



Executive Summary

February 13, 2026

Finance Report Executive Summary

1. FY26 Year-to-Date Summary

Agenda Item #1 and Appendices A & B provide a snapshot of fiscal year 26 (FY26) on or around January 20th. No large “Approved Budget” vs “YTD Actual” differences were noted in the budget review.

Transfers into the GF are lagging and will probably continue to do so – ending FY26 about \$300,000 short of the budget. Cisler Operations is leaning toward a year-end deficit greater than the \$442,000 that was approved.

The operational fund balance of \$11.9M has increased since the last report due to tuition, fee, housing, and food revenues.

The cash balance of \$9.9M is about \$5M less than the historical ten-year average. However, we do have the outstanding loan, and the transfer from the LSSU Endowments which have not yet been finalized. These would increase the operational cash available to LSSU.

Under the heading of “Other Financial Events” the report highlights:

- 1) The transfer of funds from the Foundation to LSSU as part of the dissolution process,
- 2) The progress to date regarding the use of the LSSU Endowments to fund FY26 scholarships; removing the burden from the General Fund,
- 3) The cost avoidance of about \$750,000 from moving from traditional health plans to high-deductible plans, and
- 4) The progress in securing the capital improvement loan from Central Savings Bank

2. Investment Policy Proposal (Action Item)

The Board has an Investment Policy for the LSSU Endowment portfolio. The LSSU Foundation also had an Investment Policy for the LSSU Foundation Endowment portfolio. With the dissolution of the Foundation, the LSSU Board of Trustees now has oversight of both portfolios. This requires a new policy be drafted and approved by the Board.

The Board’s Finance and Development Committee (B-FDC) has drafted the attached policy (Appendix C) for consideration for approval. The B-FDC took this opportunity to better define the endowment types held within the portfolios; add language regarding the investment of operating cash; and break out spending guidelines into a new, separate policy.

This policy is being presented by the Finance and Development Committee.

3. Investment Spending Policy Proposal (Action Item)

The background is similar to the previous Agenda Item. The old Investment Policy contained guidelines for spending. It is more consistent to have separate Investment and Spending policies. Additionally, the previous policy did not take into account the variety of investment portfolios and the ability to delineate the different spending opportunities available to LSSU. The new policy is attached as Appendix D.

This policy is being presented by the Finance and Development Committee.

4. Tuition and Fee Rate Increase Proposal (Action Item)

The Admissions, Marketing, Business, and the Financial Aid Offices desire accurate information regarding future tuition, fees, and room & board costs as early as possible as they recruit, and package aid for LSSU students. LSSU strives to provide this information in April/May or earlier when possible. LSSU requests that the Board establish FY27 tuition and fee rates as described herein. The fees referred to within this agenda item are only the mandatory fees defined as the Athletic Fee, Student Activity/Media Fee, Senior Processing Fee, Student Health Services Fee, and New Student Administrative Fee.

5. Ice Arena Engineering Proposal (Action item)

The Clarence "Taffy" Abel Ice Arena is a 4,000-seat hockey complex and is part of the Norris Center student athletic complex. The arena itself dates back to 1976; it was renovated and remodeled to its current larger form in the summer of 1995. This proposal is coming forward at this time due to identified operational issues including: Ice Cooling System Obsolescence, General HVAC and Dehumidification System Obsolescence, Deteriorating Roof Conditions, and an inability to secure appropriately certified, long-term, maintenance/repair providers.

This \$300,000 contract with I.B. Storey would result in a final design and build bid package outlining the needed upgrades and replacements of most components of the ice Arena's key operating systems.

With over 25 year of experience, I.B. Storey is Official Rink Engineering Consultant of the NHL, and is well known for their innovative, industry-leading, rink engineering systems, as well as energy efficient and sustainable engineering solutions.

