



**Executive Summary**  
May 15, 2026

**Finance Report Executive Summary**

**1. Appointment of the Treasurer to the Board. (Action Item)**

Appointment of Mr. Trevor C. Liddle as Treasurer to the Board.

**2. FY26 Year-to-Date Summary**

Agenda Item #1 and provides a snapshot of fiscal year 26 (FY26) generally from the period 3/31/2026 to 5/5/2026. No large “Approved Budget” vs “YTD Actual” differences were noted in the budget review.

Transfers into the GF continue to follow traditional timelines, slightly lagging, will continue to do so. It is expected the transfer lag will be about \$350,000 – ending FY26. Cisler Operations is going to realize a year-end deficit greater than the \$442,000 that was approved expectations currently are a loss greater than \$600,000.

The cash balance, as of 31 March is \$10.2M up about \$300,000.00 from the last report. Several items, related to prior board actions will settle in May 2026 which will increase available operating cash.

**3. Report on the Higher Learning Commission Composite Financial Index (Informational)**

*The University’s current financial rating from the Higher Learning Commission is 3.95.*

A score of 3.0 is the generally accepted benchmark for healthy institutional financial status.

**4. Annual Endowment Report (Informational)**

Annual update on the status of the endowment and investment performance. The LSSU Endowment has outpaced both the Average and Median College & University Fiscal Year Returns in 7 out of the last 8 fiscal years

**5. Single Audit Findings (Informational)**

The purpose is to inform the Board of progress on process mitigations identified in the 2025 external audit. All of the management’s response are in process and on target for completion in FY 2026 as indicated to the auditors.

## 6. Uncollectable Account (Action Item)

Per Board Policy, Finance and Operations has identified 34 accounts receivable that meet the criteria to be written off. 29 Student Accounts and 5 Non-Student Accounts for a total of approximately \$67,000. This amount is within the anticipated amount and is accounted for in the current FY budget.

## 7. Line of Credit – Physical Plant Deferred Maintenance Authorization

Board approval to allow the University to enter into a line-of-credit agreement with Central Savings Bank to complete various needed deferred maintenance projects.

The University has numerous physical plant deferred maintenance needs campus wide, most pressing of those needs is the replacement of various roofs, flatwork, and the Norris Center Natatorium. Repair/replacement of these physical plant items will ensure the campus remains able to meet its mission of education within a safe environment.

The Chief Financial Officer will negotiate the final financial and agreements and contractor scope of work to derive the greatest benefit for the campus.

## Academic Affairs Report Executive Summary

1. **Approval of Reducing the Minimum Credit Hours for Associate's and Bachelor's degrees (Action Item):** Recommendation to reduce the minimum credit hours required to complete an associate's degree to 60 and a bachelor's degree to 120 for approval.
2. **Approval of Emeritus Faculty Nomination (Action Item):** Recommendation to award emeritus faculty status to Dr. Alexei Iretski for approval.
3. **Academic Affairs Update:**
  - a. Faculty and staff continue to prepare the Assurance Argument in advance of the fall comprehensive visit by the Higher Learning Commission.
  - b. LSSU's 40<sup>th</sup> Atlantic Salmon Release will occur on June 4, 2026 at the fish hatchery adjacent to the Barch Center for Freshwater Research and Education.
  - c. Beginning July 1, 2026, Academic Affairs will be structured into three colleges, the College of Arts and Sciences, the College of Great Lakes Ecology and Education, and the College of Professional Studies. Dr. Kathy Berchem will assume the role of Associate Vice President for Assessment and Accreditation in the Provost's Office.
  - d. The 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Campus-Wide Senior Research Symposium was held on Friday, April 24, as 114 students showcased 83 capstone projects.

Since the February Board meeting, the Office of Sponsored Programs reports three external grant awards totaling more than \$270,000 to support initiatives in cybersecurity, environmental research, and the arts. These projects will strengthen campus cybersecurity planning, advance research on nuisance algal blooms in the St. Mary's River, and modernize technology in the LSSU Arts Center Mainstage Theatre.

## Charter Schools Executive Summary

1. Dashboards are 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. **WAY Academy Relocation of Second Site (Action Item):** Contract amendment to relocate the second site of WAY Academy from 19321 W. Chicago, Detroit 48228 to 9600 Leverne, Redford, MI 48239 for approval

## Enrollment Management & Student Success Report Executive Summary

1. **Recruitment, Admissions & Marketing:** Significant progress has been made in strengthening the recruiting team with the hiring of Cory Walters for Southwest Michigan, who has already logged the highest number of high school visits across all territories. Momentum in outreach continues to build, with the team completing 81 high school visits, 38 fairs, and over 2,000 student touchpoints since the last update.

The current focus is on converting admitted students into enrolled students, prioritizing orientation and housing registrations. As of April 30, 89 students are registered for Fall Orientation. Laker Decision Day was a success, yielding immediate conversions.

The University Marketing team continues to see positive growth across social media platforms, particularly on Instagram and TikTok, and has successfully implemented new online request forms and targeted PR outreach campaigns.

