



Board of Trustees Meeting Agenda

Date: October 28th, 2025

Time: 11:00 a.m.

Locations: Saranac Lake Campus & Zoom

1. Call to Order
2. Approval | August 29th, 2025, Board Meeting Minutes
3. Liaison Reports
 - a. College Senate
 - b. NCCC Association of Professionals (NCCCAP)
 - c. Civil Service Employee Association (CSEA)
4. College Reports
 - a. Board of Trustees, Chair
 - b. Interim Vice President for Academic Affairs
 - c. Vice President for Marketing & Enrollment
 - d. Interim Chief Financial Officer
 - e. Associate Vice President of Student Affairs
 - f. President
5. Representative Reports
 - a. NCCC Association
 - b. NCCC Foundation
6. Old Business
7. New Business
8. Public Comment
9. Executive Session
10. 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, August 29, 2025 | 11:00am

Board Members Present: Pete Suttmeier, Donna Wadsworth, Todd LaPage, David McNally, Tricia Preston, and Tommy Sloan

Excused: Seth McGowan and Linda Beers

Others Present: Joe Keegan, Stacie Hurwitch, Sarah Maroun, Erik Harvey, Kyle Johnston, Jackie VanBrunt, Scott Harwood, Chris Knight, Erin Walkow and Chad LaDue. Members of the College community joined as well.

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

Oath of Office

Tommy Sloan was sworn in as a NCCC Board of Trustee member:

- He is a student elected trustee replacing our former Student Trustee Shia Bright who has since graduated.
- Tommy introduced himself to the Board, and members of the college. He was warmly welcomed by all.

Minutes

Seth McGowan made the motion to accept the June 5, 2025, meeting minutes. Todd LaPage seconded the motion. Pete requests an adjustment to his portion of the minutes. Stacie acknowledged the update and will make the change prior to posting. The meeting minutes were unanimously approved (6-0-0).

College Senate Chair | Chad LaDue

Chad shared news and information regarding the second Athletics Hall of Fame weekend. The College is expecting over 350 guests at the Friday night ceremony. He encouraged all to attend the September 12-14th event.

NCCCAP President | Angela Brice

No report

CSEA President | Dianna Trummer

No report

Board Chair | Pete Suttmeier

- The dispute continues over Chancellor King wanting final authority over community college presidential searches, and their compensation.
- If this were to go through, it would allow the Chancellor to operate outside normal state procedures as it is related with SUNY and their community colleges.
- New York Community College Trustees (NYCCT) continue to advocate against this change and have engaged in exploring options through legal counsel. Over the summer, Pete attended a listening session on administrator procedures held by NYCCT.
- Pete reported that Chancellor King phoned him recently as part of his check-ins with Board Chairs. During the conversation, Pete mentioned the A2I anniversary, and the Chancellor passed the news along to his Vice Chancellor for Workforce Development, Chris White.

Interim Vice President for Academic Affairs | Sarah Maroun

- Classes have started this week, both faculty and students are off to a good start.
- Sarah noted that NYSED had approved the name change of the AAS Chemical Dependency Counseling program to AAS Addictions Counseling.
- The Direct Support Professionals (DSP) microcredential program lead, Kathleen Dowd-Maloney, provided the Board with updates since the DSP microcredential launch in March 2024. NCCC has partnered with NYS Office for People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD) and the National Alliance of Direct Support Professionals (NADSP).
 - The program offers 3 levels of certification. Current enrollment numbers for the program show:
 - DSP Level 1: 55 Students
 - DSP Level 2: 42 Students
 - DSP Level 3: 20 Students (who now have 21 credits with NCCC)
- Members of the board spoke of the DSP program and its importance in the community. Currently, all the students in the program are employed within agencies that serve individuals with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities. Spoke of the grant timetable (2028 until 2030)
- Members of the board discussed the work of the AI task force and the guide they developed – will create and lead the process.

The Board moved to approve the following resolutions:

Tricia Preston made a motion that the North Country Community College Board of Trustees hereby approves the following faculty/staff for renewal of temporary appointments effective with the 2025/26 academic year: Emma Atkinson, Nursing Clinical Coordinator; Laura Cunningham, Nursing Instructor; Chelsea Drake, Nursing Instructor; Ernest Hough, Humanities/Social Science Instructor; Luke Hudak, Dual Enrollment Initiatives Coordinator; Anne Nelson, Nursing Instructor; Courtney Roy, Nursing Instructor; and Amy Sloan, Nursing Instructor. These positions are currently funded in the 2025/26 operating budget. In accordance with the current NCCCAP agreement Article VII-Appointment and Promotions, these appointments will expire at the conclusion of the 2025/26 academic year and will not be renewed. Todd LaPage seconded the motion. The motion was approved (5-0-1). Note: due to a conflict-of-interest Tommy Sloan elected to abstain from the vote.

Tricia Preston made a motion that the North Country Community College Board of Trustees hereby approves the temporary appointment of Anita Baitinger, to the full-time, nine month (164-day), exempt appointment as Nursing Instructor for the 2025/26 academic year, at an annual salary of \$52,545. This position is currently funded in the 2025/26 operating budget. In accordance with the current NCCCAP agreement Article VII-Appointment and Promotions, this appointment will expire at the conclusion of the 2025/26 academic year and will not be renewed. David McNally seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved (6-0-0).

David McNally made a motion that the North Country Community College Board of Trustees hereby approves the North Country Community College Board of Trustees hereby approves the temporary appointment of Bretta LaFlame, to the full-time, nine-month (164-day), exempt appointment as Science Instructor for the 2025/26 academic year, at an annual salary of \$51,109. This position is currently funded in the 2025/26 operating budget. In accordance with the current NCCCAP agreement Article VII-Appointment and Promotions, this appointment will expire at the conclusion of the 2025/26 academic year and will not be renewed. Tricia Preston seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved (6-0-0).

