



**Middle Tennessee State University
Board of Trustees
Academic Affairs, Student Life, and
Athletics Committee**

August 18, 2026

MEC Meeting Room – 2nd Floor
Miller Education Center
503 East Bell Street
Murfreesboro, Tennessee 37130



**Middle Tennessee State University
Board of Trustees**

Academic Affairs, Student Life, and Athletics Committee

August 18, 2026

AGENDA

Call to Order and Opening Remarks

Roll Call

Approval of Minutes (Action) [Tab 1](#)

Approval of Tenure (Action) [Tab 2](#)

Appointment of Chair of Excellence (Action) [Tab 3](#)

Student Affairs Report (Information) [Tab 4](#)

Athletics Report (Information) [Tab 5](#)

Aspirational Goals and Vision (Information) [Tab 6](#)

Closing Remarks

Adjourn Public Session

Non-Public Executive Session



**Middle Tennessee State University
Board of Trustees**

Academic Affairs, Student Life, and Athletics Committee

Action Item

DATE: August 18, 2026

SUBJECT: **Minutes of the May 19, 2026
Academic Affairs, Student Life, and
Athletics Committee Meeting**

PRESENTER: Michael Wade
Committee Chair

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The Academic Affairs, Student Life, and Athletics Committee met on May 19, 2026. Minutes from the meeting are provided for review and approval.

**MIDDLE TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

**ACADEMIC AFFAIRS, STUDENT LIFE, AND ATHLETICS COMMITTEE
MINUTES**

The Academic Affairs, Student Life, and Athletics Committee met on Tuesday, May 19, 2026, in the Miller Education Center Meeting Room at Middle Tennessee State University.

Call to Order

Committee Chair Michael Wade called the meeting to order at 10:10 a.m.

Roll Call

Board Secretary James Floyd called the roll. The following Committee members were in attendance: J.B. Baker, Pete DeLay, John Floyd, Jimmy Granbery, Bill Jones, Kari Neely, Steve Smith, Christine Vanek, Michael Wade, Michai Mosby, and Keith Huber. Tom Boyd participated in the meeting electronically. Consistent with Tennessee Code Annotated § 8-44-108(c)(3), Trustee Boyd was asked whether he could hear clearly, and he responded affirmatively, confirming that no one else was present at his location. Chad White and Chris Massaro were absent. A quorum was declared.

Joe Bales, Vice President for University Advancement; Mark Byrnes, Provost; Yvette Clark, Vice President for Information Technology and Chief Information Officer; Drew Harpool, Vice President for Business and Finance; Danny Kelley, Interim Vice President for Student Affairs and Dean of Students; Andrew Oppmann, Vice President for Marketing and Communications; Brenda Burkhardt, Interim Chief Audit Executive; and Kim Edgar, Assistant to the President and Chief of Staff, were also in attendance.

Approval of Minutes - Action

The first agenda item was approval of the minutes from the February 24, 2026, Academic Affairs, Student Life, and Athletics Committee meeting. Trustee Vanek moved to approve the minutes

from the February 24, 2026, meeting, and Trustee DeLay seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken, and the motion to approve the minutes passed unanimously.

Approval of Tenure and Promotion – Action

Provost Mark Byrnes presented 20 candidates for tenure and 43 candidates for promotion. The candidates submitted their applications last September and were thoroughly reviewed in multiple steps throughout the academic year. Compared to other Locally Governed Institutions, MTSU ranks in the middle in the percentage of tenured faculty among all faculty.

Trustee Smith moved to approve the candidates for tenure and promotion, and Trustee DeLay seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken, and the motion to approve 20 candidates for tenure and 43 candidates for promotion passed unanimously.

Approval of Policy Revision - Action

204 Tenure

Provost Byrnes reported that the General Assembly passed and the Governor recently signed House Bill 2194/Public Chapter Number 761, which requires each institution's governing board to adopt and implement new policies that distinguish between tenure decisions and disciplinary actions, ensure uniform misconduct procedures for all faculty, protect a faculty member's tenure status through due process, and comply with state and federal law. Revisions to Policy 204 state that the President or Provost will decide sanctions for faculty misconduct without any recommendation or vote by another faculty member at the University. The President is also the final arbiter in cases of unsatisfactory performance, with performance assessments provided by the chair, dean, and provost, as in the tenure-granting process.

Trustee Boyd suggested adding language regarding conduct that adversely affects the University's reputation, image, or goodwill. Chairman Smith asked that he put his recommendation in writing for the Board meeting. Provost Byrnes added that since the policy is out for campus comment, there may be additional revisions. In discussion, the Committee agreed to consider additional revisions at the June Board meeting.

Trustee Smith moved to approve revisions to Policy 204 Tenure, and Trustee Granbery seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken, and the motion to approve revisions to Policy 204 Tenure passed unanimously.

Trustee Boyd asked for an update on the Doctor of Business Administration (DBA). Provost Byrnes responded that he and the dean are discussing the financing of the degree.