LSSU and I.B. Storey will work to develop plans that meet the needs of LSSU well into the future, while continuing to secure external funding to support this initiative. Donors have already been identified that will offer significant support for this project. Once a better cost estimate has been developed, LSSU will return to the Board to provide architectural renderings, engineering plans, cost estimates, as well as a proposed timeline.

Academic Affairs Report Executive Summary

1. Conferral of Fall 2025 and Winter 2025/2026 Candidates for Degrees (Action Item):

Candidates earning a total of 98 degrees or certificates, spread across 76 individuals, are submitted for approval.

2. Promotion and/or Tenure Recommendations (Action Item): Five faculty members are submitting their applications for tenure and/or promotion for approval.

3. **Course and Program Fee Changes (Action Item):** Course and program fee changes are submitted for approval.
4. **Bachelor of Science in Chemistry, Secondary Teaching Program Deletion (Action Item):** Deletion of this program is submitted for approval.
5. **Academic Affairs Update:**
 - a) The School of Computer Science and Mathematics proposed significant changes to the mathematics curriculum shifting the institution from a traditional developmental mathematics sequence to a corequisite mathematics model.
 - b) The Center for Engaged Teaching and Learning (CETAL) held its Spring Professional Development Day with Dr. Jared Tippets as the plenary speaker. Dr. Tippets offered strategies for advancing student retention and increasing student success.
 - c) A monitoring report was submitted to the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) addressing enrollment, financial sustainability, and transparency.
6. **Honorary Doctorate (Action Item):** Recommendation of Thomas C. Bailey for conferral of an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters degree.

Charter Schools Executive Summary

1. **Dashboards:** Included for ongoing Charter School activities and highlights.
2. **Appointments (Action Item):** Board member appointments or reappointments for the Board of Directors of the LSSU public school academies are proposed.
3. **Regent Park Scholars Charter Academy Reauthorization (Action Item):** Reauthorization of the charter contract for approval.
4. **Detroit Service Learning Academy Reauthorization Resolution (Action Item):** Reauthorization of the charter contract for approval.

Enrollment Management & Student Success Report Executive Summary

1. **Recruitment, Admissions & Marketing:** As of February 3, 2026, Fall 2026 undergraduate admits total 1,288, down from 1,640 the prior year. This decline is driven by a 12.4% decline in applications, particularly among First-Time in Any College students, underscoring the urgency of focused yield strategies in the months ahead.

Recruitment efforts remained strong into spring, with notable momentum in key territories and expanded Canadian outreach. Early results from Spring Showcase events, increased counselor visits, and new travel assignments are already supporting Fall 2026 application flow.

The University Marketing team continues to modernize and unify the LSSU brand, completing over 150 projects this academic year. Highlights include new MBA, Fisheries & Wildlife, and Robotics program materials; refreshed Orientation and Housing content; and widespread updates to admissions and scholarship web pages. The team has also supported increased

visibility for LSSU athletics, academic programs, and student life through integrated campaigns and event coverage

2. **Updated English Proficiency Requirements for International Students (Action Item):** The President recommends that the Board approve a revision to English proficiency standards for international student admission, increasing the Duolingo English Test requirement from 85 to 95. This change aligns LSSU's standards with updated Duolingo-to-TOEFL equivalency matrices and ensures consistency across approved English proficiency exams.
3. **Financial Aid Updates:** The Financial Aid Office has focused on spring aid processing and supporting enrolled students, while also preparing for the upcoming scholarship cycle. The team has reviewed over a dozen appeals for students who lost eligibility, approving most within policy to support student persistence. In partnership with an external consultant, the office is accelerating scholarship packaging and award letters for new students, targeting a February 13 launch for the updated aid offers.
4. **Base Housing Rates for FY27:** The President recommends that the Board approve the Housing Base Rate for the 2026 to 2027 fiscal year at \$6,000. This represents a 7.08 percent increase from the current Housing Base Rate. No Food Base Rate is being presented at this time and will be brought forward separately following completion of the dining services RFP process.
5. **Student Affairs Updates:** LSSU's inaugural CARE Team has launched successfully, holding weekly case review meetings and utilizing the NABITA Risk Rubric to assess and support students. In its first semester, the CARE Team received 25 referrals, with 80% of referred students engaging in support meetings. In parallel, Student Conduct implemented new tracking systems, emphasizing education and restorative responses. Student Life increased program offerings by 12.7% and engaged 693 unique students, 3,500 times. The Laker Success Program received over \$100,000 in state grant funding and served students through peer mentoring, five high-impact events, and nearly 400 total engagements.
6. **Counseling Services:** Counseling Services conducted 185 appointments with 60 unique clients between September and January. Wellness education remained a focus, with QPR Suicide Prevention training provided to student-athletes, nursing students, and Athletics staff. Workshops on grief, test anxiety, and emotional wellness further expanded proactive outreach. A \$750 SAMHSA grant supported substance misuse education through a Winter Wellness Wonderland event, and efforts to launch the Green Bandana Project, a peer-driven mental health campaign, are underway