Tricia Preston made a motion that the North Country Community College Board of Trustees hereby approves the temporary appointment of Christine Newcomb, to the full-time, nine-month (164-day), exempt appointment as Human Services Instructor for the 2025/26 academic year, at an annual salary of \$49,673. This position is currently funded in the 2025/26 operating budget. In accordance with the current NCCCAP agreement Article VII-Appointment and Promotions, this appointment will expire at the conclusion of the 2025/26 academic year and will not be renewed. Todd LaPage seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved (6-0-0).

David McNally made a motion that the North Country Community College Board of Trustees hereby approves

Lauren Tender (Heath), to the full-time, nine-month (164-day), exempt initial term appointment as Nursing Instructor for the 2025/26 academic year, at an annual salary of \$58,288. This position is currently funded in the 2025/26 operating budget. Tricia Preston seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved (6-0-0).

Vice President for Marketing and Enrollment Management | Kyle Johnston

- Thanks to new funding initiatives, the summer has been busy running both planned and unplanned campaigns.
- The program SUNY Reconnect has been confirmed to run the course of this academic year with eligible program opportunities subject to change. Data outcomes of the program are anticipated within the next couple of weeks and will be shared as they become available.
- New grants have been allocated for student supports, and marketing resources are in place for this fall.
- SUNY has new funding available but has pivoted the process and now requires a report containing proposals and action plans for grants to be approved.
- Preparations for marketing the college for Fall of 2026 are complete. Admissions team will begin their rotations on the road in the next two weeks.
- Members of the board discussed the status of enrollment numbers in the College Bridge Program with BOCES. Kyle shared some districts are covering students to participate in the program. This opportunity has the potential to increase the number of enrollments.

Interim Associate Vice President of Student Affairs | Jackie VanBrunt:

- Thanks to efforts of the coaching staff, there are over 80 students in athletics this year.
- The residence halls are full and have a wait list.
- This weekend, our soccer teams will take the field for the first time of the semester.
- Hall of Fame weekend schedule of events was shared with the Board. Chad shared additional event information.
- The new approach for Student Orientation this year has shown positive results. Sessions held in July and August were well attended. The students were engaged and offered great feedback. The reports from Faculty and staff were also encouraging.
- Angela Brice is creating a program for SGA students to participate in a Leadership Academy. This is a pilot program and if successful, it will be opened to other student groups in Spring 2026.
- Members of the board discussed outreach potential for student athlete alumni. Jackie shared a new alumni database that is being created and highlighted some difficulties with tracking alumni.
- Members of the board discussed the positive impact of the grant used for the Swimming Program. Over 200 youths have received swimming lessons in 2024-2025. In addition, the grant has also allowed the college to offer Lifeguard certification courses. Both are opportunities in providing exposure for the college and supporting our local communities.

Interim CFO | Erik Harvey:

- Shared the college has had a great summer and enrollment is up. He noted that the budget deficit has decreased to \$78,000, due to the shift the college has taken in new programs and the support of grant money to alleviate expenses.
- Updated the board on the Student Information System (SIS) Upgrade. He highlighted this is additional work for our staff on top of daily duties. Erik voiced appreciation of staff for their engagement and support. He shared current delays are due to the vendor; they anticipate majority of their work on the project will be from September to December.
- Noted the 14% increase through Utica National, the college's Insurance Agent for property and liability. This insurance plan does not cover cyber or workers compensation. May need to consider exploring other options. He shared this is an issued with the industry and the College.
- Shared update with current investments with Wells Fargo. Due to high risk, they no longer service municipal accounts. This change does not affect NCCC Foundation investments. There are no options to reinvest now,

but there is potential for recommendations in the Spring. Erik will continue to explore options and share opportunities as they become available.

- Members of the board briefly spoke of the SIS update and the available resources to make it happen.

The Board moved to approve the following resolution:

Tricia Preston made a motion from the floor that the North Country Community College Board of Trustees hereby approve the financial statements for May 2025, June 2025, and July 2025, as they were presented in the CFO report. Todd LaPage seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved (6-0-0).

President | Joe Keegan:

- Appreciation is expressed to members of the Board for their continued support of the College, students, faculty and staff.
- Extended a warm welcome to our new board member Tommy Sloan.
- Thanks, extended to Trustee Todd LaPage for volunteering for a 7-year reappointment by Franklin County.
- Reported updates on Essex and Franklin board members will be retiring.
- Supported the reports from the team who noted a good start to the semester. Highlighting the success of the college is always a collective effort.
- Briefly commented on the improvement of the budget deficit.
- Expressed thanks to our supporting counties and their non-renewable financial contribution for 2025-2026. Counties are hesitant to commit longer due to the concern with the anticipated cuts from the government to support Medicaid.
- Shared proposed federal budget is threatening to cut Pell which will have a direct impact to students and colleges.

The Board moved to approve the following resolution:

Tricia Preston made a motion that North Country Community College Board of Trustees hereby approves that the North Country Community College Board of Trustees hereby approves Kevin Symonds, Programmer/Analyst, for renewal of a temporary appointment effective with the 2025/26 fiscal year. This position is currently funded in the 2025/26 operating budget. In accordance with the current NCCCAP agreement Article VII-Appointment and Promotions, these appointments will expire at the conclusion of the 2025/26 academic year and will not be renewed. Tommy Sloan seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved (6-0-0).

- Joe presented to the board about the college's collaboration with Achieving the Dream (ATD). Members of the core team will attend the upcoming Data & Analytics Summit in September. The college will welcome our ATD Coaches in November who will help lead a Capacity Café (much like the style of a World Café). ATD will guide the college to create goals and make decisions based on data, rather than assumptions.

