



Executive Summary

October 9, 2026

Finance, Operations & Human Resources Report Executive Summary

1. Fiscal Year 2027 Budget (Approval)

Agenda Item #1 is the presentation of the fiscal year budget for approval.

The budget as presented represent

1. A student enrollment loss of 220 student headcount (12.21%) and a Semester Credit Hour decline of 1900 hours (11.10%) from Fall 2025.
2. Contractual obligations with our CBA units and other contracted employees represent an 8.9% increase in salary and fringe benefit expenses.

The FY27 All Funds (AF) budget results in a All-Funds deficit of \$4.396M.

2. Endowment Spending Plan Amendment (Approval)

The purpose of this item is to provide authorization for the CFO to draw and apply endowment proceeds/income above the currently approved spending plan draw for the purpose of funding the recurring Board of Trustees Scholarship during its sunset period. This authorization will also sunset upon the final cohort awards, currently expected to be in FY 2029.

3. FY27 - Institutional Cash and Investments (Informational)

The cash balance (\$8.19M) has remained relatively stable from over the first 2 months of the fiscal year. A decrease in available cash by about \$700,000 since the start of the fiscal year is related to timing of state appropriations disbursement and some deferred maintenance project payments. This trend is also typical for this time of the year.

4. Human Resources Update – Title IX (Informational)

Per the State of Michigan requirements, this report covers all reports made to the Title IX Office.

Since the last board report, the Title IX Office has received NO report of alleged prohibited conduct.

Academic Affairs Report Executive Summary

1. **Conferral of Summer 2026 Candidates for Degrees (Consent Agenda Item):** Candidates earning a total of 89 degrees or certificates, spread across 53 individuals, are submitted for approval.

2. Academic Affairs Update:

- a. **Preliminary Input Sought:** The School of Natural Resources and the School of Engineering and Technology are exploring the development of reduced-credit bachelor's degree programs as part of ongoing efforts to enhance program flexibility and student completion.
- b. Higher Learning Commission Comprehensive Evaluation assurance argument was submitted on August 31, 2026 and the peer reviewers conducted the on campus visit on September 28-29, 2026.
- c. An Academic Affairs Council was established this fall to strengthen communication, collaboration, and shared governance across Academic Affairs including Deans, Chairs, Directors, Academic Support Leaders, the Registrar, Assessment and Accreditation Leadership, Instructional Technology, and other key partners.
- d. Through the MiLEAP (Michigan Department of Lifelong Education, Advancement, and Potential) initiative, LSSU is participating in a grant sequence aimed at increasing Michigan adults with post-secondary credentials to 60% by 2030. An update on progress is provided.
- e. The [annual graduate survey report](#) was completed and posted on LSSU's Transparency website. The report covers graduate outcomes across Fall 2024 through Summer 2025 cohorts, capturing data on 494 credentials awarded to 323 unique individuals.
- f. In August, LSSU welcomed Dr. Mistie Navarro to campus as our new Director of Sponsored Programs.
- g. Three grants have been awarded since the last meeting of the Board of Trustees totaling \$120,029. These grants will support the expansion of humanities opportunities for student participating in the prison education program, expansion of the existing prison education music club, and development and testing of a replicable archival literacy module embedded in LSSU's pre-service teacher education curriculum.

3. Charter Schools Executive Summary

- a. Dashboards are included for ongoing Charter School activities and highlights.
- b. **2025-2026 Charter Schools Annual Report (Information):** Key statistics related to LSSU Charter Schools.
- c. **Appointments (Consent Agenda Item):** Board member appointments or reappointments for the Board of Directors of the LSSU public school academies are proposed.
- d. **Dissolution Request for Concord Academy Boyne (Action Item):** Dissolution of the Charter Contract for Concord Academy Boyne for approval.
- e. **The College Preparatory School of Michigan Contract Authorization (Action Item):** Authorization of The College Preparatory School of Michigan charter contract effective July 1, 2027 thru June 30, 2032 for approval.
- f. **The College Preparatory School of Michigan Board Member Appointments (Action Item):** Board member appointments to The College Preparatory School of Michigan Board of Directors for approval.

- g. **WAY Academy Flint Site Relocation (Action Item):** Relocation of WAY Academy Flint from 817 East Kearsley, Flint, MI 48503 to 1050 W. Bristol Road, Flint, MI 48503 for approval.

