



Chancellor's Cabinet Meeting Minutes **June 17, 2025 2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.**

In Attendance: Chancellor Stefani Hicswa, Krista Montague, Paula Highlander, Kathleen Thatcher, Dan Carter, Leslie Weldon, Suzette Nynas, Mike Bazemore, Kathy Kotecki, Richard Beer, Natalie Preston

Absent: Kim Hayworth

Did You Know?

For grades received in MSUB courses during summer 2024, fall 2024, and spring 2025:

- Combined A, B, C, and P grades (successful course completion) make up 85%
- Combined D, F, W, and I grades (unsuccessful course completion) make up 15%
- Over half (54%) were A's
- Less than 1% were Incompletes

INFORMATION

Summer/Fall Enrollment

Chancellor Hicswa gave an update on enrollment. Summer enrollment is down slightly, and fall enrollment is up 4.6%, mostly due to new freshmen.

FY 26 Budget

Leslie Weldon, Vice Chancellor for Administration and Finance, gave an update on recent work that will benefit MSUB's budget for the upcoming fiscal year. Barb Burows, Director of Business Services, has posted updated tables on the website that show tuition and fee increases approved by the Board of Regents in May. Additionally, fiscal year end close is in process. Chancellor Hicswa added that collective bargaining agreements are currently being negotiated.

Summer Facilities Projects

Vice Chancellor Weldon reported on ongoing facilities projects. There are many dead and dying trees being removed throughout campus. The roof of the Physical Education building is being replaced. Any questions on these or other ongoing facilities projects can be directed to Leslie.

Federal Update

Dan Carter, Director of University Communications and Marketing, announced that the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education has developed a [new website](#) that contains analysis of federal issues and impacts on campuses. The reconciliation bill's proposed changes to Pell grant eligibility are expected to impact Montana students and are being closely monitored. Dan reported that TRIO programs may be impacted as well, but have many advocates. The Senate is currently discussing the reconciliation bill and their version is expected by the end of the week.

Evaluations

Chancellor Hicswa reminded Cabinet members to conduct staff evaluations and submit copies to the Human Resources office and remind their direct reports to do the same with their staff. Additionally, it is possible that personnel files will be audited for evaluations by the NWCCU review team during the Year 7 visit in October.

Cabinet Retreat July 28-29

Chancellor Hicswa announced that the next time Cabinet will meet is the Cabinet Retreat on July 28-29. The retreat will be at the Billings Public Library in the Royal Johnson Community Room. In preparation for the retreat, read *Everything is Figureoutable* by Marie Forleo. Further details will be forthcoming.

DISCUSSION

Shared Governance

The Cabinet subcommittee on Shared Governance, (Suzette Nynas, Kathy Kotecki, Kathleen Thatcher, and Dan Carter) presented the framework for shared governance at MSUB that they arrived at after the discussions at Cabinet and 'Jacket Leadership Team meetings throughout the academic year. They distributed an infographic card and will be creating an online repository for resources on the website, based on the example: <https://www.uwlax.edu/info/shared-governance/>. The subcommittee will report to 'Jacket Leadership Team at the August 12, 2025, meeting as a follow up on the discussions and team's work.

Operational Plan

Cabinet members reviewed and updated the Operational Plan.

UPDATES (Reprinted as Submitted)

Krista Montague, MSU Billings Foundation and Alumni CEO

Fundraising to date is \$5,665,935. Our team is actively preparing for both the upcoming fiscal year and the launch of the **Next is Now Campaign**—a five-year, \$27 million initiative. The campaign will allocate \$11 million toward the art building, \$13 million for scholarships, and \$3 million to support program impact beyond those areas. The Quiet Phase of the campaign will begin on July 1, 2025, and will continue until 70% of our fundraising goal has been achieved. This fall, the Foundation plans to meet with as many campus departments as possible. These meetings are intended to provide updates, educate faculty and staff about the Foundation's work, and address any questions they may have.

Dan Carter, Director of University Communications and Marketing

UCAM team helped support the annual Heart and Sole race as runners maneuvered through the parking garage. No injuries or calamities were reported.

Design work for three wayfinding signs is complete. Waiting for payment processing to be completed.

Work continues on cleaning up and archiving pages on the website. Pages with antiquated information or PDFs are being cleaned up or moved (like all COVID pages) to the intranet for

reference. In addition, two more in-person CMS trainings will be take place the last week in June for new users or those who missed the earlier sessions.

Patrick and Shiloh are working on updates to this year's Viewbook. Those should be done in a few weeks and ready for printing and distribution to out-of-state prospects this summer.

Shiloh is finishing edits for a series of YouTube videos called "Feel the Sting." Based on the popular "Hot Wing Challenge" where famous people eat spicy wings and answer questions, we do the same thing and have them talk about experiences at MSUB. They are a lot of fun!