NCCC Association Director | Robert Rathbun

No report

NCCC Foundation Director | Erin Walkow:

- Attended several events on behalf of the Foundation: Adirondack Health Foundation Gala, Lake Placid Center for the Arts, Sinfonietta, and Pendragon.
- Shared appreciation for Joe and Sarah representing the College at the Adirondack Community Foundation's Garden Party.
- Over the summer, Erin met with several individual donors.
- In addition to the Opportunity Scholarship, the Foundation awarded \$55K to 56 of the 90 student applicants from annual and endowed scholarships.
- Highlighted recent gifts to the Foundation:
 - \$1,200 from Adirondack Garden Club for pollinator garden fencing (Environmental Science).
 - \$20,000 split between Opportunity Scholarship and Faculty Professional Development.

- \$10,000 from Lake Placid Education Foundation for Opportunity Scholarship.
- \$62,500 total raised for 2025–2026 Opportunity Scholarship, exceeding the original goal.
- \$10,000 unrestricted stock gift.
- Renewed \$100,000 unrestricted donation, earmarked for capital improvements to qualify for NYS matching funds.
- Members of the Board discussed the opportunities given to scholarship applicants.

Old Business

None

New Business

- Stacie shared with the board a potential 2025-2026 meeting schedule. The board discussed and will finalize the schedule soon.

Public Comment

None

Executive Session

Tricia Preston made the motion to enter Executive Session at 12:29 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. David McNally seconded the motion. The motion was passed unanimously (6-0-0). Joe Keegan was invited to attend the meeting at 12:29 p.m.

Adjourn

Tricia Preston made a motion to adjourn the meeting and go into Public Session. David McNally seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously (6-0-0). The Board meeting was adjourned at 1:15 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Stacie G. Hurwitch
Assistant Secretary, NCCC Board of Trustees

Date: October 28, 2025

Resolution: 2025-2026 | Pending

Motion:

Seconded:

Action: Pending (x-x-x)

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



**Interim VPAA Report to the
Board of Trustees
October 28, 2025**

Please find the following report from the Academic Area.

★ **Academic Planning, Programs and Policies:**

Fall 2025:

We are just past the mid-term period for the fall semester. Early progress reports were submitted on October 6th, and we're continuing to follow up with students who may need extra support to finish the semester successfully. Student Success Coaches and the LAC's will follow up with those students who have grades below a C- in one or more of their classes.

Winterim/Spring 2026: The Winterim schedule is posted, and registration is open. For Spring 2026, priority registration for continuing students begins on October 27th and ends on November 7th with New Student registration to follow beginning November 10th.

Second Chance Pell: The Second Chance Pell program celebrated graduations on September 24th at FCI-Ray Brook and at Franklin Correctional Facility on October 17th. Adirondack Correctional Facility will host their ceremony on December 4th. Congratulations to all of our graduates!

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Task Force: The AI Task force continues to meet bi-weekly to discuss ways to integrate AI into the classroom while also encouraging ethical use among students. The group distributes periodic newsletters with interesting information and resources for faculty and staff.

SUNY's Academic Momentum Campaign: SUNY recently contacted all 64 campuses with information regarding a new campaign to improve student success. They have set targets and metrics for each campus to review and develop plans for meeting those targets. The metrics include the following areas for first-time, full-time students seeking associate degrees: 1) Fall to fall retention, 2) Graduation within 100% (meaning within two years for a two-year degree), 3) Graduation within 150% (meaning graduation within three years for a two-year degree), 4) Earning 30+ credits within the first year, 5) Performance in "gateway" English and Math courses, and 5) FAFSA completion. These metrics align with many of the data points we have identified with Achieving the Dream. We will have more updates as the planning process continues.

Program Approvals:

- **Approved:**
 - **AAS Chemical Dependency Counseling:** Name change to Addictions Counseling
- **Pending:**
 - **Elizabethtown Campus Closure**
 - **AAS Digital Arts & Design:** Addition of 70% Distance Learning format [hybrid]

Program Advisory Boards: On October 17th, we hosted an advisory board meeting for the Radiologic Technology program. The remainder of the program advisory board meetings will be scheduled for the spring semester.

Middle States Commission on Higher Education: In anticipation of moving to a Prison Education Program, Middle States will conduct a substantive change site visit at all four correctional facilities. The first two of those visits will happen on November 13th and 14th at FCI Ray Brook and Adirondack Correctional. We are also expecting an invitation to the Self-Study Institute in the Spring 2026 semester to prepare for the 2028 Self-Study Review.

Workforce Development:

We received updated guidelines for the SUNY workforce training grant funds. For area employers, SUNY will support 60% of the cost for employers to train their workforce. Mandatory, basic safety, or "cost of business" (i.e. employer orientations, onboarding, etc.) trainings are **not** eligible for this funding; however, ServSafe and OSHA trainings are covered by the funding. Areas of focus for apprenticeship pathways include customer service, business, teaching assistant, community health worker and medical assistant.

