



Building Opportunity. Strengthening Community. Securing the Future.

October 09, 2026

Agenda Item #1: University Strategic Plan, 2027-2031

☐ Information

☒ Action

☐ Discussion

Purpose:

The purpose of this agenda item is to seek Board of Trustees approval of Lake Superior State University's 2027-2031 Strategic Plan. In August of 2025, President Travis initiated the process of developing Lake Superior State University's next Strategic Plan. Although the current plan was scheduled to expire at the end of 2025, it was determined that a full year would be needed to develop the next plan through a comprehensive and inclusive process. Thus, the current plan was extended one more year. The initial conversations began with an open discussion at the campus Professional Development Day meeting (August 19) centered around key questions such as "What do you want this university to look like five years from now?", "What is the best way to achieve that vision?" and "What are the key obstacles in making that happen?" A campus-wide survey was then sent out with similar questions during the fall of 2025 to gauge broader input on key directions for the new plan. The results of this survey were shared in January 2026 at the winter Professional Development Day gathering. This process helped establish key parameters for the new Strategic Plan, including the 2027-2031 planning period.

Throughout the 2025-26 Academic Year, extensive input was collected from campus stakeholders on the direction, goals, and strategies of the next Strategic Plan. These efforts included over 40 meetings with campus constituents in small groups (e.g., schools, departments, and divisions); breakfasts or lunches hosted by the President in small groups with approximately 60% of campus; multiple Town Hall and 'Pizza with the President' discussions; and updates at Board of Trustees meetings. During the summer of 2026, the President's Cabinet also had a dedicated retreat focused on reviewing campus-level input to identify priorities, strategies, and targets for the new plan. The first draft plan was then presented to campus at the Fall Kick-off meeting on August 16, 2026.

Strategic Plan development was overseen by a shared governance committee representing faculty, staff, and students:

Riley Adams (Student)
Kathy Bechem (AP) (Co-Chair)
Addy Chwalek (Student)
Jason Garvon (Faculty)
Marcus Izzard (ESP)

Becca Kilponen (ESP)
Lauren Pierce (AP)
Russ Searight (Faculty)
Mellisa Schaffer-O'Connell (Faculty)
Jason Swedene (Faculty) (Co-Chair)

The Strategic Plan Development Committee subsequently met three times to review the draft Strategic Plan and provide input on changes while providing opportunities for others to share input from within their respective constituencies. The committee also assisted in the development of a campus-wide survey to provide feedback on the draft document. A total of 44 responses were received.

Final changes to the document were made in mid-September with the final draft presented for discussion at a campus Town Hall on September 25, 2026.

Background:

The proposed Strategic Plan focuses on three areas: Student Success and the Lake State Experience; Fiscal Resilience and Organizational Stewardship; and Infrastructure, Innovation, and Community Impact. For this reason, the tagline for the Plan is **Building Opportunity. Strengthening Community. Securing the Future.** This also demonstrates that the priorities in this plan are mutually reinforcing. Student success and a distinctive Lake State experience support enrollment, retention, and completion. Sustainable enrollment and diversified revenue strengthen the University's fiscal resilience and capacity to invest in people, academic programs, technology, facilities, and partnerships. Those investments, in turn, strengthen the student experience, LSSU's competitive position, and its ability to serve the region for generations to come.

The proposed Strategic Plan is designed to be **dynamic and responsive**, allowing implementation strategies to evolve over the five-year period as goals are achieved, new challenges emerge, and institutional conditions change. Progress on the plan will be tracked by the **Strategic Plan Progress Committee (SPPC)**. The SPPC will be a shared governance group with similar representation to the committee that originally developed the plan. They will meet multiple times per year to review progress, assist in dissemination of updates, and advise the President on where additional resources are needed to help achieve strategic goals.

Each strategic objective will be supported by a published **annual implementation plan** identifying responsible leadership areas, priority actions, annual milestones, resource requirements, and measures of progress. The **implementation plans** and **strategic dashboard** will be **reviewed annually**, reported to the campus and Board of Trustees, and adjusted as conditions, data, and institutional needs evolve. The President's Cabinet and SPPC will jointly oversee this effort.