Starting work now on Science Expo 2026 awareness. Plan to have table at Saturday Live in September.

Strategic Communications, Marketing and Branding guides being finalized. Will be presenting to JLT in August.

Kathleen Thatcher, Director of Assessment and Accreditation

The Year 7 NWCCU visit will take place October 8-10, 2025. Please mark this on your calendar. If you receive a request for information related to the Year 7 report or visit, please be timely with your response. The NWCCU provided the official feedback on the Year 6 PRFR report. The NWCCU issued no new findings and also marked our only outstanding recommendation as fulfilled. At this time, MSUB has no outstanding recommendations!

Mike Bazemore, Athletic Director

Scott Keister has agreed to become our new Head Volleyball Coach. He was previously the head coach at Northwest College.

The Athletics Golf Scramble will be on Friday, Aug. 1.

Tom Ebel resigned as the Head Athletic Trainer; Ortho MT is in the process of backfilling the position.

The GNAC is switching to a Pay Per View model where all conference members are required to participate.

Kim Hayworth, Vice Chancellor for Student Access and Success

Enrollment Update

June 6, 2025 enrollment report

Fall registration, excluding dual enrollment, compared to the same week in 2024

Overall headcount up +.6%

Undergraduate headcount up +1.2%

Graduate headcount down -6%

FTE is slightly up +.4 compared to same week in 2024

Admissions

Due to flooring/carpet installation – UC Staff located in McMullen garden level as well as CC Admissions Office

Fall 2025 New Student Registration Dates

(UC two sessions per date 8:30 am-11:45 am, 1 pm – 4:15 pm, CC see website for am/pm)

Four dates left! June 24th, July 9th, July 22nd, August 1

New Student Orientation is July 14-15th!

ASMSUB – relocated to former CFE Offices.

TRIO Update

As of June 11, 2025, Talent Search, Educational Opportunity Center, and both Student Support Services programs are funded through August 31, 2025. Upward Bound is funded through August 2026.

MSUB will need to explore contingency plans if any of these programs are not funded, as they play important roles in student support and enrollment.

Leslie Weldon, Vice Chancellor for Administration and Finance **Administration and Finance**

Food Service RFP awarded to Sodexo – working on contract language through MSU

Pour Rights and Vending RFP – Awarded to Coca Cola – working on contract language through MSU.

Legislative Update:

New Art Building approved for authority only (\$13,400,000 plus O&M \$257,680)

Cisel Hall HVAC and Piping System Replacement \$4,000,000

Project includes a new, energy-efficient HVAC system that provides a climate-controlled environment throughout the 40,000 sf building designed to protect musical instruments and provide a healthy environment for occupants. The aged plumbing will be removed and replaced with modern systems.

End of Year Funding from Risk Management and Tort Division

2026-14 Tree Removals \$29,000

2026-15 Concrete Walkways \$28,775.60

2026-16 HVAC System \$29,000

Enterprise Risk Management – OCHE End of year funding \$43,000

MSUB partnered with an architecture firm to assess campus infrastructure and advance nine priority projects aimed at reducing risk. The effort supports proactive improvements in safety, accessibility, and structural integrity, ensuring alignment with industry standards and regulatory requirements.

Business Services

Fiscal Year End

Last day to use Pcard June 12th

Emails will be almost daily next week from me to get things cleared from Chrome River. If anyone is going to be out please let us know who can approve and we will re-route.

FY25 orders need to be paid by 6/30, but if are not received contact us to accrue if over \$1000.

Banner Feeds will process 6/20 but be paused 6/21 through 6/30. This means we will have daily transactions that do not close. No vendor payments can be made during this pause. Checks will resume printing 7/1 or 7/2, depending on the feeds being started again.

Fee Tables are posted online (same format) and being built to Banner Test as we train backup staff.

Email for departments to review Fall extra course fees will be sent after Banner 202570 (fall semester) is fully built Banner.

Facilities

Tree Removal

Auditorium Renovations – completed by end of June

City College Food Service – working to use equipment from Sub Connections as Sub Connections will remain closed

Foundation Concrete – demo and replacement from last fall destructive storm

Campus Water Main Replacement – expect bid solicitation late this year

PE Roof – work continues on roof replacement

Art Gallery Roof – currently not leaking, but will plan upgrades within FY26.

Financial Services & Payroll

Working on FYE to ensure all cash is positive

Working on FY26 Budgets

LOA contracts

IT

Deploying our 2nd AI chat bot (Parking). Departments interested in testing, contact Brett. Foundation is now part of our MSU Microsoft contract so that they'll get similar benefits, functionality, and pricing as we do.

Paula Highlander, Director of Human Resources

Performance Evaluations are due to HR by June 30, 2025.

Union negotiations are currently in progress.