Enrollment Management & Student Success Report Executive Summary

1. New Enrollment Updates

Fall 2026 new student enrollment reached 42% of the division's combined goal: 207 new FTIAC students (of a 500 goal) and 88 new transfer students (of a 200 goal), for 295 total new students against a 700-student goal. Total enrollment across all class levels declined 11.9% year-over-year, from 1,174 students in Fall 2025 to 1,052 in Fall 2026.

Heading into Fall 2027, Recruitment and Financial Aid have moved from operating in silos to an integrated model, with Associate Vice President Kristen Gast now owning the full hand-off from recruitment to aid to enrollment. The division's "2026-27 Playbook" rests on three pillars; Aid modernization, a CRM revamp with ICP-specific messaging, and stronger cross-department collaboration, supported by tactics including five territory-based recruiters from day one, merit scholarships integrated directly into acceptance letters, and purposeful recruiting events. Laker Landing community events are scheduled around away hockey games this season to build early familiarity with LSSU, as the division works toward its reaffirmed 2026-27 goal of 350 (stretch goal of 500) new FTIAC and 100 (stretch goal of 200) new transfer students.

2. Recruitment & Admissions Updates

The recruiting team is currently operating with four of five full-time territory positions filled, with an offer extended to fill the open Western Michigan recruiter position. Despite the vacancy, weekly event activity and student contact have climbed steadily, from 8 events the week of September 8 to 26 events the week of September 21, reaching roughly 275 prospective students and 10 or more counselors in that most recent week alone.

Dual and concurrent enrollment continues to build across LSSU's partner high schools, led by growth at Sault Area High School and continued progress at Brimley, with early conversations underway with WAY Academy about a new dual-enrollment partnership. Admissions continues CRM and process improvements alongside steady campus visit activity, and is preparing for CTE Day, Laker Preview Day, and other fall recruitment events.

3. Financial Aid Updates

Financial Aid is transitioning to 100% paperless, mobile-friendly forms, bringing the office into compliance with file storage requirements, with a new student forms process targeted to go live January 1. Setup for the 2027-28 Banner aid year is underway ahead of an October 17 system patch that will allow the office to begin packaging for the next cycle. The office also presented to all Head Coaches and spoke to USEM on financial aid literacy, and reports more students choosing to visit the office in person rather than calling.

4. Student Affairs Updates

On September 11, LSSU hosted its 25th Anniversary 9/11 Remembrance Ceremony, honoring the lives lost and recognizing the service of first responders. From August 1 through September 11, the four areas under Student Affairs held 19 student programs with a combined attendance of 1,200, including 861 attendees during Laker Week alone. Housing remains steady at approximately 405 students across eight residential areas, and the Conduct, CARES & Basic Needs caseload has grown from 12 to 16 total cases over the reporting period, reflecting active outreach and follow-up with students facing challenges.

5. Counseling Services Updates

Counseling Services delivered extensive summer outreach and prevention programming, reaching 118 campus stakeholders between July 1 and September 11. Clinical utilization has remained strong into the fall, with 24 students served the week of September 14 and 28 students served the week of September 21, including continued triage consultations and referrals from campus partners.

Information Technology Report Executive Summary

The October 2026 report highlights continued progress in technology service delivery, campus infrastructure, cybersecurity, and website modernization with an emphasis on customer service, security, operational efficiency, and responsible stewardship of university resources.

1. Information Technology Update

Information Technology continues to improve service delivery and campus technology operations.

- **Helpdesk Restructure & Customer Service:** IT restructured and existing IT Support Specialist position into a Helpdesk Coordinator role, placing a greater emphasis on customer service, communication, student worker development, and oversight of the frontline IT support. Heather London, who brings nearly 10 years of experience at LSSU in multiple academic roles was selected for the position.
- **Infrastructure & Classroom Technology:** IT completed several infrastructure improvements, including streamlining the computer imaging process, completing a previously unfinished network wiring in Osborn Hall, and maintaining wireless connectivity in Athletics areas during construction. Classroom AV equipment was also upgraded in several chemistry labs, with additional improvements and proactive maintenance being explored.
- **Technology Stewardship:** Faculty and staff responded to IT's request to remove Zoom cloud recordings that were no longer needed, significantly reducing storage usage and helping control increasing cloud storage costs.