Although the new plan will not take effect until January 2027, additional time has been built into the process to allow for confirmation of baseline numbers, clarification of strategies and tactics, and determination of responsibility in each area.

Additionally, implementation of a new Strategic Plan provides an appropriate opportunity to review the University's Mission, Vision, and Core Values for continued alignment. These will be reviewed prior to implementation of the new Plan and, if revisions are recommended, brought before the Board of Trustees at an upcoming meeting for consideration and approval.

Suggested Action/Motion and President's Recommendation:

Approve the 2027-2031 University Strategic Plan, as presented.



Strategic Plan 2027–2031

**Building Opportunity. Strengthening Community.
Securing the Future.**

Strategic Framework:

The three priorities in this plan are mutually reinforcing. Student success and a distinctive Lake State experience support enrollment, retention, and completion. Sustainable enrollment and diversified revenue strengthen the University's fiscal resilience and capacity to invest in people, academic programs, technology, facilities, and partnerships. Those investments, in turn, strengthen the student experience, LSSU's competitive position, and its ability to serve the region for generations to come.

Implementation and Accountability

- Baseline values are included where needed to measure progress toward established targets and will be validated prior to implementation. Additional baselines will be established as needed, with measures and targets applied consistently throughout the life of the plan.
- Each strategic objective will be supported by a published annual implementation plan identifying responsible leadership areas, priority actions, annual milestones, resource requirements, and measures of progress.
- The implementation plans and strategic dashboard will be reviewed annually, reported to the campus and Board of Trustees, and adjusted as conditions, data, and institutional needs evolve.

PRIORITY ONE

Student Success and the Lake State Experience: Create an exceptional and distinctive student experience that attracts, supports, and graduates students prepared for successful careers, meaningful lives, and lifelong learning.

Objective 1.1: Strengthen Enrollment and Recruitment. Achieve sustainable enrollment growth by attracting a broad range of students, strengthening recruitment pathways, and expanding LSSU's reach in priority markets.

Table 1.1

Outcome/Measure	2026 Baseline	Target (Goal/Aspirational Goal)
Increase total student enrollment (Headcount/FTE):	1300 Headcount 1100 FTE	2000/2400 Headcount 1800/2000 FTE
Increase annual new transfer student	87	100/200 new transfer students annually
Increase annual First Time in Any College (FTIAC) enrollment	209	350/500 new FTIAC students annually
Increase annual student credit hours generated	16,000 (est)	Increase to 25,000/30,000 per semester
Improve conversion of admitted students to enrolled students	15%	Increase to 20%/25% annually

Strategies

- 1.1.1 Expand and differentiate recruitment efforts across Michigan, Ontario, and targeted national markets based on enrollment potential and student demand.
- 1.1.2 Strengthen recruitment pipelines with high schools, homeschool networks, career and technical education programs, community organizations, alumni, and other educational partners.
- 1.1.3 Expand transfer pathways and partnerships with community colleges and other institutions to create seamless routes to degree completion.
- 1.1.4 Strengthen institutional branding, digital marketing, and communications to define and consistently communicate LSSU's distinctive value proposition and authentic student experience and increase awareness among prospective students and families.
- 1.1.5 Use enrollment, market, and student behavior data to target recruitment efforts, evaluate effectiveness, and adjust strategies.
- 1.1.6 Strengthen coordination among Enrollment Management, academic programs, Athletics, and other campus areas to support institution-wide recruitment.
- 1.1.7 Engage alumni, current students, faculty, staff, and community partners as ambassadors in recruitment and enrollment efforts.
- 1.1.8 Strengthen coordinated enrollment support and pre-enrollment advising to simplify processes, reduce administrative barriers, and guide prospective and incoming students from application through enrollment.

Objective 1.2: Improve Student Retention and Completion. Improve student persistence, academic progress, and degree completion by creating an environment that supports students throughout their educational journey.