Non-Credit Course Offerings for Fall:

Wastewater Basic Operator Training Course: September 19th-November 8th

EMT Original/Refresher Training (both credit and non-credit): Fall semester schedule

Pottery Classes: October 27th- December 10th

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah Maroun

Interim Vice President for Academic Affairs

Vice President of Marketing & Enrollment

Report to the Board of Trustees

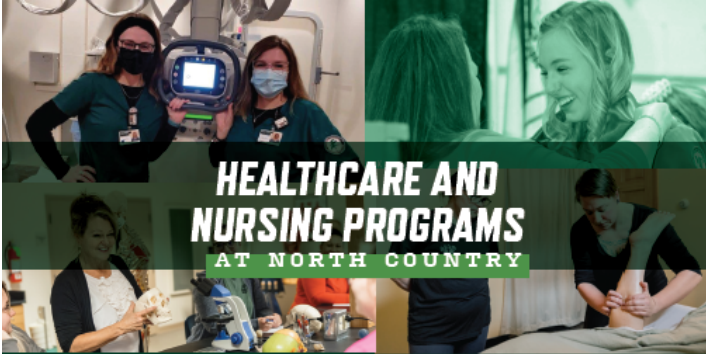
Created October 21, 2025

Project, Enrollment, Financial Aid, and Marketing Updates:

- **Major project updates:**
 - **SEM PLAN & SUNY PROJECTS:** We have re-kindled the work on our new SEM Plan recently adding in new initiatives that will become a reality through the grants that were secured this summer. The next step (November) will be to create the teams that will be in charge of the work happening within our 10-15 goal areas. The aim is for all work to begin during the Spring semester, and we will share the new plan more-widely in April.
 - **SLATE CRM (Customer Relationship Management):** We have recently brought a few new college departments on-board to help log their student communications in our CRM system. This is a crucial next step in sharing information between departments to better-serve our students. Our next big step will be to open up the texting capabilities within the system.
 - **EdSights Retention/Enrollment/Web Chat & Text Support Implementation:** Bernie, our new SMS ChatBot has been deployed and has been providing check-ins to students to assess their academic momentum, engagement with the college, financial stability, and overall wellness. Their responses to the question sets help to determine if they are low, medium, or high risk for dropping out and this scoring mechanism along with other alerts are provided to college support staff for quick follow-up and triage. As of this week, Bernie has received over 300 texts from our students, 20% of our student body is actively using the service, and 97% of the students remain opted-in. The second phase of this project will be to open up the capabilities to our incoming prospects/applicants then we will make it available to everyone across our website in about 1-2 months.
- **Admissions/Enrollment Team:** The enrollment team has been exceptionally busy as we are short a few positions this travel season. Meredith and Sam have been handling ALL of the college fairs and high school visits, which is quite an accomplishment. In a typical year, we have a pool of at least 4 people available for the college fair circuits to spread out the work. They've been extremely efficient/strategic in their travels to help cover events across the state. We are currently looking to build our staffing back up as we have posted both the Administrative Assistant and Enrollment and Financial Aid Counselor positions recently. Also, the Admissions Office recently provided assistance to get a regional "Influencer Mailing" out the door where we compiled a list of the people and organizations that do the most to assist prospective students through their college search and decision-making processes. Included with the mailing were our new promo calendars, viewbooks, stickers, and a letter encouraging further collaboration.
- **Financial Aid Team:** The Financial Aid Office continues to assist in the development of the Thesis Elements Student Information System (SIS) which will become available to everyone this winter. They're also gearing up for Spring financial aid packaging, the next round of the Opportunity Promise (Reconnect) scholarship awarding as well as the awarding of our other institutional, grant funded, and foundation funded scholarships.

Marketing and Web Updates:

- The upcoming programmatic campaign series will feature our Healthcare & Nursing programs during the month of November followed by our Transfer programs campaign that'll run in December and January. Running concurrently, we will also be launching our larger Spring Registration Campaign as well as general brand awareness (streaming service/paid social/YouTube), Gateway-2-Plattsburgh, Scholarships-4-Everyone, and possibly another round of SUNY Reconnect.
- Video projects: We are currently wrapping up video projects for our Environmental Programs and the Gateway-2-Plattsburgh program, all of which will start being featured in our digital advertising in November. On October 30th, we will have a video shoot to start work on videos that will be used for SUNY Reconnect both regionally (us) and state-wide (SUNY). This will be a quick turnaround project with videos starting to be shared in December & January to help with Spring semester enrollment.



HEALTHCARE AND NURSING PROGRAMS AT NORTH COUNTRY

**Get the degree, certificate or training necessary
to become a healthcare provider in the North Country!**

North Country is taking applications for this upcoming year's Nursing, Massage Therapy, Radiologic Technology, Healthcare Administration, Health Science, and Advanced Emergency Medical Technician programs. There are plenty of scholarships available for these programs so apply today!

At North Country Community College, we offer a supportive atmosphere where you can find small class sizes, plenty of academic support, and a hands-on approach to the healthcare professions.

Healthcare related programs at North Country:

- Associate Degree in Nursing (Spring) (Evening/Weekend option to pursue RN licensure) -FULL
- Associate Degree in Nursing (Fall) (To pursue RN licensure)
- Practical Nursing Degree (Fall) (To pursue PN licensure)
- Health Science (AS or Certificate)
- Massage Therapy (AAS)
- Radiologic Technology (AAS)
- Healthcare Administration Track
- Advanced Emergency Medical Technician (AEMT) Certificate

For more information on all of our healthcare programs please visit [NCCC.EDU/HEALTHCARE](https://nccc.edu/healthcare).

NC **NORTH COUNTRY
COMMUNITY COLLEGE**
THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

Learn more at [NCCC.EDU/PROGRAMS](https://nccc.edu/programs), call 888-TRY-NCCC or email ADMISSIONS@NCCC.EDU



Bernie, our NCCC mascot, has gone digital! As a student at North Country, you can now text with our very own virtual companion, Bernie, anytime to help support you, answer your questions, and communicate important information throughout the school year. Whether it's a late-night question or a quick check-in during the day, Bernie is here for you 24-7-365. And yep, Bernie will hit you up during the semester to see how you are doing—but don't wait around if you need help! Current students can text **844-592-1663** anytime or reply to Bernie's welcome message to get started. Pro tip: Save that number in your contacts as "Bernie"!