Approval of Policy Revision - Action

541 Residential Life and Housing

Interim Vice President Danny Kelley reported that Policy 541 was revised to account for the demolition of Womack Lane housing, which eliminated the option of family housing. An average of 13 families have needed family housing over the past 10 years. This year, guest apartments were used by the nine families in need of housing. The national trend is moving away from family housing.

Trustee Baker moved to approve revisions to Policy 541 Residential Life and Housing, and Trustee DeLay seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken, and the motion to approve revisions to Policy 541 Residential Life and Housing passed unanimously.

SACSCOC Reaffirmation Update - Information

Vice Provost for Planning and Effectiveness Mary Hoffschwelle reported that the on-site reaffirmation review committee, after its March visit, recommended full approval of MTSU's reaffirmation with no findings or recommendations. The Commission will vote on final approval at its December meeting.

Athletics Report - Information

Deputy Athletic Director Lee De León presented recent accomplishments in the Department of Athletics. Highlights included: Fifty-five student-athletes graduated in May. Each of our 17 teams earned a multi-year Academic Progress Rate over 950. Men's Tennis won its seventh straight CUSA Championship. Two golfers qualified for the NCAA Golf Regionals.

Build Blue Phase II is now underway. The \$119M renovation of the Murphy Center will provide a new entrance with escalators, upgraded locker room and coaches' offices, and premium seating. Naming rights opportunities are still available. The \$16M Floyd Stadium renovation will provide additional chairbacks, field-level suites, and group party decks. Premium amenities are the national trend.

NIL fundraising activity continues. Jersey patches are available for corporate sponsors. Sapphire Circle (\$25,000/year) membership is up to 110 members.

Adjournment

Committee Chair Wade adjourned the meeting at 10:52 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Academic Affairs, Student Life, and Athletics Committee



**Middle Tennessee State University
Board of Trustees**

Academic Affairs, Student Life, and Athletics Committee

Action Item

DATE: August 18, 2026

SUBJECT: **Approval of Tenure**

PRESENTER: Mark Byrnes
Provost

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The University occasionally finds it necessary to recommend tenure and/or promotion outside the typical review calendar. The following faculty members have been reviewed by their department and college committees, department chairs, and college deans, according to MTSU Policy 204 Tenure and their respective college and department policies. The President and Provost recommend that tenure be granted effective September 28, 2026.

Name	Department	Rank
Fidan, Ismail	Engineering Technology	Professor
Rhoten, Bethany	Nursing	Professor



**Middle Tennessee State University
Board of Trustees**

Academic Affairs, Student Life, and Athletics Committee

Action Item

DATE: August 18, 2026

SUBJECT: **Appointment of Chair of Excellence**

PRESENTER: Mark Byrnes
Provost

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The primary mission of The Carl Adams Chair of Excellence in Health Care Services is:

- To strengthen the working relationships between MTSU's programs in health and human services and the regional health care community
- To enhance and continuously improve the image of MTSU at the regional, national and international level
- To enhance the academic, research, and service programs by involving faculty members in health and human service programs to ensure the continuous improvement of their skills and the relevancy and immediacy of the materials they impart to students
- To make Middle Tennessee State University an institution of choice for those wishing to pursue careers in health and human services

Attached for your review and approval is the recommendation of the Vice Provost for Research, the Provost, and the President to appoint Dr. Linda Gibson-Young as the holder of The Carl Adams Chair of Excellence in Health Care Services.

MEMO

From: David L. Butler, Vice Provost for Research and Dean, College of Graduate Studies

To: Sidney A. McPhee, President

Through: Mark Byrnes, University Provost

Date: July 14, 2026

Subject: Appointment of Dr. Linda Marie Gibson-Young as Holder of the Adams Chair of Excellence in Health Care Services

With this memo, I formally request that you approve the appointment of Dr. Linda Marie Gibson-Young as holder of the Adams Chair of Excellence in Health Care Services and recommend approval of the appointment by the Middle Tennessee State University Board of Trustees.

Dr. Gibson-Young is a nationally distinguished nurse scholar, educator, advanced-practice clinician, and community health leader. She currently serves as a tenured Professor and the Dr. Bill Lazenby Endowed Professor in Auburn University's College of Nursing. She earned a Ph.D. in Child and Family Health Nursing, an M.S.N., post-master's preparation as a nurse educator, a B.S.N., and an M.B.A. She is a board-certified Family Nurse Practitioner and a Certified Asthma Educator, and she holds Rural Health Provider Certification. Her combination of clinical expertise, academic leadership, business preparation, and community-engaged scholarship is exceptionally well aligned with the interdisciplinary responsibilities of the Adams Chair.

Over a career spanning more than two decades, Dr. Gibson-Young has developed a respected program of scholarship, clinical practice, and public engagement focused on rural and underserved populations, pediatric asthma, school-based health, telehealth, population health, chronic disease prevention, community health workers, and health equity. She has held academic appointments at Auburn University, Texas A&M University–Corpus Christi, the University of Central Florida, and the University of Alabama at Birmingham. Her academic experience is complemented by significant clinical practice as a Family Nurse Practitioner in pediatric pulmonary, primary care, and community settings.