Table 1.2

Outcome/Measure	2026 Baseline	Target (Goal/Aspirational Goal)
Increase six-year bachelor's degree graduation rate	46%	55% for 2 or more consecutive years 60% for 2 or more consecutive years
Increase first to second-year retention rate	66%	75% for 2 or more consecutive years 80% for 2 or more consecutive years
Increase second-to-third-year persistence rate	83%	85% for 2 or more consecutive years 90% for 2 or more consecutive years

Strategies

- 1.2.1 Strengthen advising, mentoring, and student support services to promote academic progress, persistence, and timely degree completion.
- 1.2.2 Strengthen academic readiness, gateway-course support, tutoring, co-requisite learning, and other evidence-based approaches that help students successfully transition to and progress through college-level work.
- 1.2.3 Develop a holistic and proactive student success enterprise that identifies and supports students at risk of stopping out or falling behind academically.
- 1.2.4 Expand opportunities for meaningful student engagement, connection, and belonging that contribute to persistence and student success.

- 1.2.5 Identify and improve academic, financial, administrative, course-scheduling, and other institutional policies and processes that create barriers to student progression and timely degree completion.
- 1.2.6 Use persistence (term to term), retention, and completion data to identify achievement gaps, evaluate interventions, and continuously improve student success strategies.

Objective 1.3: Strengthen Academic Programs and Expand Flexible Learning Opportunities.

Strengthen and expand high-quality, distinctive academic programs and flexible learning opportunities that respond to student demand, regional, statewide, national, and emerging workforce needs, and market opportunities while supporting enrollment growth and student success.

Table 1.3

Outcome/Measure	Milestones/Target
Strategically invest in academic programs, particularly those with the greatest growth potential.	Year 1: Complete and begin implementation of the comprehensive, data-informed Academic Plan. Years 2–5: Use priorities identified in the Academic Plan, along with recent performance metrics, to strategically invest in current and new programs.
Increase the number of academic programs available completely through online delivery.	Year 1-2: Establish sufficient online offerings in general education to support development of fully online programs for current online degree completion programs. Years 3-5: Grow the number of fully online programs.
Increase faculty preparation for high-quality online instruction.	Year 1: Establish expectations and identify appropriate preparation standards. Years 2–3: Expand development opportunities and establish baseline participation. By 2031: Faculty teaching online courses demonstrate preparation appropriate to high-quality instruction through training, experience, credentials, or equivalent competency.
Increase headcount enrollment in new and existing online programs.	Annually increase enrollment by 20%.

Strategies

- 1.3.1 Develop and implement a comprehensive, data-informed Academic Plan that establishes priorities for academic program development, investment, restructuring, and evaluation based on student demand, enrollment potential, regional, statewide, national, and emerging workforce needs as appropriate to the program, academic quality, mission alignment, and financial sustainability.
- 1.3.2 Evaluate and strengthen existing academic programs based on enrollment trends, student outcomes, relevant regional, statewide, national, and emerging workforce demand, program quality, and financial sustainability.
- 1.3.3 Develop and expand academic programs and credentials that respond to student demand, relevant regional, statewide, national, and emerging workforce needs, emerging opportunities, and LSSU's institutional strengths.

- 1.3.4 Expand high-quality online, hybrid, summer, accelerated, and other flexible learning opportunities for traditional, adult, working, and geographically remote learners where student demand, academic quality, market opportunity, and financial sustainability support expansion, while preserving LSSU's distinctive strengths in hands-on learning and personal engagement.
- 1.3.5 Strengthen academic support, instructional design, faculty preparation, instructional technology, and other resources necessary to deliver consistently high-quality learning across modalities.

Objective 1.4: Foster a Culture of Belonging and Engagement. Foster an inclusive and engaging campus experience where students develop meaningful connections, participate in campus life, and feel a strong sense of belonging and pride in the Laker community.