Need something specific?

You can text Bernie to explore North Country resources and information on:

- **Academics** (Tutors, Success Coaches, Academic Advisors)
- **Financial Matters** (Financial Aid, Food and Housing Challenges, Childcare)
- **Student Life, Activities & Community** (Clubs, Organizations, Resources, Events)
- **Mental and Physical Health, & Overall Wellbeing** (Counseling Services, Recreation Opportunities, Campus Safety)

And that's just the beginning! Any information you provide to Bernie will be used by North Country to help you succeed in college and by EdSights as permitted within its [privacy policy](#).

Why Text Bernie?

Bernie, your virtual companion, is one of many ways for you to access support at NCCC. Bernie has your back!

24/7 RESPONSE

Bernie answers your questions whenever they come up. Anytime, anywhere.

STAY CONNECTED

Bernie will check in to see how you're doing throughout the year.

INSTANT ANSWERS

Have a question? Bernie has the info you need, right at your fingertips.

FIND RESOURCES

Discover what's available to you at North Country.

PERSONALIZED HELP

Bernie learns about you and your needs and follows up to help you.

EXTRA SUPPORT

NCCC staff can step in when Bernie flags something that needs more attention.

Student Engagement

This is where you can monitor student engagement.

Filter by Tag

Clear

97% Opt-In

97% of students on the platform are opted into receiving texts from Bernie 🗨️

20% Engagement

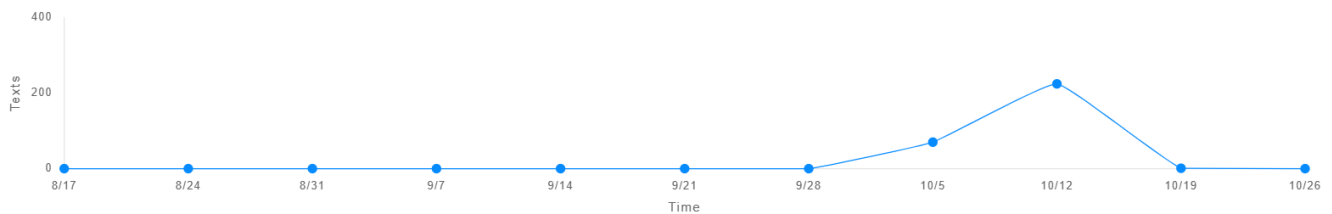
20% of students are actively engaged and texting Bernie 🗨️

295 Texts Received

295 student texts received in the last 12 months or since launching 🗨️

Engagement over Time

The number of student texts received over the last 12 months or since launching.



What topics are students asking about most?



The subtopics students are asking about most

Services / Other

Academics / Registrar

Dining / Dining Services

Services / Career Services

Academics / Other

Services / Tutoring

Academics / Calendars

Financial Aid / Dates & Deadlines

Services / Library

Academics / Programs

The top questions students are asking

What resources are available to help with sense of belonging?

What is on the menu today?

How many credits do you need to be considered a full-time or part-time student?

When will I receive my financial aid package?

Where can I get career resources?

When is Break?

Where can I find information about tutoring?

How can I get help with our portal/LMS?

How can I get help with my application?

How can I get help selecting my course schedule?



Student Affairs

October 2025 BOT Report

Athletics:

- Hall of Fame weekend was a huge success. We had over 400 people attend the ceremony on Friday night, about that many on Saturday's events and around 200 people on Sunday. Thanks to all who helped make the weekend so memorable!
- Men's and women's soccer are finishing up their regular seasons, and it looks like both teams will be making the playoffs this year. Our women's team may have a chance to host a playoff game.
- Jerrad is in full swing and gearing the Craft fair. We look to be completely filled with vendors, so this year's event should be well attended again.
- Community swimming lessons have started, which means roughly 200 children will be benefitting from this community service and on our campus this fall.
- Chad is finishing up NCCC's Equity in Athletics Disclosure Act (EADA) Title IX report for Athletics.
- Men's and Women's basketball are in full practice and are slated to start playing games in November.

Staff Updates:

Our **Student Success Coaches**: Emma, Nate, and Portia have been busy with proactive outreach to their cohorts, planning success programs, and meeting with students. SSC's most recent outreach was to the students whose faculty identified as having a C- or lower in classes as part of an Early Alert Academic Progress effort. Roughly 350 students were emailed with the intent of triaging need and connecting students with resources to help them succeed. Overall, students are responding, and Coaches are connecting them with resources. Some key themes from student challenges:

- Work-Life-School Balance & Time Management
- Academic Preparedness & Readiness
- Technology & Online Learning Barriers
- Communication & Self Advocacy Gaps

We welcomed our new **Health & Wellness Counselor, Betsy Doud**, to our team on October 6th. Betsy brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to NCCC and is planning to offer her services on all three campuses on a weekly basis. Betsy has been very busy in her first few weeks with the following referrals for counseling needs: and You can refer students with counseling needs

- 11 students self-referred using our electronic [Counseling Services Referral Form](#)
- Three students were referred from staff/faculty
- Eight out of the 11 referrals have met with Betsy, and all requested a follow-up meeting
- Two referrals to SUNY Upstate Medical Student Telepsychiatry Network
- Two referrals to Gender Identity Support Group (Through SUNY Upstate)

Student Life:

Basic Needs & SNAP The NCCC Food Pantry has been busy this semester, packing and filling orders for students across all campuses. To date, we have filled over 35 online orders and supported 30+ student walk-ins. We continue to provide grab-and-go meals and snacks to students across three campuses. Next, we'll be posting expanded pantry hours, promoting the online order form, and identifying additional signage locations to improve visibility and access.