Human Resources Report Executive Summary

1. **Title IX Quarterly Report:** A regular Title IX report is shared with the Board of Trustees. Zero (0) reports were filed. There are no open reports and no reports that involve an LSSU employee.
2. **Public Safety Update:** The LSSU Public Safety Department welcomed two new Staff Officers.
3. **Safety and Risk Updates:** Planning has started for our annual property/casualty insurance renewals for policies ending July 1, 2026. An RFI is being conducted as part of a broker relationship review.
4. **Human Resources Update (Action Item):** The HR office has two open positions. A payroll coordinator due to a resignation, and an HR manager due to adjustments to duties and

responsibilities. Last year, we focused on updates to employee medical plans with a focus on cost avoidance. Additionally, LSSU changed brokers and joined the Western Michigan Health Insurance Pool (The Pool), a member-owned collective. This change allowed LSSU to avoid a 25.6% rate increase from our prior broker (approximately 10% with The Pool), saving employees and the University a sizable cost increase. As we start this year, we are looking at other plans to identify service and offering improvements.

5. **Health Care Center Update:** The Health Care Center reports to the CHRO on an interim basis and is currently undergoing an operational review regarding revenue, costs, and operational efficiencies.

Information Technology Report Executive Summary

The February 2026 report highlights continued progress in infrastructure stabilization, cybersecurity modernization, and digital engagement initiatives across campus. These efforts reflect Information Technology's focus on strengthening system reliability, improving security posture, and enhancing the student, faculty, and community digital experience.

1. **IT Department Update:** Over the past several months, the IT department concentrated on restoring and modernizing core systems while maintaining uninterrupted academic and administrative operations.
 - Infrastructure Stabilization & System Restoration: Following the earlier cyber incident, IT completed large-scale rebuilding efforts across virtual hosts and more than 100 virtual servers. Backup systems were reconstructed, and hundreds of campus devices were reimaged to align with updated network and security standards. The campus network environment was rebuilt to improve monitoring visibility and reliability. In parallel, a phased faculty laptop deployment is underway to modernize instructional technology, improve device reliability, and ensure consistent security and software standards across academic departments.
 - Operational & Academic Support: IT restored multiple specialized environments, including laboratory equipment systems, student project servers, and external project network access. Additional support was provided for campus partners through scoreboard system assistance, bookstore network relocation, and specialized alerting implementation for the CFRE Discovery Center. Software deployments and imaging updates ensured instructional continuity for end-of-semester projects and finals.
 - Institutional Reporting & Connectivity Improvements: Institutional Research collaborated with campus offices to complete state and federal reporting requirements tied to accreditation and funding under tight timelines. In support of connectivity demands, five new wireless access points were installed in Taffy Abel Arena, improving coverage for academic events, athletics, commencement, and community use. Google Workspace storage compliance efforts continue to reduce long-term risk and costs while maintaining uninterrupted access to academic and business resources.
2. **Cybersecurity and Risk Management:** Cybersecurity remains a top priority. Major efforts include:
 - SOC Activation: LSSU is fully integrated with Merit's 24/7 Security Operations Center, providing continuous monitoring and real-time threat visibility. Advanced endpoint

protection tools have successfully identified and contained suspicious activity before broader network impact.