Table 1.4

Outcome/Measure	Milestones/Target
Improve student satisfaction and sense of belonging: Student Success/Satisfaction Survey	Year 1: Implement survey and establish baseline; Year 2: establish benchmark; Years 3–5: demonstrate sustained improvement
Increase student participation in co-curricular activities.	Year 1: Implement consistent participation tracking and establish baseline. Year 2: Establish participation and engagement targets. Years 3–5: Demonstrate sustained improvement.
Increase faculty, staff, and student participation in learning and development opportunities that strengthen respectful engagement, belonging, and campus connection	Year 1: Implement learning opportunities with consistent participation tracking and establish baseline. Year 2: Establish participation and engagement targets. Years 3–5: Demonstrate sustained improvement.

Strategies

- 1.4.1 Create meaningful and varied opportunities for students to connect with student life, peers, faculty, staff, and the broader community.
- 1.4.2 Establish a coordinated student engagement assessment process that tracks participation, identifies student interests, evaluates the relationship between engagement, belonging, and student success, and uses findings to improve programs and opportunities.
- 1.4.3 Strengthen opportunities and support that foster belonging and engagement, particularly for student populations experiencing barriers to participation or connection.
- 1.4.4 Provide ongoing, role-appropriate learning opportunities that help faculty, staff, and students foster respectful engagement, meaningful connection, and a welcoming campus environment.
- 1.4.5 Strengthen campus traditions, shared experiences, and programs that build connection and pride in being a Laker.
- 1.4.6 Use student feedback and engagement data to identify gaps in participation and develop opportunities responsive to student interests and needs.

PRIORITY TWO

Fiscal Resilience and Organizational Stewardship: Ensure the long-term financial sustainability and operational excellence necessary to support the University's mission for generations to come through responsible stewardship of institutional and student resources.

Objective 2.1: Strengthen Financial Sustainability. Align academic and administrative resources with enrollment, institutional priorities, program performance, and financial sustainability.

Table 2.1

Outcome/Measure	Milestones/Target
Achieve a balanced operating budget	Demonstrate significant progress by FY2029; achieve a balanced operating budget by FY2030
Increase annual restricted philanthropic support	\$10 million annually for at least 2 consecutive years
Increase annual unrestricted philanthropic support	\$100,000 annually for at least 2 consecutive years
Increase annual grant and contract revenue	\$4 million annually for at least 2 consecutive years
Reduce reliance on institutional tuition discounting while maintaining student affordability	<15% discount rate excluding athletic aid (Establish target following baseline and tuition-discount analysis).
Increase revenue from alternative/non-tuition sources	\$300K annual year over year increase in net revenue

Strategies

- 2.1.1 Align institutional resources and major commitments with enrollment, financial capacity, student needs, and strategic priorities.
- 2.1.2 Implement a multi-year financial plan that establishes annual milestones toward achieving and sustaining a balanced operating budget and communicate progress on those milestones to University stakeholders.
- 2.1.3 Diversify and grow revenue by strengthening philanthropic and grant support, expanding educational and partnership opportunities, and developing other sustainable sources of non-tuition revenue.
- 2.1.4 Use financial, enrollment, program performance, and other institutional data to inform resource allocation and investment decisions.
- 2.1.5 Optimize tuition pricing, fees, financial aid, and discounting strategies to maintain affordability and competitiveness, support enrollment and completion, and maximize use of donor dollars.

Objective 2.2: Improve Accountability and Transparency. Strengthen institutional accountability and transparency through clear expectations, measurable performance, accessible information, and consistent communication about progress and decision-making.

