



**BAY de NOC COMMUNITY COLLEGE
IRON MOUNTAIN ADVISORY BOARD
MEETING MINUTES**

**March 17, 2026
Location: Remote**

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order by Vice Chair Jennifer Huotari at 1:31 p.m. CT.

Roll Call: Laura Johnson took roll call.

Members Present: Christie Borchardt, Andrew Brisson Jennifer Huotari, Russ Kassin, Bob Koerschner, Mindy Meyers, Terri Mileski, Paul Peterson, Jim Rice, Kevin Sullivan

Members Absent: None

Bay College: Nerita Hughes, President; Amy Reddinger, Vice President of Academic Affairs & Educational Equity

Recorder: Laura Johnson, Executive Administrative Assistant to the President

Minutes: The minutes from the January 20, 2026, meeting were presented for approval.

It was motioned by Russ Kassin and seconded by Mindy Meyers to:

“Approve the Minutes from the January 20, 2026, Iron Mountain Campus Advisory Board Meeting as presented.”
No discussion. Motion carried unanimously.

Administrative Reports:

President’s Report:

Dr. Hughes reported:

- We continue to see strong student engagement, particularly in our efforts to expand STEM education opportunities for the surrounding community within Iron Mountain. The Iron Mountain (IM) campus operates largely as a commuter campus, which creates a different dynamic from the

Escanaba campus where more students live on-site and therefore have access to more frequent events. Because IM has a unique employee and student makeup, our goal is to complement—not duplicate—existing efforts.

We have maintained consistent community engagement by reintroducing Lunchtime Live events on the IM campus and hosting a variety of activities. Local businesses have rented space for programs, and we have held major events such as the annual Dickinson Area Economic Development Alliance (DAEDA) Healthcare Careers Day. Bay Area Campus Ministry (BACM) also provides weekly Thursday lunches for students, drawing regular participation. In addition, the campus food pantry allows us to support students with essential resources.

Recent activities included the February 13 open bowling event at Recreation Lanes, attended by ten dual-enrolled and current students, and an NMU informational session on campus held February 2. We also partnered with Woodland Elementary for a STEM Night, where our faculty and staff facilitated hands-on engineering activities for families.

Mindy Meyers added that because the Healthcare Careers Day has succeeded, the DAEDA Talent and Education Task Force is considering offering the event for a full day. The event provides opportunities for high school guidance counselors and students to talk about partnerships with health care providers and Bay College.

- The winter 2026 final enrollment report will be shared after the Board of Trustees receives it on March 18. Headcount was down 4% and 3% down compared to budget which equates to 74 students. Limited acceptance into the Practical Nursing program and only being able to offer theory classes at the IM campus has impacted enrollment. The Escanaba campus received approval from the State Board of Nursing to offer Practical Nursing (PN) program classes in May 2026. Over the coming months, the College will submit the paperwork to the Board of Nursing to reinstate the PN program at the Iron Mountain campus. Approval for the Iron Mountain campus is anticipated for fall 2026.
- A “Bay College Fast Facts” document was shared with advisory board members. Dr. Hughes highlighted that there are 137 students in housing at the Escanaba campus.

Housing is a huge barrier for the College. There are two townhouses on the Escanaba campus that hold 98 students, and the remaining 43 students are in overflow housing at a local hotel. Another economic impact study is planned to reflect the College's current economic impact.

- The migration to a new enterprise resource planning (ERP) system is coming along. The new system will modernize processes with less manual aspects.

Dr. Hughes introduced Dr. Amy Reddinger, Vice President of Academic Affairs & Educational Equity who oversees academics to share more information about the nursing program, academics, and the Rural Guided Pathways Project.

- Approval of the Escanaba campus from the State Board of Nursing to offer Practical Nursing (PN) program classes was great news. Jennifer Farnsworth, a full-time nursing instructor, was hired as the Director of Nursing at the Iron Mountain campus due to a rule change that requires additional campus locations to have their own program Director of Nursing if they are offering both practice and theory classes. Since that requirement is met, the process to reinstate the PN program and then the Registered Nurse (RN) program at the Iron Mountain campus is underway. Iron Mountain campus students are excited to take practical and theory classes at the Iron Mountain campus especially since the SIM Lab was recently upgraded.

Dr. Reddinger responded to Bob Koerschner that approval for the PN program at the Iron Mountain campus is anticipated for fall 2026 based on the State Board of Nursing meeting schedule and if all goes as expected. Hopefully, the RN program will be approved for winter 2027. Senator Ed McBroom was instrumental in the reinstatement process through his support and advocacy with the Michigan State Board of Nursing. His collaboration with community partners, healthcare leaders, faculty, and supporters helped make this achievement possible.

- Dr. Reddinger added that the top ten program enrollment updates shared with the Board of Trustees in 2024 will be presented again beginning with the board meeting tomorrow. Top enrollment programs include pre-nursing & nursing, liberal arts, social work, pre-radiography, early childhood education, business & business administration, and pre-engineering. The updates report strengths,

challenges, and how the programs align with workforce and labor market needs and data. This information is used to support and inform discussions held at the statewide level. Dr. Hughes sits on the Dept. of Labor & Economic Opportunity (LEO) Michigan Workforce Development Board representing all Michigan community colleges and the local U.P. Michigan Works! Workforce Development Board.

Dr. Reddinger responded to Mindy Meyers that at least one section of the art studio class has been consistently offered each semester.