- Threat Prevention & Access Controls: Enhanced intrusion prevention and monitoring controls blocked more than 15,000 unauthorized traffic attempts and over 12,000 attempted VPN connection attempts in the past 30 days. Network access rules, permissions, and authentication practices were reviewed and strengthened across core systems.
- Regional Cyber Collaboration: LSSU hosted the quarterly Eastern Upper Peninsula Information Security Advisory Council (EUPISAC) meeting in the Crow's Nest, with attendance from Cloverland Electric, the EUP Intermediate School District, Chippewa County, and Merit SOC leadership. The group continues to share resources, threat intelligence, and response strategies to strengthen regional readiness.

3. Website Improvements: Website initiatives continue to focus on modernization, performance optimization, and recruitment-focused enhancements that strengthen the University's digital presence and user experience.

- Major Updates: WordPress and the supporting database were upgraded to improve security and platform stability. A WebP image conversion process was implemented to automatically optimize newly uploaded images, reducing storage usage and improving overall site load speeds. A redesigned site header and condensed homepage banner were also introduced, improving usability and access to key information above the fold.
- Ongoing Improvements: Content restructuring and departmental navigation simplification remain underway to improve accuracy, reduce clutter, and create a more intuitive user flow. Search engine optimization initiatives continue to enhance program visibility and discoverability through organic search.
- New Features Coming: A homepage quick-link icon section is being developed in collaboration with Marketing to provide direct access to high-impact pages such as Majors, Financial Aid, Admissions, Visit, About LSSU, and Apply. Additional visual and accessibility enhancements are planned to further modernize the site experience.
- Usage: Website engagement increased significantly over the past 60 days, with a 102.6% increase in active users and a 111.9% increase in new users, along with a 14.5% increase in total page views. Traffic originated from 178 countries.

These improvements reinforce IT's role in providing secure, reliable, and student-focused technology services that support learning, recruitment, and operational continuity across the University.

Athletics Report Executive Summary

This report provides an update on key Athletics Department highlights from November 2025 through January 2026, with emphasis on student-athlete achievement, academic success, brand growth, corporate partnerships, and facility utilization.

1. **Department News:** LSSU student-athletes across multiple sports earned significant conference, national, and international recognition during this reporting period. Highlights include multiple GLIAC Players of the Week in swimming, men's and women's basketball, and volleyball; CCHA weekly honors and national recognition for Men's Ice Hockey; and the selection of former Lakers Louis Boudon (France) and Lukas Kaelble (Germany) to their respective 2026 Olympic Men's Ice Hockey Teams. Additionally, nine ACHA Division I Women's Hockey student-athletes were

named Academic All-Americans, reinforcing the department's commitment to excellence both in competition and in the classroom.

2. **Social Media Impressions:** LSSU Athletics continues to experience strong growth in digital engagement. From November 7, 2025, through January 16, 2026, combined Athletics social media accounts generated nearly 4 million impressions, representing a 61.7% increase over the same period last year. Men's Ice Hockey accounts led this growth with a 138.8% increase, driven by in-season success, alumni Olympic announcements, and major events such as the Kwik Trip Holiday Faceoff and the Superior Ice Showdown. Instagram and Facebook remain primary drivers of engagement, reinforcing the value of continued strategic investment in digital communications.
3. **Academic Success Rate (ASR) Report NCAA Division II:** Academic outcomes remain a core strength of LSSU Athletics. The NCAA Division II Academic Success Rate (ASR) for LSSU student-athletes stands at 90%, significantly exceeding the Division II national average of 76 percent and surpassing conference benchmarks in several sports. Fall Semester 2025 academic performance further reflects this success, with multiple teams posting semester and cumulative GPAs above GLIAC and Division II averages. These results underscore a sustained culture of academic accountability, retention, and holistic student-athlete development.