Her record of sponsored activity is particularly compelling. Dr. Gibson-Young has served as principal investigator, co-principal investigator, project director, or co-investigator on research and outreach initiatives supported by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Alabama Department of Public Health, the United States Department of Agriculture, the Health Resources and Services Administration, the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute, Blue Cross Blue Shield, the Russell Medical Foundation, the Hill Crest Foundation, and other public and private sponsors. Her work includes the Auburn Rural Community Health Initiative, the Alabama Cardiovascular Health Program, TigerCHAT and related school-based health initiatives, advanced nursing education, rural telehealth expansion, community health worker programming, and pediatric asthma research and education. These projects demonstrate her ability to build durable partnerships, secure external support, and translate scholarship into sustainable programs that improve health care access, prevention, education, and outcomes.

I AM *true* **BLUE**

Dr. Gibson-Young also brings a substantial record of scholarly productivity, teaching, and mentorship. Her work has appeared in respected publications, including *The Journal of Rural Health*, *Journal of Asthma*, *Journal of School Nursing*, *Journal of Pediatric Nursing*, *Journal of American College Health*, and *Health Science Reports*. Her scholarship addresses clinically and socially significant issues such as childhood asthma management, rural cardiovascular health, school-based interventions, electronic cigarette use, personal protective equipment, health literacy, and access to care. She has mentored undergraduate, honors, master's, doctoral, and interdisciplinary students and has contributed to the development of junior faculty through collaborative grants, publications, presentations, and community-engaged projects.

Her professional recognition reflects the national stature she would bring to MTSU. Dr. Gibson-Young is a Fellow of the American Academy of Nursing, a Fellow of the American Association of Nurse Practitioners, and a Fellow of the National Academies of Practice. Her honors include Auburn University's Award for Excellence in Faculty Outreach, the President's Outstanding Collaborative Units Award for the Rural Health Initiative, the Daisy Award for Graduate Teaching, the Lillian Holland Harvey Award, and recognition for outstanding contributions to advancing health equity. She also has an extensive record of professional and community leadership, including service with the Alabama Asthma Coalition, Asthma Camp Eagle, the Alabama State Nurses Association, and national nursing and interprofessional organizations.

Dr. Gibson-Young is an especially attractive candidate for the Adams Chair because her career has consistently connected universities, health care providers, schools, public agencies, nonprofit organizations, and communities in addressing complex health challenges. The mission of the Adams Chair calls for strengthening relationships between MTSU's health and human services programs and the regional health care community; enhancing the University's academic, research, and service programs; elevating MTSU's regional, national, and international reputation; and helping make the University an institution of choice for students pursuing careers in health and human services. Dr. Gibson-Young's experience and accomplishments directly support each of these goals.

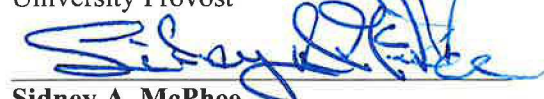
As holder of the Adams Chair, Dr. Gibson-Young would be positioned to expand interdisciplinary health research, develop new clinical and community partnerships, strengthen health workforce initiatives, particularly in rural areas, create additional opportunities for students and faculty, attract external funding, and extend MTSU's impact throughout Middle Tennessee and beyond. She brings the rare combination of scholarly credibility, clinical experience, administrative skill, public engagement, and collaborative leadership needed to advance both the legacy and the future direction of the Adams Chair of Excellence in Health Care Services.

I encourage you to approve Dr. Gibson-Young's appointment as holder of the Adams Chair of Excellence in Health Care Services and to forward the appointment to the MTSU Board of Trustees for final approval.

APPROVED:


Mark Byrnes
University Provost

7/15/26
Date


Sidney A. McPhee
President

7/21/26
Date



**Middle Tennessee State University
Board of Trustees**

Academic Affairs, Student Life, and Athletics Committee

Information Item

DATE: August 18, 2026

SUBJECT: **Student Affairs Report**

PRESENTER: James Bridgeforth
Vice President for Student Affairs and Dean of Students

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Dr. Bridgeforth will provide an update on the Division of Student Affairs.



**Middle Tennessee State University
Board of Trustees**

Academic Affairs, Student Life, and Athletics Committee

Information Item

DATE:	August 18, 2026
SUBJECT:	Athletics Report
PRESENTER:	Chris Massaro Athletics Director

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Mr. Massaro will provide an update on the Department of Athletics.



**Middle Tennessee State University
Board of Trustees**

Academic Affairs, Student Life, and Athletics Committee

Information Item

DATE: August 18, 2026

SUBJECT: **Aspirational Goals and Vision**

PRESENTER: Stephen Smith
Board Chair

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Aspirational goals and vision presented by Chairman Stephen Smith.