SCP to PEP. We understand that doing so comes with some risk and believe that as a community we should be clear eyed about the benefits and risks of continuing in this work. The remainder of this document seeks to lay them out.

The Benefits

One of the benefits for NCCC is and remains our location. The four facilities where we are currently offering Second Chance Pell are located within either Essex County or Franklin County, our service area. SUNY regulations require that NCCC have the first right to provide higher education there and, if we chose to not do so, to provide permission for another SUNY institution who has the desire to do so.

Since entering SCP, the College has benefited in several ways, as have those who have been affiliated with the program. We have witnessed and been a part of the successes of hundreds of incarcerated students who found success and ultimately graduated from one or more of our programs. Some of our SCP graduates have transferred onto other institutions and, in other cases, begun to use their education as part of their reentry. The faculty and staff who teach and work in the program have found that the students in SCP are motivated, work hard, and a pleasure to teach. Additionally, the notion of second chances is one that appeals to many, and being part of a program that allows for the transformative power of higher education to be realized is particularly gratifying.

At a more pragmatic level, any time we teach more students, there is typically a financial benefit. As a small institution, achieving an economy of scale is difficult. Over the years of SCP, between 100-150 students were served annually, adding to the student body and to revenues that strengthen the College and thus benefit all students. North Country's Second Chance Pell program recognizes on average \$1.5 million in annual revenue including NYS base aid. The program yields close to \$1 million in contribution to overhead annually. This is an important contribution to the college as without this program, the back office overhead supports would likely need to be reduced and those supports are critical in also servicing the online and on campus students.

The Risks

Prior to entering into SCP in 2017, the College made the decision to account for SCP separately from the its "core" operations (the three campuses and the classes offered at Akwesasne, home of the St. Regis Mohawk Tribe). This was prompted by the 1995 decision by the federal government to restrict Pell grants to those individuals incarcerated in state or federal facilities. At the time, the College was heavily invested in what was then termed the Inmate Higher Education Program (IHEP) and the loss of Pell funding for incarcerated students left a large hole in our revenues and resulted in a painful downsizing, both in the IHEP program and beyond. However, the work of SCP, particularly in areas other than Academic Affairs, is not easily teased out and separated from other work and were the funding to dry up once again, we would expect that some positions would no longer be able to be funded.

What follows are the risks currently perceived, starting with those having the most impact to those having the least impact:

1. Future legislation that restricts Pell grants to be awarded to incarcerated individuals as happened in 1995.
2. Continued reduction in the number of incarcerated individuals in NYS which could have a corresponding reduction in the number of individuals participating.
3. Shuttering of one or more of the area facilities. Over the last decade or so, we have seen a decline in the prison population in NYS and the closing of at least two facilities in Franklin County, Camp Gabriels and Chateaugay CF, and one in Essex County, Moriah Shock. The current incarcerated individual population at Adirondack CF is relatively modest and has a small number of students in the program. One could envision that this location could be closed.

While the College cannot control any of these circumstances should they happen, we can go into the PEP with an understanding that these are possible and, if they occur, would

require corresponding efforts of the College to make sure that it remains viable in its service to NCCC's sponsoring counties.

Opportunities

Within the College's service area is another NYS correctional facility where we are not offering Second Chance Pell and have been invited to; Upstate CF. In Fall 2023, we were approached by the facility and NYS DOCCS to consider adding Upstate CF to our suite of locations should we pursue the PEP. While the prison is a maximum-security facility, it has two populations within it: those individuals serving time in a maximum-security facility and those in the general population. The former are segregated and housed in secure settings with an elaborate and hardened system of barriers to prevent escape. The latter group, those in the general population, have demonstrated success in their rehabilitation and are considered lower risk. They work in the facility and are good candidates for a higher education program. There are 280 individuals currently in the general population, thus a good size pool from which to draw students.

One other area of opportunity is to develop and deliver technical programs within the facilities, including such programs as Basic Wastewater Operator training. There are likely others, including some that the College may not currently be offering, that could equip incarcerated individuals with marketable skills and help provide some relief to workforce shortages in the process. Individuals incarcerated at Bare Hill CF and Franklin CF will be released and thus there may be some additional opportunities there. There is support for this sort of effort in NYS and with DOCCS, as evidenced in a [*Jails to Jobs*](#) initiative announced by Governor Hochul in January 2022.

Other Considerations

Should the College go forward with the PEP application, there some things to consider, including:

1. Whether to move the SCP Director position from a partial load position to a full-time, 221-day position. The needs of the program are year-round and having a director available during throughout is needed.
2. Whether to move the SCP Coordinator positions from temporary full-time grant-funded positions to full-time, tenure track positions.
3. Ensuring an understanding that those in full-time positions in SCP have risk associated with them as explained in the risks section above.
4. That an expansion of services within the facility will be necessary, including transfer and related advising.

Summary

The proposal to move from Second Chance Pell to a Prison Education Program is supported by the administration and has also received support from President's Council. There is an acknowledgement of the benefits for the student, their families and the College, as well as some of the risks outlined above.