- **SUNY Basic Needs Summit:** In September, our two Empire State Service Corps Members and Ang attended the first-ever SUNY Basic Needs Summit in Albany, NY. This was an incredible opportunity to collaborate with other SUNY institutions on supporting students' essential needs—such as food security, housing, wellness, and parenting resources. We also participated in sessions focused on building, expanding, and sharing best practices for campus support programs.

We held our first "**Fall into Student Success Fairs**" on all three campuses where many of our student resource areas came together as a community to engage with students and promote our services to help them succeed. **Angela Brice** reported that **160 attendees** came through the Connector on our SL campus.

Bernie was on hand as well to promote our new partnership with [EdSights | Student Voice Platform for Retention and Success](#). Results from our first two texts from Bernie were received as we currently sit at 97% opt-in rate for students, and we've received 270 texts from students since 10/5. Many students engage with **Bernie** in the evening and on the weekend, which is one reason for utilizing this retention platform.

We have many upcoming events planned, some of which include: **Veteran's Day Observances**, **Winter Carnival Princess** nominations, and a celebration to kick off our **First-Generation Student Support** group to happen on all campuses during the week of November 2nd where we will be recognizing students who are the first in their family to attend college.

Respectfully submitted,

Jackie VanBrunt, Interim Associate Vice President of Student Affairs, Chief Diversity Officer & Title IX Coordinator

**North Country Community College
President's Report to the Board of Trustees
October 28th, 2025**

Greetings to you all,

Today marks a new date and time for Board meetings, one that seeks to keep the Board meeting times accessible for faculty and staff while also accommodating the work schedules of our Board members. We hope that the change will lead to fewer cancellations of meetings due to lack of quorum.

Many thanks to members of the Board who were able to join us at the Community Leaders' Day event earlier this month and at the Athletic Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony and celebration in September. Both events were confirmation of the work of NCCC faculty and staff, past and present, in creating opportunities and supporting students, as well as responding to community needs.

The current semester is beyond the midterm point and great efforts have been undertaken to engage students who are at risk of failing classes, whether the needs are academic ones or not. One such resource is the Student Health and Wellness counselor, Betsy Doud, who joined the College on October 6th. As the Board meets, priority registration for Spring 2026 courses is taking place for our continuing students and will run for the next two weeks. New students will be able to begin registering for Spring 2026 courses thereafter.

Planning for the 2026-2027 state budget and our advocacy efforts are underway with both state and federal representatives. We have been told that we should expect this upcoming budget year to be a difficult one. While there remain concerns about the future, that is always the case. We'll continue to do our part to educate and prepare students for success here and beyond, let them know that they are valued, that they matter and can succeed, and give them the best education and support to do so.

Despite the concerns, there are a few themes that are emerging related to the budget that I expect may rise to the top: 1) continued support for SUNY ReConnect including expansion of eligible programs and 2) expansion of the ASAP program for community colleges (a form of robust student supports).

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

Joe

★ Board Matters

□ *Board Appointments:*

- *Governor's:* We have two (2) vacancies and a few candidates have expressed interest in serving. These are being vetted internally and expect some to move to the Governor's office for consideration

□ *New York Community College Trustees (NYCCT):*

- Several members of the Board attended NYCCT's annual conference in Saratoga in September.
- NYCCT continues their efforts to retain powers of appointment, evaluation, and establishment of contracts with community college presidents, as well as support for legislative reform to strengthen community colleges. They are actively advocating against A.5979-A /S.4685, a bill that is with Governor Hochul that "provides for the inclusion of a faculty or staff member on the board of trustees of community colleges".

★ Budgeting and Planning

- **25-26 Budget:** Since the Board's last meeting, the College's 25-26 budget was passed by the SUNY Board of Trustees, the final step in the approval process. It is now our official budget for the year. As a reminder, our county sponsors, despite the funding uncertainty, each contributed an additional \$50,000 in one-time operating aid, hedging against the potential impact of Medicaid cuts that could fall to the counties. We are grateful for their ongoing support.

Through the good work of our community, the support of our county sponsors, and increased investments by NYS, we have whittled our annual operating deficit to \$130,000, which continue to work on to bring it into balance. Some items that bear mentioning related to the budget include:

- Retention of floor funding for the 25-26 year, allowing predictability in our state operating aid,
- An \$8M increase in operating aid from 24-25 was carried into this year. NCCC received \$200K from that for expenses related to nursing and mental health,
- An additional \$8M in operating aid for 25-26 which SUNY earmarked for workforce programming in healthcare, advanced manufacturing, green tech, and AI/cybersecurity. NCCC received \$75K which we used for the development of a cybersecurity training program, which will prepare students directly for careers.
- Governor Hochul's Opportunity Promise (aka SUNY ReConnect). The Governor earmarked \$28M for the *Opportunity Promise* to help NYS residents between 25-55 who don't currently hold a degree pursue an associate's degree in high needs workforce areas.

- **26-27 Budget:** No sooner has the 25-26 College Budget been approved by all parties, than we begin the work of planning for the 26-27 budget. Over the next month, we will be working on establishing the 26-27 tuition and fees schedule, among other tasks. Two items that we are following related to the budget are
 - any federal actions that would reduce Pell funding, and
 - the impact of recent cuts in federal spending on the state and by extension, the counties.

At this point, neither of those have emerged as challenges, but we continue watch for any concerns that may arise.