Table 2.2

Outcome/Measure	Milestones/Target
Increase alignment of institutional resources with strategic priorities.	90% of major budget/resource requests explicitly linked to strategic plan priorities
Increase accountability for progress on institutional priorities	80% of strategic plan outcomes with established measures, responsible areas, and annual progress reporting
Increase transparency and accessibility of institutional performance information.	Regular publication of strategic plan dashboard or annual progress report
Improve campus understanding of institutional priorities and decision-making.	Employee survey results related to understanding institutional priorities and decisions

Strategies

- 2.2.1 Align annual budgeting, resource allocation, and planning processes with strategic priorities and measurable outcomes
- 2.2.2 Establish a transparent annual process for requesting, evaluating, and allocating resources for strategic plan implementation.
- 2.2.3 Develop a new Strategic Plan Progress Committee (SPPC), comprised of faculty, staff, and students that meets each semester to review progress and consider ways to support the goals of the Plan.
- 2.2.4 Establish clear performance measures, responsible areas, annual milestones, and resource requirements for strategic plan outcomes, with progress updates provided to the Board of Trustees at least three times annually, including an annual assessment each December followed by Board review and a campus update during the Spring Semester.
- 2.2.5 Develop an accessible institutional dashboard and annual progress report to communicate performance on key strategic measures.
- 2.2.6 Create regular opportunities for campus and community stakeholders to receive information, provide input, and understand progress on institutional priorities.

Objective 2.3 Build Organizational Capacity. Build and sustain a skilled, engaged, and adaptable workforce with the knowledge, resources, and capacity needed to advance institutional priorities and respond to evolving needs.

Table 2.3

Outcome/Measure	Milestones/Target
Improve employee engagement and workplace experience.	Increase the percentage of employees who respond favorably on the engagement items of the annual employee survey by 3% per year.
Strengthen employee retention and organizational continuity.	Reduce the annual voluntary employee turnover rate by 10% from the 2026 rate by 2028 and sustain that reduction through 2031.
Increase participation in professional and leadership development.	Increase annual employee participation in professional and leadership development by 20%.

Strategies

- 2.3.1 Strengthen employee onboarding to ensure employees understand their roles, institutional processes, resources, and university priorities.
- 2.3.2 Develop succession planning and knowledge-transfer practices for critical positions and institutional functions.
- 2.3.3 Increase cross-training and process documentation to strengthen operational continuity.
- 2.3.4 Expand professional, supervisory, management, and leadership development opportunities aligned with institutional and workforce needs.
- 2.3.5 Use employee feedback to identify and address opportunities to improve workplace culture, communication, recognition, cohesion, and engagement.
- 2.3.6 Regularly assess employment practices and the employee experience to strengthen LSSU's ability to recruit, support, and retain a skilled and engaged workforce.
- 2.3.7 Regularly assess workforce capacity to support employee well-being and ensure alignment with institutional needs and strategic priorities.

Objective 2.4 Enhance Operational Efficiency. Improve institutional effectiveness by simplifying processes, leveraging technology, reducing administrative burden, and fostering a culture of continuous improvement.

Table 2.4

Outcome/Measure	Milestones/Target
Improve efficiency of high-impact institutional processes	Year 1: Identify and prioritize high-impact processes and begin improvement of selected processes. Years 2–5: Demonstrate measurable improvements in efficiency, timeliness, administrative burden, or user experience for prioritized processes.
Reduce unnecessary administrative steps and duplication in institutional processes	Year 1: Identify unnecessary duplication and administrative barriers and begin eliminating high-priority inefficiencies. Years 2–5: Demonstrate measurable reduction in identified inefficiencies.
Increase effective use and integration of institutional technology systems	Year 1: Establish system/integration baseline, identify redundant platforms or licensing, and begin addressing high-priority opportunities. Years 2–5: Demonstrate sustained improvement in integration, utilization, cost effectiveness, and user experience.
Improve student and employee experience with institutional processes and services.	Year 1: Establish baseline measures and begin addressing high-priority service and process issues. Years 2–5: Demonstrate sustained improvement.

Strategies

- 2.4.1 Review and redesign high-impact institutional processes to simplify workflows, reduce duplication, improve timeliness, and decrease administrative burden.
- 2.4.2 Optimize, integrate, and rationalize technology platforms to reduce unnecessary duplication, improve functionality and data sharing, enhance user experience, and increase operational efficiency.
- 2.4.3 Establish continuous improvement practices that use data, assessment, and stakeholder feedback to identify, implement, and evaluate operational improvements.
- 2.4.4 Prioritize operational improvement efforts based on institutional impact, resource requirements, and the experiences of students and employees.

