LAKE SUPERIOR STATE UNIVERSITY

Executive Summary
July 17, 2026

Finance Report Executive Summary

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

   Agenda Item #1 provides a snapshot of fiscal year 26 (FY26) as of June 30 (fiscal year end). 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. Cisler Operations is going to realize a year-end deficit greater than the approved budget, Expectations currently are a loss greater than $725,000. Including some one-time expenses related to the food services contract.

   The cash balance, as of 30 June is $9.2M, down about $300,000.00 from the last report. This is due to timing of expenses and items, related to prior board actions will settle fully settle in July 2026 which will increase available operating cash.

2. **FY26 Assurance Services – Professional Services Plan**

   As part of our annual financial reporting process the University provides audited financial data to multiple entities most notably the State of Michigan for inclusion in the Annual Comprehensive Financial Report (ACFR).

3. **Physical Plant Projects Update**

   Annual update on the status of physical plant projects and planning. Seven major projects are underway for a total of $8,100,000 +/- invested in the campus infrastructure.

Academic Affairs Report Executive Summary

1. **Conferral of Spring 2026 Candidates for Degrees (Consent Agenda Item):** Candidates earning a total of 323 degrees or certificates, spread across 219 individuals, are submitted for approval.

2. **Program Enrollment:** Program enrollment for the past 10 years.

3. **Academic Affairs Update**:
   a. Higher Learning Commission Comprehensive Evaluation assurance argument must be submitted by August 31, 2026 and the on-campus visit will be conducted on September 28-

29, 2026.

b. The State of Michigan approved the $30.0 million capital outlay project submitted by Lake Superior State University and approved by the Board of Trustees in October 2025 to renovate and expand the Center for Applied Science and Engineering Technology (CASET Hall).
c. Three grants have been awarded since the last meeting of the Board of Trustees, totaling $31,754.96. These grants will support continued monitoring of sea lamprey, workforce development in aquaponics, and expansion of research capabilities, educational impact, and environmental stewardship through mobile robotics.

Charter Schools Executive Summary

1. Dashboards are included for ongoing Charter School activities and highlights.

2. **Appointments (Consent Agenda Item):** Board member appointments or reappointments for the Board of Directors of the LSSU public school academies are proposed.

3. **Concord Academy Petoskey Second Site (Action Item):** Contract of a second site of Concord Academy Petoskey at 8700 Mercer Road, Charlevoix, MI for approval.

Enrollment Management & Student Success Report Executive Summary

1. **New Enrollment Updates:** Dashboards

2. **Recruitment, Admissions & Marketing Updates:**

   Since the last Board meeting, the five regional recruiters have maintained strong outreach momentum, sustaining weekly text and phone contact with new applicants, admitted students, no-shows, and incomplete files. With the K-12 calendar concluded for the summer, the team shifted to community-based visibility through farmers markets, fairs, and other local events, and is preparing to attend the Michigan State Fair, the Upper Peninsula State Fair, and multiple county fairs.

   Fall 2026 applications and admits are each up roughly 10% since the last update, though both remain behind Fall 2025's pace at this point in the cycle, with registrations down significantly year-over-year; closing this gap through sustained outreach and melt-prevention is the team's top priority through the fall. Orientation continues to build toward the fall class, with 106 students having attended to date and 110 more registered so far for upcoming sessions with additional students signing up almost daily. Dual-enrollment (ND) applications and admits are trailing last year by more than half, with several high schools citing cost as a factor in choosing Ferris State's program instead; a feasibility study is recommended to evaluate LSSU's dual-enrollment pricing model.

   The University Marketing team sent 1,367 outreach messages this period with a 42.3% open rate, and Instagram engagement grew significantly year-over-year across every measured metric. The team also launched new brand, gallery, and content-submission web pages, automated Unicorn License distribution, and established the Laker Family Hub, which has already reached over 1,500 users.

3. **Financial Aid Updates:**

   The Director of Financial Aid position has been restructured into an Executive Director of Financial Aid & Scholarships role with a broader, more strategic portfolio. Kristen Gast has joined LSSU as Interim Director of Financial Aid & Scholarships through The Registry and has already packaged all incoming freshman and transfer students, with scholarship offers rolling out daily. Two permanent Financial Aid Advisors, Adam Grifka and Shane Fulcher, have been hired and placed on structured 30/60/90-day training plans as the office prepares for the FA27 recruiting cycle and the upcoming FAFSA opening.