4. **NCAA Student-athlete Academic Achievement for Fall Semester 2025:**

	LSSU Fall '23 Semester	LSSU Fall '24 Semester	LSSU Fall '25 Semester	LSSU Cumulative	GLIAC 2024 Cumulative	DII 2024 Cumulative
Women's XC	3.45	3.41	3.71	3.69	3.62	3.46
Men's XC	3.34	3.42	3.16	3.23	3.47	3.25
Men's Track	3.14	3.30	3.11	3.22	3.17	3.07
Women's Track	3.47	3.37	3.63	3.60	3.49	3.35
Women's BB	3.41	3.18	3.56	3.52	3.49	3.39
Men's BB	3.06	3.17	3.21	3.05	3.07	3.01
Men's Swimming	N/A	3.41	3.02	3.63	3.26	3.28
Women's Swimming	N/A	3.00	3.48	3.29	3.53	3.46
Volleyball	3.45	3.27	3.31	3.37	3.54	3.48
Hockey	3.26	3.45	3.52	3.47	3.38	3.43
TOTAL ALL	3.32	3.30	3.40	3.41	3.42	3.32

5. **Corporate Sponsorship:** The Athletics Department strengthened its external partnerships during the first three months of collaboration with Taymar Sales U, adding several new corporate sponsors while maintaining a strong base of returning partners. These relationships support the long-term sustainability of Athletics programs, enhance community connections, and expand the department's revenue-generating capacity.
6. **Norris Center Use:** The Norris Center, including the Arbuckle Student Activity Center continues to serve as a vital hub for students, Athletics, and the broader community. From November 1, 2025, to January 1, 2026, the Arbuckle Center averaged 987 weekly check-ins and hosted a wide range of community groups, athletic practices, and special events. Facility usage generated \$15,433 in revenue during this period, reflecting both strong demand and the Center's role as a key campus and regional asset.

Advancement Report Executive Summary

1. **Fundraising:** FY25-26, through 1/21/26 in Q3 - \$7,571,134.
 - a. Three weeks into Q3, we have surpassed the most ever raised annually of \$3.6M
 - b. Forecasting over \$10M raised for FY25-26
2. **Major Gifts, Planned Gifts, and Grants:**
 - a. Bud Denker leveraged a \$50K gift with Penske matching funds for a \$100k total
 - b. Twelve other major gifts (over \$10k) were recorded this cycle.
3. **Annual Fundraising & Alumni Relations Update:**
 - a. Laker Hockey Challenge – in celebration of the Laker Hockey 60th Anniversary and to build on the momentum of the anonymous hockey donor, LSSU launched a \$1.5M challenge to run until Dec 31, 2026. Over \$1.2M had been committed prior to the public launch.
 - b. The 2026 Superior Give-a-Thon is gearing up to start Feb 16 - April 10
 - c. 2nd Annual Superior Ice Showdown brought over 100 alumni together in Soo, Ontario
 - d. Some 150 tickets were sold for the annual LSSU at the Red Wings
 - e. Upcoming events
 - i. Laker Basketball Alumni Weekend – Sat, Feb 21
 - ii. LSSU at the Detroit Tigers, Sat, July 25
4. **Legislative Affairs update:**
 - a. Tracking
 - i. LDSI proposal – President Travis submitted \$1M LDSI proposal through Senator Damoose and Rep Fairbairn. The proposal addresses infrastructure needs for utility upgrades and IT security.
 - ii. Capital Outlay – Speculation there may be movement in Dec of 2026 after the election (lame duck session). A key hurdle is the need for a new bond cap.
 - iii. Budget timing – With elections this fall there is hope a budget will be reached earlier this year to facilitate elected officials returning home to campaign.