★ **Federal Items:**

- **Federal Advocacy:** In earlier September, I joined four (4) other Presidents and members of Chancellor King's team including Valerie Dent, Vice Chancellor for Community Colleges and the Education Pipeline, and Chris White, Vice Chancellor for Workforce Development and Upward Mobility for a day-long advocacy day in DC. We met with representatives on both sides of the political spectrum and were pleased to hear the support voices for community colleges. A second advocacy day is planned for early December.
- **FY 2026 Budget:** No updates. Federal cuts are expected to result in NYS receiving a \$750M reduction in this year's budget (through March 31, 26) and a \$3B reduction for the following year. We will continue to keep an eye on this and how it might impact us.
- **US Department of Education (DOE):** No updates. The federal government shutdown is not expected to affect either Pell grants or financed student loans and the college has not experienced problems drawing down funds.

★ **Enrollment**

- **Fall 2025 Enrollment:** The 7% enrollment increase at the start of the year was retained during the verification period and improved upon (see below), a testament to the good work of many! The first line in the chart includes core activity except for our DSP students. "Core" students are enrolled in courses at any of our three campuses, online or at Akwesasne. Second Chance Pell and dual-enrollment students (i.e., College Bridge) are tracked separately.

Since the verification period ended (after the 3rd week of the semester), our efforts turned to helping our students connect with resources that will help them be successful and, ideally, return for Spring 2026.

Core Enrollment <i>Date: 092825</i>	Fall 2024	Fall 2025	% Change
Headcount	723	801	10.8%
Headcount incl DSP	751	821	9.3%

★ **Other Items of Interest**

- **Campus Safety:**
 - **Presentations and Planning**
 - The Emergency Guide has been updated and is available at [this link](#).
 - **Exterior Door Numbering:** As part of our campus safety improvements, the numbering of exterior doors is underway. This initiative creates a more uniform naming and numbering system of building entrances/exits to assist law enforcement and fire departments should the need arise. This work has largely been completed on the Saranac Lake campus and will begin at Malone and Ticonderoga.
 - **Title VI Policies**
 - *Identification Card Policy:* In closing the loop on ID cards for students, the process and procedures were developed over the summer and student IDs are being generated as required by the policy. I have begun a

conversation with our collective bargaining units about extending this to their members.

□ **Achieving the Dream (ATD) Consortium:**

- Our partnership with ATD and our sister SUNY Community Colleges (Broome, Jefferson, and TC3) is in full swing. Last month, three (3) members of the College attended a data summit to help prepare the team for a better understanding and use of our data to inform our work.
- The Core Team homed in on three mantras, some inspired by the data summit that are worth sharing here:
 - *Change takes time...thus we need to practice strategic patience.*
 - *Avoid jumping into change before fully understanding the data.*
 - *Avoid data overload and select data that is most important and meaningful for us.*
- We have begun our coaching/consultation meetings and expect those to last over the three years we are with ATD.
- Nearly 100 members of our college community completed the Institutional Capacity Assessment Tool (ICAT). We will be holding a college-wide meeting with our coaches on November 21st, 2025. While originally planned as a dive into the ICAT results and student performance measurements, we are pivoting in response to the SUNY Academic Momentum campaign (see below) and will be focusing more on developing a plan to respond to that campaign and setting the stage for the Capacity Café in Spring 2026.

□ **Strategic Plan Update**

- *2024-2027:* Action related to the four (4) strategic priorities is underway. Some highlights include:

- **Pathways:** (Provide a meaningful and engaging education that prepares students for transfer or career opportunities)

Goal	Progress/Update Highlights
<i>Develop a Liberal Arts Advisory Board to advise departments on how to align liberal arts curriculum to strengthen students' transfer and career success.</i>	A small group met in Fall 24 to review as an advisory board does not seem to be the means to achieve what is hoped for, which is more enrollment.
<i>Establish a comprehensive program to address academic use of Artificial Intelligence (AI).</i>	An AI Leadership Group formed and met this summer to help lead curriculum and professional development in AI. A presentation from the group to the faculty occurred during opening week, sharing a “do’s and don’ts list” and planning for a newsletter.

- **Student Experience:** *Create and nurture a supportive environment that welcomes diversity and difference and focuses on student success and growth.*

Goal	Progress/Update Highlights
<i>Ensure that the College is fully accessible in our facilities, technology, instruction, and</i>	1. The next update to OCR is due in early November 2025. 2. Facilities has been addressing items

<i>programming.</i>	in the report, including establishing accessible parking spaces, creating accessible counters, and the like.
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- **Partnerships:** *Act as a strong and valued partner in the communities we serve.*

Goal	Progress/Update Highlights
<i>Develop a comprehensive Continuing Education Department that can respond to evolving community needs with non-credit programming and accessible facilities.</i>	1. Assessment of regional workforce needs in the health and human services pathways and mapping them to specific offerings/pathways continues. 2. SUNY Transformation funds repositioned to hire a short-term tech-focused workforce consultant who began in June 2025.
<i>Expand and, where needed, establish our relationships with DOCCS, BOP and County Jails by August 2027.</i>	1. The Prison Education Program (PEP) application continues. 2. The PEP application adds the Entrepreneurship Cert to offerings. 3. A Supplemental Information Report (SIR) was submitted to Middle States on March 31, 25.
<i>Explore and implement microcredential opportunities to better serve students and employers.</i>	1. Apprenticeship roundtables in Fa24 at SL and Ti campuses. A Sp25 roundtable was held in ML on February 28th, 2025. 2. Direct Support Professional microcredential launched Sp24. 3. New microcredential opportunities in health/human services have been identified and are being explored. 4. <i>HUS 113 Crisis Intervention</i>, a new course and microcredential launched this semester.

- **Sustainability:** *Ensure the financial sustainability of the institution through strengthening enrollment and maximizing use of resources.*

Goal	Progress/Update Highlights
<i>Implement a new department level review process using clearly defined guidelines and self-assessment evaluations so employees and department heads can more competently evaluate institutional effectiveness and alignment with strategic plan.</i>	1. The President's Office, Foundation, and Records Office completed the process during the Spring 2025 semester. 2. A new round of offices will undertake their review this academic year.
<i>Increase non-student revenue streams by 5% annually by August 2026 to support the College mission.</i>	1. Receipt of two new endowed scholarships (\$50K each) in 2025 2. A new Foundation Advancement plan/strategy was approved by the Foundation.