4. **Student Affairs Updates:**

   Fall 2026 housing assignments currently total 421 students across eight residential areas, led by Student Village, Brady Hall, and the Townhouses. Summer renovation projects are underway in Brady Hall and Student Village to update bathrooms, flooring, and student apartment appliances. The office also welcomed Elizabeth Antonello as the new Laker Success Coordinator, transitioned Zabrina LeVasseur into a newly defined Student Conduct, CARES, and Basic Needs Coordinator role, and has begun a search to replace the outgoing Student Life Coordinator.

5. **Counseling Services Updates:**

   Counseling Services is expanding into a broader Student Wellness Center model, funded through the two existing student wellness fees rather than general fund or grant dollars, enabling a more proactive and holistic approach to student wellness. Most regular programming has paused for the summer, though short-term triage care remains available. In collaboration with Athletics, the office is finalizing the hire of a Mental Health Clinician, with two finalists on campus and an anticipated August start.

Human Resources Report Executive Summary

1. **Title IX Quarterly Report:** The Title IX Office received one report this quarter (February 2 – July 6, 2026), which has an LSSU employee as respondent; it remains open under assessment or investigation.

2. **Campus Safety/Risk Updates**: Public Safety staff continue OSHA and HAZWOPER training to enhance campus safety and emergency preparedness. LSSU has transitioned its Cyber and Property insurance brokerage services from Gallagher to Cottingham & Butler. Renewals for most University insurance policies were completed effective July 1, with the property insurance renewal scheduled for August 1. A campus safety audit with Safety Management Services is scheduled for July 21 & 22. This will include an open all-campus safety awareness forum on July 22 at 10:00 am. Clery Act data collection for the annual report is underway

3. **Human Resources Update:** HR/Payroll continues several initiatives to modernize systems and improve data quality, such as updating employee classification codes, benefits codes, implementing a new Applicant Tracking system, and an online benefits management platform.

Information Technology Report Executive Summary

The July 2026 report highlights continued progress in enterprise system modernization, cybersecurity operations, campus technology, and digital experience improvements. These efforts reflect Information Technology's continued focus on improving operational efficiency, strengthening institutional security, modernizing technology resources, and supporting the university's academic and administrative priorities.

1. **Information Technology Update**

   Over this reporting period, Information Technology continued to modernize enterprise systems, improve campus infrastructure, and collaborate with departments to enhance operational efficiency and technology services.

   - **Enterprise Systems & Administrative Improvements:** IT completed upgrades to Banner Self-Service, Financial Aid, and supporting applications while successfully completing fiscal year-end technology preparations. Work also continued on Ellucian Intelligent Processes (EIP) and Person Manager to modernize administrative workflows and replace legacy processes.
   - **Business Process Improvements:** IT partnered with Human Resources and Strata Information Group (SIG) during a multi-day business process review to identify opportunities to streamline HR workflows, improve operational efficiency, and maximize the university's use of Banner.
   - **Infrastructure & Campus Technology:** Infrastructure improvements included network wiring, preparation of technology spaces for campus renovations, deployment of new point-of-sale equipment, and network infrastructure maintenance to improve performance, reliability, and long-term sustainability.

     Campus Support & Collaboration: IT continued supporting academic and administrative departments through technology improvements and facilities-related projects while participating in professional development and statewide collaboration through Merit, MASU, and artificial intelligence training opportunities.

2. **Information Technology Security**

   Cybersecurity operations remained stable while Information Technology continued strengthening proactive monitoring, vulnerability management, and security integration.

   - **Security Monitoring & Response:** In partnership with the Merit Security Operations Center, IT continued 24/7 monitoring of the university's technology environment. During June, Merit analyzed more than 14 terabytes of LSSU network traffic and over 8,000 security events, with no critical alerts or new incidents requiring escalation.
   - **Proactive Threat Monitoring:** Merit continued proactive threat hunting and intelligence activities focused on emerging cybersecurity risks. Thirty distributed denial-of-service (DDoS) attacks were mitigated across participating organizations during June, with none directed at LSSU.
   - **Security Enhancements:** IT remediated vulnerabilities within Banner Self-Service, renewed digital security certificates, and implemented the Fortinet Security Fabric to improve communication between security platforms and strengthen threat identification and response capabilities.

3. **Website Improvements**

Website improvements focused on major platform modernization, accessibility, content quality, and enhancing the university's digital experience.