2. **Action Item: Updated English Proficiency Requirements for International Students:**

The President recommends that the Board approve updated admissions policy tying changes in international placement scores to national equivalences, with the Registrar serving as the final decision maker.

3. **Financial Aid and Scholarships:**

The Financial Aid Office has prioritized essential functions to maintain student service, successfully processing summer financial aid for approximately 150 students. Recruitment to fill open positions is actively underway, with one candidate having accepted an offer and another decision pending. The office is also actively managing the scholarship cycle: departmental and non-departmental scholarship awarding is currently in progress, and new student scholarship applications remain open through May 17.

4. **Action Item: Dining Vendor & Base Dining Rates for FY2026:**

The President recommends that the Board approve the selection of Elio Collegiate Dining as the new campus dining services provider following a comprehensive RFP process. Additionally, the University proposes a tiered meal plan structure, with a maximum base rate for the "Platinum Plan" (19 meals per week plus \$300 in Laker Bucks) set at \$7,100 for the 2026-2027 academic

year. This rate, combined with the previously proposed Housing Base Rate, maintains LSSU's strong price advantage and commitment to affordability.

## 5. Student Affairs Updates

Student engagement saw significant growth, with the four areas under Student Affairs hosting 215 tracked events this year (a 63% increase) and total tracked attendance reaching 7,751 (a 24% increase). Spring 2026 was the strongest semester in recent memory, with tracked attendance growing 87% over Spring 2025. In Spring 2026, Student Conduct adjudicated 28 cases, while the CARE Team received 18 referrals, with mental health concerns driving the majority (72%) of cases. The 2026-2027 housing application cycle is tracking strong, with 409 total applications received and 228 Fall 2026 room reservations currently secured, reflecting sustained demand for on-campus living.

## 6. Counseling Services

Counseling Services supported 99 unique clients across 396 appointments, representing an 11.24% increase in utilization from the previous academic year. The implementation of a standardized national best practice triage model allowed the office to serve more students efficiently without placing any students on a waitlist. Campus wellness activities remained a priority, with Counseling Services facilitating evidence-based screenings behavioral health discussions, grief workshops, and harm reduction education at various campus events throughout the spring semester.

## 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:**
3. **Safety and Risk Updates:** Processing of annual property/casualty insurance renewals has started for policies ending July 1, 2026. Following an RFI process, we changed brokers for property and cyber coverage from Gallagher Risk Management Services to Cottingham & Butler (C&B). A campus safety audit is planned for this summer with Safety Management Services Company, a division of C&B.
4. **Human Resources Update:** The HR office welcomed two (2) new staff members. Anita Ficke, Payroll Coordinator, and Alexandria Loughran, HR Generalist. A payroll and workflow review and update is currently underway.

## Information Technology Report Executive Summary

The May 2026 report highlights continued progress in system reliability, cybersecurity operations, and digital experience improvements across campus. These efforts reflect Information Technology's focus on strengthening day-to-day operations, improving security posture, and enhancing the overall experience for students, faculty, and staff.

### 1. Agenda Item #1 – Information Technology Update

Over this reporting period, Information Technology maintained full operational support across campus while continuing to improve system reliability, user experience, and enterprise processes.

- **Operational Support & Campus Events:** IT maintained uninterrupted service during a temporary staffing shortage and successfully supported graduation events, delivering a reliable audio-visual experience during a high-visibility campus event.
- **System Reliability & Improvements:** Core systems were stabilized and improved, including rebuilding VPN and print monitoring systems, restoring monitoring integrations, and fully recovering the Virtual Lab environment. Single sign-on enhancements improved access to academic resources such as Statistica..
- **Enterprise & Reporting Enhancements:** IT partnered with campus departments to streamline Financial Aid processes, improve reporting accuracy, and support Institutional Research in completing a significant federal IPEDS reporting requirement under tight timelines.
- **Infrastructure & Upgrades:** Infrastructure improvements and system maintenance continued, including wiring projects across campus, replacement of access control systems, and Banner and database upgrades to maintain performance and stability.

### 2. Agenda Item #2 – Information Technology Security

Cybersecurity operations continue to mature, with a focus on proactive monitoring, early detection, and coordinated response.

- **Monitoring & Response Improvements:** Enhanced monitoring processes are improving visibility and enabling faster identification and response to potential risks. A recent event identified by the LSSU network team was quickly analyzed with Merit SOC, resulting in proactive containment before impact.
- **Stable Security Environment:** Overall activity levels remained controlled, with no critical alerts and minimal active issues requiring attention, reflecting a more stable and managed environment.
- **Regional Cyber Collaboration:** LSSU continues active participation in EUPISAC, strengthening regional coordination and shared threat awareness. As part of this partnership, LSSU will host a FEMA-supported cybersecurity training in July, reinforcing its commitment to supporting cybersecurity preparedness across the region.

### 3. Agenda Item #3 – Website Improvements

Website improvements continue to focus on accessibility, platform modernization, and enhancing the user experience to support recruitment and engagement.