PRIORITY THREE

Infrastructure, Innovation, and Community Impact: Invest strategically in facilities, technology, partnerships, and innovation to strengthen LSSU's role as a regional leader.

Objective 3.1: Modernize Campus Infrastructure. Maintain and strategically modernize campus facilities to provide safe, accessible, attractive, and effective environments that support learning, working, and campus life.

Table 3.1

Outcome/Measure	Milestones/Target
Develop and implement a comprehensive Campus Master Plan.	Years 1–2: Complete and adopt Campus Master Plan. Years 2–5: Demonstrate annual progress on identified priorities.
Reduce deferred maintenance and address critical infrastructure needs.	Establish prioritized facilities renewal plan and demonstrate 10% reduction in high-priority deferred maintenance annually by 2031.
Improve campus accessibility, safety, functionality, and appearance.	Demonstrate sustained improvement through facilities assessments and campus satisfaction measures.
Improve utilization of campus facilities and space.	Demonstrate improved alignment of space allocation and utilization with enrollment, academic, and operational needs.

Strategies

- 3.1.1 Develop and implement a comprehensive Campus Master Plan, informed by facilities data and stakeholder input, that aligns the campus environment and future investments with institutional needs and strategic priorities.
- 3.1.2 Establish and implement a prioritized, multi-year approach to deferred maintenance, facility renewal, and critical infrastructure needs.
- 3.1.3 Improve campus facilities and grounds to provide safe, accessible, functional, and welcoming environments for the University community.
- 3.1.4 Use facilities, enrollment, and program data to guide campus planning and investment decisions.
- 3.1.5 Use transparent criteria to prioritize infrastructure investments based on institutional needs, impact, and long-term sustainability.

Objective 3.2: Advance Technology and Digital Transformation. Build a secure, reliable, and modern technology environment that supports high-quality teaching and learning, effective operations, and the evolving needs of the University.

Table 3.2

Outcome/Measure	Milestones/Target
Increase learning spaces that meet established instructional technology standards.	Year 1: Establish standards and baseline and begin modernization of high-priority learning spaces. Years 2–5: Progressively modernize identified spaces; by 2031, >85% of designated learning spaces meet standards.
Strengthen institutional cybersecurity and data protection.	Year 1: Identify and prioritize cybersecurity improvements based on the established maturity baseline. Years 2–5: Demonstrate annual progress on identified priorities and maintain compliance with applicable cybersecurity standards and requirements.
Modernize and sustainably maintain institutional technology infrastructure and instructional technology.	Year 1: Evaluate technology lifecycle and replacement needs and identify funding strategies. Years 2–5: Demonstrate annual progress on identified modernization priorities. By 2031: 100% of designated critical technology infrastructure and instructional technology are included in a lifecycle/replacement plan with identified funding strategies.
Increase effective utilization of current institutional technology systems and modernized learning environments.	Year 1: Establish baseline measures of user training, utilization, and experience for priority technology systems and learning environments. Years 2–5: Provide targeted training and support as technologies are implemented or modernized and demonstrate improvement in utilization and experience. By 2031: Meet established institutional benchmarks for effective utilization of priority technologies.

Strategies

- 3.2.1 Establish and implement consistent instructional technology standards across designated learning environments.
- 3.2.2 Strengthen cybersecurity, data protection, network infrastructure, and technology resilience to protect institutional information and ensure continuity of operations.
- 3.2.3 Maintain and strengthen sustainable lifecycle planning for technology infrastructure, instructional technology, equipment, and systems.
- 3.2.4 Prioritize technology investments based on institutional needs, strategic priorities, effectiveness, existing institutional capabilities, total cost, and their potential to enhance teaching, learning, research, student services, and operations.
- 3.2.5 Provide effective training, communication, and ongoing support to promote successful utilization of institutional technology systems and modernized learning environments.