Relatedly, the Community Leaders' Day event on October 7th, was a way for us to acknowledge legislative and other community leaders, as well as donors to the Foundation for their support, financial and otherwise.

□ **Grants and Opportunities**

- *Perkins*: Our Perkins Grant was approved for this year. Our allocation of \$191,164 is an increase from last year's \$173,057 and supports upgrades to equipment in science labs, nursing simulation professional development, and support for students with disabilities, including coaches for students with autism spectrum disorders, a text-to-speech tool, and A&P models for students with visual impairments.
- Betsy Penrose, our Grant Writer, has been active in canvassing grant opportunities and, where there is a good fit, writing grants. In this latter category, Betsy
 - submitted a grant application with the Northern Borders Regional Commission for a *feasibility study* to construct a new building in Saranac Lake near the rail trail to support wilderness recreation leadership, environmental science and art courses/needs,
 - is working with Essex County to submit a grant application to DASNY for funding to support capital upgrade needs with the Sparks pool,
 - completed a community policing grant, in concert with the Saranac Lake Police Department, which would provide additional campus safety resources for the College, and
 - completed a grant to support diversification of the nursing profession in rural areas.

□ **Information Technology (IT):**

- *Thesis Elements*: The process to convert the College's student information system (SIS), from *CAMS* to *Thesis Elements*, is well underway. A cutover from the sandbox to production occurred earlier this month. Scott Harwood and Erik Harvey have been leading this effort on behalf of the College and holding regular steering committee meetings with updates on the progress. Erik will have more details on this project in his report.

□ **Facilities:** Our Facilities staff have been busy cleaning up from the fall and readying our campuses for the arrival of colder temperatures and snow. We welcomed Joe Wells as a part-time laborer at our Ticonderoga campus and bid farewell to Brian Barden who retired in late September.

In addition to the day-to-day tasks, the Facilities Department has been

- numbering exterior doors as part of our campus safety planning,
- addressing the Office for Civil Rights findings related to access, including making restrooms, parking, and counter heights more accessible, and
- ensure that capital projects were completed including replacement of the boilers and roof at Clermont Hall in Saranac Lake.

Other activities include planning for:

- replacement of the Sparks front vestibule (a 2nd notice to bidders saw no responses and we are exploring other options),
- replacement of a transformer at Sparks,

- demolition of the former radio station on the Saranac Lake campus, and
- assessments of the College pool and College Hall.

Planning for additional capital upgrades to the *Sparks Athletic Complex* beyond the pool and the vestibules and doors (including updates to the plumbing and electrical infrastructure, restrooms, locker rooms and showers) are tied to those assessments mentioned.

□ **NCCCAP:**

- *2025-2028 Contract:* The contract was approved by both Essex County and Franklin County.

□ **CSEA:**

- *2025-2028 Contract:* The contract was approved by both Essex County and Franklin County.

□ **Middle States Commission on Higher Education:**

- We have a new Middle States liaison, Suzan Harkness, who recently joined the Commission. She has significant higher ed experience including serving as Provost at SUNY Morrisville recently.
- Next month, we will be hosting MSCHE representatives for site visits to our Second Chance Pell sites as part of the process to convert the program into the new Prison Education Program (PEP).
- We will be participating in a self-study institute in Spring 2026 as we prepare for our next self-study in 2028-2029.
- We are also considering attending the annual conference in December to ensure that we are ready for the self-study institute.

□ **SUNY:**

- *Vice Chancellor Visits:*
 - Two SUNY Vice Chancellors and members of their teams visited the College on October 8th as part of their swing through the North Country. Valerie Dent, Vice Chancellor for Community Colleges and the Education Pipeline, and Chris White, Vice Chancellor for Workforce Development and Upward Mobility, met with members of our community to learn more about our experience with SUNY ReConnect, workforce development and other college-related initiatives.
- Updates on the *Transformational Initiatives:*
 - *Workforce Development Coordinator (tech focus):* Greg Hart, formerly with the Workforce Development Institute, is serving as a consultant conducting an environmental scan of tech and tech-related workforce needs for us across our service area. He continues to meet with area employers, workforce partners, and other parties to identify those needs. We expect a report later this year that will summarize his findings.
- *Academic Momentum Campaign:* SUNY's plan to improve retention, completion and academic momentum of students entering in 2026-2027 is underway. SUNY established proposed targets, for six (6) indicators of student performance (see below), and the College proposed alternate ones based on our analyses of our student performance data. Once they are

approved, we will share them with the Board and engage our campus community more broadly on them.

As noted under the ATD section, many of the indicators align with ATD's measures of student success and thus our work with ATD will now include SUNY's measurements and help with the preparation of our plan for SUNY. Those indicators are:

- 100% graduation rate;
- 150% graduation rate;
- Fall-to-Fall retention rate;
- 30+ Credits earned in 1st year;
- Gateway course completion rate for English and Math; and
- FAFSA completion rate

Per SUNY, campuses will be asked to “...*proportionally contribute towards System goals through individual action plans that build on existing campus strengths and adoption of evidence-based strategies not currently in place or delivered at scale.*” A plan on the strategies we will undertake to meet these targets is due February 5th, 2026.

- **NYSED:** Has been working on the development of a statewide dual enrollment policy, which they were charged with as an outcome of the 2025-2026 NYS Budget.

That's all for now. Gratefully yours,



Joe Keegan
President