- **Accessibility & Compliance:** The website maintains an accessibility score of approximately 94%, exceeding standard thresholds. Ongoing work continues to address remaining accessibility items in preparation for updated compliance requirements.
- **Platform Modernization:** Preparations are underway for the WordPress 7.0 update; the most significant platform and user interface change in over a decade.
- **Content & User Experience:** Content updates and restructuring efforts continue across departments to improve navigation and ensure key information is easier to locate.

- **Usage:** Website traffic saw a modest decrease over the past 60 days, while user engagement patterns remained consistent. Traffic continues to originate from a broad global audience.

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 February through April 2026, with emphasis on student-athlete achievement, academic and personal development, revenue generation, fan engagement, digital growth, and facility utilization.

### 1. Student-Athlete Recognition and Competitive Excellence:

LSSU student-athletes continued to earn significant conference and program-level recognition across multiple sports. Highlights include the University's first NCAA Division II Swimming and Diving Championships qualifier, All-GLIAC honors and record-setting performances in basketball and track and field, and multiple CCHA weekly and monthly awards in men's ice hockey. These achievements reflect continued competitive progress and the emergence of LSSU student-athletes on both conference and national stages.

### 2. Digital Engagement and Brand Visibility:

LSSU Athletics maintained strong digital momentum, generating more than 3.5 million social media impressions during the reporting period, a 45% increase over the prior year. Growth was driven primarily by Men's Ice Hockey and main Athletics accounts, with Instagram continuing to lead engagement. These results underscore the effectiveness of strategic content development and the expanding reach of the Laker Athletics brand.

### 3. Student-Athlete Development and Life Skills Programming:

The department continued to prioritize holistic student-athlete development through targeted programming in career readiness, life skills, and personal growth. Workshops focused on resume development, networking, and interview preparation, complemented by guest speakers and hands-on nutrition education initiatives. These efforts reinforce LSSU's commitment to preparing student-athletes for success beyond their competitive careers.

### 4. Athletics Revenue and Financial Sustainability:

Athletics generated diversified revenue through corporate partnerships, ticket sales, facility utilization, and conference distributions. Corporate sponsorships remained the leading revenue source, followed by strong contributions from ticketing and premium seating. These efforts highlight continued progress toward strengthening the department's financial sustainability while supporting the student-athlete experience.

### 5. Fan Engagement, Promotions, and Corporate Partnerships:

Game-day experience initiatives played a central role in building community and enhancing fan engagement. A comprehensive strategy of theme nights, interactive promotions, and

personalized fan experiences created a high-energy and inclusive environment across events. Corporate partnerships were effectively integrated into these experiences, shifting from passive branding to active engagement and strengthening connections between sponsors, fans, and the broader community.

#### 6. **Norris Center Utilization and Community Impact:**

The Norris Center continued to serve as a vital campus and regional hub, with average weekly usage exceeding 1,000 participants across students, community members, and partner organizations, like the Sault Tribal members. Facility usage supported a wide range of athletic, recreational, and community events, while generating more than \$39,000 in revenue during the reporting period, a significant increase over the previous year. These results reinforce the Center's role as a key asset for both campus life and community engagement.

Collectively, these updates reflect continued alignment with the department's strategic priorities, enhancing the student-athlete experience, expanding community impact, and strengthening the competitive and financial foundation of LSSU Athletics.

## Advancement Report Executive Summary

1. **Fundraising:** FY25-26, Q4 through 5/04/26 - \$13,660,453.
  - a. With seven weeks remaining in the fiscal year, we are 427% over the five-year fundraising average.
2. **Major Gifts, Planned Gifts, and Grants:**
  - a. An anonymous \$3.7M gift in support of repairs of the Taffy Abel Arena
  - b. Five other major gifts (over \$10k) were recorded this cycle
  - c. Two grant proposals are being submitted in Q4 totaling nearly \$300,000
3. **Annual Fundraising & Alumni Relations Update:**
  - a. Laker Hockey Challenge – in celebration of the Laker Hockey 60<sup>th</sup> 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 \$1.35M has been committed to date.
  - b. Both ongoing Annual Fund campaigns are up over last year: Superior Give-a-Thon and Laker Club.
  - c. Upcoming events
    - i. LSSU at the Detroit Tigers, Sat, July 25
    - ii. Lake State Classic, Friday, Aug 7
    - iii. 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Laker Women's Basketball Golf Outing, Saturday, Sept 26
    - iv. GLSW, Oct 23 & 24
4. **Legislative Affairs update:**
  - a. Tracking
    - i. LDSI proposal – \$1M LDSI proposal approved in House. Moves to Senate and if approved on to Governor. 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.

**5. Authorization for Special Liquor License Applications:**

In short, if passed by the BOT, this resolution would give the President (or a designee) ongoing authority to apply for special liquor licenses when needed.

Currently, the BOT needs to approve each application during a full, public BOT meeting. This is impractical due to timing and the nature of special liquor license requests.