2. Information Technology Security Update

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

- **Threat Activity & Phishing:** Over the past two months, university security systems blocked 1,298,055 connection attempts originating from Russia, Iran, Lithuania, and Albania. With assistance from the Merit Security Operations Center, IT identified and blocked 10 additional malicious IP addresses, preventing 208,727 connection attempts. The university has also experienced a noticeable increase in phishing attempts targeting faculty and staff.
- **VPN & Security Enhancements:** Following implementation of the new VPN environment, IT completed a comprehensive review of firewall rules to ensure remote users have access only to necessary systems and resources. IT also established protocols to securely restore VPN access for approved third-party vendors when required.

3. Website Improvements

Website improvements continue to focus on modernization, accessibility, performance, content quality, and responsible use of university resources.

- **Content & Storage Cleanup:** Working with campus content editors, IT reduced the number of files stored on the university website from approximately 16,500 pdfs to 12,440 pdfs, a reduction of nearly 25%, while removing outdated content and improving the content management.
- **Hosting Migration:** IT is preparing to migrate the university website from WP Engine to Pantheon. The transition is expected to significantly reduce annual hosting costs while improving website performance and providing a more sustainable hosting environment.
- **Accessibility & Engagement:** Content restructuring and accessibility work continue across the website. While active users decreased 29% during the summer period, average engagement increased 48%, and visitors accessed the website from 176 countries.

These efforts reinforce Information Technology's continued commitment to providing secure, reliable, accessible, and sustainable technology services that support the university's academic, administrative, recruitment, and strategic priorities.

Athletics Report Executive Summary

This report provides an update on key Athletics Department highlights since May 15, 2026, with emphasis on student achievement, digital engagement, enrollment impact, community engagement, revenue generation, and facility utilization. The report reflects the department's continued commitment to advancing student-athlete success while strengthening the University's enrollment, visibility, financial sustainability, and community partnerships.

1. Department News: LSSU student-athletes continued to achieve competitive success, including GLIAC recognition in volleyball, 11 new program records in women's swimming, multiple new records in men's swimming, and a program-best second-place finish by Noel Black in the women's 5K at the Northwood Invitational.

2. Social Media Impressions for Laker Athletics: LSSU Athletics generated more than 4.4 million social media impressions from May 15 through September 14, 2026, representing a 175.5 percent increase over the comparable 2025 period. Men's Ice Hockey generated 1.75 million impressions, while GLIAC team accounts generated 1.87 million and the main Athletics accounts generated 794,280, significantly expanding the University's visibility through the Athletics brand.

3. The Strategic Value of Athletics: Athletics recruited 93 new students for 2026-27, including 73 first-year and 20 transfer students, with 203 total student-athletes representing 19 percent of LSSU full-time enrollment. Athletics-generated enrollment represents an estimated \$1.62 million in net tuition and fee revenue, additionally with 117 student-athletes participating in University housing and dining. LSSU student-athletes posted a 74 percent graduation rate for the 2019 cohort compared with 46 percent for the broader LSSU student population, while 74 international student-athletes represent 79 percent of the University's total international student population.

4. Summer Athletic Youth Camps: LSSU Athletics hosted 345 participants through its 2026 Summer Athletic Youth Camps and generated \$68,795 in net revenue. The camps provide a recruitment pipeline, strengthen community engagement, bring prospective students and families to campus, and generate external revenue. Net revenue reflects registration revenue forgone through 77 complimentary registrations provided to Sault Tribe youth.

5. Norris Center Utilization and Community Impact: The Norris Center remained an important campus and regional asset, averaging 583 weekly Arbuckle Student Activities Center check-ins from July 1 through August 31, including students, general members, Tribal members, Coast

Guard members, and day-pass users. Recurring groups included EUP Community Pickleball, Special Olympics, Coast Guard, MCOLES, and other community organizations, while the facility generated \$9,253.83 in revenue during the reporting period.

Advancement Report Executive Summary

1. **Fundraising:** For Q1 FY26-27: \$824,475

FY26-27 Q1 Gift breakdown:

Cash + pledges	\$ 349,475
Estate	<u>\$ 475,000</u>
TOTAL	\$ 824,475

2. **Major Gifts, Planned Gifts, and Grants:**

- a. First quarter major gifts include:
 - i. Jeff Jackson \$45,702
 - ii. Darien and Ruth Neveu \$10,000
 - iii. Wildshore Foundation \$12,000
 - iv. Craig Miller \$100,000

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. Upcoming events
 - i. Oct 3, Alumni event prior to the LSSU vs Windsor hockey game
 - ii. GLSW, Oct 23 & 24

4. **Legislative Affairs update:**

- Legislators out for the summer to campaign.
- Possible lame duck initiatives being developed.