- **Platform Modernization:** IT successfully deployed WordPress Version 7, representing the most significant modernization of the university's website platform in more than a decade. The upgrade introduces enhanced security, expanded accessibility features, AI-assisted tools, improved collaboration capabilities, and a modernized content management experience.
- **Accessibility & Content Improvements:** Accessibility enhancements and content updates continued across multiple departments. Work also began on a comprehensive redesign of the Advancement website and evaluation of future website hosting options.
- **User Experience:** Development continues on Light/Dark Mode functionality, along with ongoing efforts to improve website usability, performance, and long-term sustainability.
- **Website Usage:** While active users decreased by 21.5%, consistent with the conclusion of the academic year, the average time spent on the website increased by 49.3%. Visitors accessed the website from 165 countries, with the Homepage, Directory, Search, Library, and Commencement pages receiving the highest number of views.

These improvements reinforce Information Technology's role in providing secure, reliable, and sustainable technology services that support the university's academic mission, administrative operations, recruitment efforts, and strategic priorities.

Athletics Report Executive Summary

This report provides an update on key Athletics Department highlights from May through June 2026, with emphasis on academic achievement, digital engagement, community service, revenue generation, and facility utilization. The report reflects the department's continued commitment to advancing student-athlete success while strengthening the University's visibility, financial sustainability, and community partnerships.

1**. Department News:**
LSSU Athletics continued its tradition of academic excellence with 83 student-athletes earning GLIAC All-Academic or All-Academic Excellence recognition during the 2025-26 academic year. These honors reflect the department's commitment to academic achievement and the holistic development of its student-athletes.

2**. Social Media Impressions for Laker Athletics:**
LSSU Athletics generated more than 1.25 million social media impressions during the reporting period, representing a 134 percent increase over the previous year. Strategic storytelling surrounding Laker Hockey, Taffy Abel Arena renovations, the "Raising State" documentary, and Commencement significantly expanded the visibility of both Athletics and the University.

3**. Spring Semester 2026 Academic Performance:**
Student-athletes continued to excel in the classroom, posting an overall spring semester GPA of 3.275 and a cumulative department GPA of 3.329, both improving over the previous academic year. Multiple programs recorded significant year-over-year gains, reinforcing the department's commitment to academic success and student development.

4. **Community Engagement and Community Service for Laker Athletics:**
LSSU Athletics completed more than 3,550 hours of community service during the past year, representing a 100 percent increase from the previous academic year. Student-athletes, coaches, and staff continued to strengthen the University's connection to the region through meaningful service, outreach, and community partnerships.

5. **Athletics Corporate Partnership Revenue:**
The Athletics Department achieved record corporate partnership revenue of $264,955 during its first nine months working with Taymar Sales U. Early commitments for Fiscal Year 2026-27 demonstrate continued momentum in expanding external partnerships and strengthening the department's long-term financial sustainability.

6. **Norris Center Utilization and Community Impact:**
The Norris Center remained an important campus and regional asset, hosting University activities, youth camps, community organizations, and recreational programming while generating nearly $37,000 in revenue during the reporting period. Continued facility utilization reflects the department's commitment to serving both the University and the greater community.

Advancement Report Executive Summary

1. **Fundraising:** For FY25-26: $14,604,753

   LSSU's best fundraising year at 464% over the five-year fundraising average.

   FY26 Gift breakdown:

Cash + pledges	$ 9,654,735
Estate	$ 4,950,000
TOTAL	$14,604,735

2. **Major Gifts, Planned Gifts, and Grants:**
   a. Two major gifts were received since May, one from the Sault Visitors Bureau for $10,000 in support of the campus and community fund.
   b. Two grant proposals were submitted in Q4 totaling nearly $300,000.

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 $1.35M 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. 2nd Annual Laker Women's Basketball Golf Outing, Saturday, Sept 26
      iv. GLSW, Oct 23 & 24

4. **Legislative Affairs update:**
   Budget Timing: A budget was reached early in the morning of Friday, July 3, 2026.

LSSU received a $30M (75%) capital outlay for a $40M CASET renovation/expansion.

LSSU is obligated to raise a minimum $10M (25%) to meet the state required match.

<u>Other key LSSU budget issues</u>:

No change	Charter School 3% funding reporting requirements
+1.6%	General Fund
$0	ITEMS (Infrastructure, Technology, Equipment, Maintenance, Safety)
Funded	ITW (Indian Tuition Waiver)
Increased	Prison program funding ($850,000 to $1.95M state wide)
4% / $651	Tuition increase – whichever is greater
No change	Tuition Incentive Program (TIP)