Objective 3.3: Advance Innovation and Emerging Technologies. Build institutional capacity to identify, evaluate, and responsibly adopt emerging technologies that enhance teaching and learning, prepare students for an evolving workforce, support research and innovation, and improve institutional effectiveness.

Table 3.3

Outcome/Measure	Milestones/Target
Strengthen institutional capacity to evaluate and respond to emerging technologies.	Year 1: Establish an emerging technology review process and begin evaluation of high-priority opportunities. Years 2–5: Periodically reassess emerging technologies and respond to identified priorities, opportunities, costs, and risks.
Increase integration of relevant emerging technologies into academic programs and learning experiences.	Years 1–2: Establish baseline and priority opportunities. By 2031: Demonstrate increased integration across academic programs and experiences.
Increase opportunities for faculty, staff, and students to develop knowledge and skills related to emerging technologies.	Years 1–2: Establish development opportunities. By 2031: Demonstrate sustained participation and application.
Increase responsible adoption of emerging technologies that could enhance learning, research, the student experience, and institutional effectiveness.	Years 1–2: Identify and pilot potential high-value applications. By 2031: Scale successful applications and document impact.

Strategies

- 3.3.1 Establish a coordinated process for evaluating and prioritizing emerging technologies based on institutional needs, opportunities, and strategic priorities.
- 3.3.2 Pilot, assess, and scale emerging technologies that demonstrate potential to improve teaching and learning, research, the student experience, or institutional effectiveness.
- 3.3.3 Support the integration of relevant emerging technologies into curriculum, teaching, research, experiential learning, and workforce preparation.
- 3.3.4 Provide professional development, training, and learning opportunities that prepare faculty, staff, and students to effectively use emerging technologies.
- 3.3.5 Develop and maintain appropriate policies and guidance for the responsible, ethical, secure, and transparent use of emerging technologies, including artificial intelligence.
- 3.3.6 Strengthen partnerships with industry, employers, and other organizations to identify emerging technology trends and evolving workforce skill needs.
- 3.3.7 Support faculty, staff, and student innovation, applied research, technology development, intellectual property creation, and appropriate pathways for commercialization and external partnership.

Objective 3.4: Strengthen Community and Regional Partnerships. Strengthen mutually beneficial partnerships that expand educational and workforce opportunities, address regional needs, and enhance LSSU's contribution to the economic, social, and cultural vitality of the region.

Table 3.4

Outcome/Measure	Milestones/Target
Increase active, mutually beneficial partnerships aligned with institutional and regional priorities.	Year 1: Establish partnership inventory and criteria for active partnerships and identify priority opportunities for expansion. By 2031: Demonstrate sustained growth and impact of priority partnerships.
Increase workforce development and continuing education opportunities.	By 2031: Demonstrate sustained growth in offerings, participation, and revenue.
Increase student opportunities created through community and regional partnerships.	By 2031: Demonstrate increased participation in partnership-supported experiential learning opportunities.
Maintain or increase LSSU's economic return on investment to the region.	By 2031: Complete an updated Economic Impact Analysis and maintain or exceed the 10:1 economic ROI.
Sustain LSSU's contribution to Michigan's workforce through graduate retention in the state.	Maintain >70% of graduates residing and/or employed in Michigan.

Strategies

- 3.4.1 Strengthen mutually beneficial partnerships with Indigenous communities, alumni, educational institutions, employers, industry, governmental organizations, and community organizations.
- 3.4.2 Expand workforce development, continuing education, and professional learning opportunities in response to regional, employer, and community needs.
- 3.4.3 Leverage partnerships to expand internships, clinical experiences, research, service learning, and other experiential learning opportunities for students.
- 3.4.4 Strengthen connections among students, alumni, employers, and regional organizations to support career pathways, mentorship, experiential learning, and graduate success, including opportunities to retain graduates in Michigan.
- 3.4.5 Leverage LSSU's academic expertise, research, facilities, and other institutional assets to advance regional economic and community development.
- 3.4.6 Regularly assess partnership activities and regional impact to guide priorities, strengthen collaboration, and demonstrate LSSU's contribution to the region.