Dr. Hughes added that she and Jason Sullivan, Executive Director of Iron Mountain campus, are considering piloting seven-week classes in spring 2027 or fall 2027. The Iron Mountain campus is a good location to do this pilot because there are more adult learners at the Iron Mountain campus compared to the Escanaba campus. Complete seven-week tracks for full-time and part-time students would be offered. The criminal justice program has successfully adopted to seven-week classes. Seven-week courses reduce the cognitive load for students. Terri Mileski added it may also be advantageous for hiring instructors if they are committed to seven-weeks versus sixteen-weeks.

- Bay College was selected for Phase 2 of the National Center for Inquiry & Improvement (NCII) Rural Guided Pathways (RGP) Project, a very competitive national program. There were no Michigan community colleges in phase 1 of the project. Michigan is represented in Phase 2 by Bay College and Montcalm Community College. The goal of the RGP project is to make sure students have a structured guided pathway and a road map for their programs. To be eligible to apply for the Rural Guided Pathways project with NCII, colleges had to be one of the following: be rural, rural serving, or rural adjacent. Bay College is considered “truly rural”. Teams of eight from each school must attend six Institutes and the project lead and the college president must attend all six institutes. Each institute is comprised of various partners. The Bay College team that attended Institute #3 from March 11-13 was focused on the K-12 partners. Good conversations were held about what we need to do to assist students in acclimating from being high school students to college students as dual enrolled students. The fourth Institute will focus on workforce and how we can align with workforce

needs and labor data.

The work is an exciting research-based opportunity to create clear paths for all students (dual enrolled, senior citizen, traditional, adult, etc.) that will give them a livable sustaining wage job. The objective is to focus our students on the right career-path even when they don't know that direction (i.e., healthcare but unsure of what specific career path). The goals as a college are multi-fold and graduating more of our students remains an important priority.

Academic pathways are being revised to academic majors. The technology upgrade (ERP) will improve students' ability to see their education plan, schedule meetings with advisors, and better understand their academic path and what they need to do to earn their degree or certificate.

Ways the College can work with business and K12 partners to provide career education to students early on are being explored. The more we can do as a community to encourage students early and often to show them how they can earn a living sustainable wage in their community, the more students will be motivated to complete educational credentials.

Dr. Hughes added she is excited for the outcome of the RGP Project. There are three more Institutes to attend. An internal team is working on reclassifying the academic pathways (there are eight on our website) and exploring whether those pathways are needed to get our students to the end game and sustainable careers.

Unfinished Business: None

New Business: The advisory board terms for Andrew Brisson, Mindy Meyers, Jim Rice, and Paul Peterson expire on June 30. They have all agreed to continue serving and the Board of Trustees is expected to approve their reappointment at their meeting tomorrow.

Due to a conflict on June 16, the June meeting date needed to be rescheduled. Discussion determined that the meeting will be rescheduled to June 9.

It was moved by Bob Koerschner and seconded by Russ Kassin to:

“Move the June 16, 2026, meeting to June 9, 2026.” No further discussion. Motion carried unanimously.

Advisory Board Updates:

Mindy Meyers, DAEDA Executive Director reported:

- The Dickinson Area Economic Development Alliance Annual meeting is on March 19. Accomplishments from 2025 and plans for 2026 will be shared.
- The DAEDA Talent and Education Task Force is working on hiring for a projection survey that would provide hiring projections for manufacturing in Dickinson County between 2025-2031. She hopes she can share that information when it has been gathered.
- The Healthcare Career Day was a great success, and the Talent and Education Task Force is looking forward to its expansion.
- Manufacturing Day will be held at Bay College on the first Friday in October for area 9th graders. Participation in school events have increased. Over 300 students attended Manufacturing Day last year.

Jennifer Huotari, Dickinson Iron Intermediate School District (DIISD) Superintendent reported:

- DIISD schools applied for the 61v Michigan Career and Technical Education Expansion Grant funded by the Dept. of War. There is funding for two regional centers and Bay College Iron Mountain campus was selected as the U.P. location. A person on Bay's campus would have regional training and train local K12 staff on the equipment coming from the grant. The regional centers introduce manufacturing and engineering at the middle school level.
- Jennifer and Jason Sullivan have been exploring what it would like for the ISD to introduce one block of public safety courses next year on campus.
- The bids for the DIISD Tech Center renovation are due back next week.

Christie Borchardt, Med/Surg/Pediatric/Infusion & ICU/IMC/Pool Manager, Sanford Marshfield Medical Ctr- Dickinson

- The Iron Mountain hospital was included in the Marshfield, Sanford merger as of March 22. The name is now Sanford Health Marshfield Medical Center – Dickinson.
- The PN approval at Escanaba is good news, and the hospital looks forward to hiring more permanent nursing staff as they have several traveling nurses in-house.
- Christie added that she is willing to help with the Healthcare Career Day and other educational opportunities.
- Christie asked if students are given a post-event evaluation and whether college information is sent to parents after the K12 events. Dr. Hughes will confirm.

Kevin Sullivan, Dickinson County Board of Commissioners expressed support for the return of the PN program, noting that it is an important field in which graduates usually remain in the local area.

Adjournment:

It was moved by Mindy Meyers and seconded by Christie Borchardt to:

“Adjourn the meeting.” No discussion. Motion carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 2:25 p.m. CT.