



Middle Tennessee State University

Board of Trustees

Spring Quarterly Board Meeting

Tuesday, March 17, 2026
1:00 p.m.

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



**Middle Tennessee State University
Board of Trustees**

Quarterly Board Meeting

Tuesday, March 17, 2026
1:00 p.m.

AGENDA

Call to Order

Pledge of Allegiance

Introduction of Student-Veteran

Welcome and Opening Remarks

Roll Call

Minutes..... Tab 1
1) December 3, 2025, Winter Board Meeting
2) December 15, 2025, Special Called Board Meeting

Permanent Appointment of the Vice President for Business and Finance..... Tab 2

**Change in Title and Compensation Adjustment for the University Counsel
and Board Secretary**..... Tab 3

**Academic Affairs, Student Life, and Athletics Committee Report
and Recommendations** Tab 4
1) Approval of New Academic Program – Master of Science in Mechatronics Systems
Engineering

Audit and Compliance Committee Meeting Report

Finance and Personnel Committee Meeting Report

Discussion of Board Objectives..... Tab 5

President’s Report

Closing Remarks

Executive Session – Discussion of Matters Deemed Confidential Under State Law

Adjournment



**Middle Tennessee State University
Board of Trustees**

MEETING: Spring Quarterly Board Meeting

SUBJECT: **Minutes of December 3, 2025
Winter Quarterly Board Meeting**

PRESENTER: Chairman Stephen Smith

Background Information

Approval of minutes of December 3, 2025 Winter Quarterly Board Meeting

MIDDLE TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
MINUTES

The Middle Tennessee State University Board of Trustees met on December 3, 2025, in the Miller Education Center Meeting Room at Middle Tennessee State University.

Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

Board Chair Steve Smith called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m. Lt. Gen. (Ret.) Keith Huber led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Introduction of Student Veteran

General Huber introduced Marine Corps Veteran Greg Palm. He shared that within a week of graduating from high school, Palm enlisted in the United States Marine Corps, where he served for six (6) years, including service as a military police officer with an overseas tour at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. While in the Marine Corps, Mr. Palm was attracted to and appreciative of their emphasis on history, teaching, and training, which led to his decision to become a teacher. To date, he has taught Social Studies to sixth and seventh-grade students at Stewarts Creek. In May, he will graduate from Middle Tennessee State University with a Bachelor of Science in History. Expressing his gratitude for everything the Charlie Daniels Center has done for him and his family, Mr. Palm recalled his experience of enlisting in the USMC and telling the recruiter he chose the Marine Corps for the camaraderie and brotherhood. Upon completing his service in 2022, he found himself wondering about his purpose and what he should do next, which led him to the Charlie Daniels Center in search of the same camaraderie and brotherhood he had experienced as a Marine. Mr. Palm thanked General Huber, Dr. Hilary Miller, and everyone at the Veterans Center for everything they have done for him and his family.

Roll Call

Board Secretary James Floyd called the roll. The following trustees were in attendance: J.B. Baker, Tom Boyd, Pete DeLay, John Floyd, Jimmy Granbery, Bill Jones, Kary Neely, Steve Smith, Christine Vanek, Michael Wade, Chad White, and Michai Mosby. A quorum was declared.

President Sidney A. McPhee; Joe Bales, Vice President for University Advancement; Mark Byrnes, University Provost; Andrew Oppmann, Vice President for Marketing and Communications; Yvette Clark, Vice President for Information Technology and Chief Information Officer; Danny Kelley, Interim Vice President for Student Affairs and Dean of Students; Drew Harpool, Interim Vice President for Business and Finance; Leah Ladley, Chief Audit Executive; Chris Massaro, Director of Athletics; Lt. Gen. Keith Huber, Senior Adviser for Veterans and Leadership Initiatives; Kim Edgar, Executive Assistant to the President and Chief of Staff; and James Floyd, University Counsel and Board Secretary were also in attendance.

Approval of September 9, 2025, Meeting Minutes – Action

The first agenda item was the approval of the meeting minutes from September 9, 2025. Trustee Baker motioned to approve the September 9, 2025, meeting minutes, and Vice Chair Vanek seconded the motion. A voice vote was taken, and the motion was approved unanimously.

Committee Report: Finance and Personnel Committee

Committee Chair DeLay reported that the Finance and Personnel Committee met on November 11, 2025. The Committee approved the minutes from its August 19, 2025, meeting. The Committee report contained two (2) action items, unanimously approved by the Committee, and one (1) informational item to be considered by the Board. Materials outlining these actions were made available for review prior to the Board meeting and were contained in the Board notebooks.

Compensation – Action

Trustee DeLay stated that the Committee considered a recommendation to implement market salary increases for faculty and staff. The proposed market adjustments will be effective January 1, 2026, for employees on the payroll as of December 31, 2025. The Committee unanimously approved the compensation proposal as presented.

2025-26 October Revised Budget – Action

Trustee DeLay stated that, as required by THEC, one of the three budgets submitted annually for approval by the Board of Trustees is an October (Revised) budget. The revised budget contained changes since the July Budget related to tuition and fee revenue, appropriations, and expenditures, as well as auxiliaries and restricted budgets. Materials were provided showing details of these changes for the Committee.

The Committee unanimously approved the 2025-26 October Revised Budget as presented.

Performance-Based Pay – Information

Interim Vice President Harpool provided an update on the work of the University's Compensation Committee. He reported that the committee met regularly to discuss the development of a potential performance-based pay plan for the University. The committee identified challenges associated with implementing such a plan in higher education and submitted a report to the President for review.

Mr. Harpool noted that the University is implementing an updated performance review framework for staff and a new evaluation instrument for faculty. Data collected through these evaluations during the current year will inform future consideration of a performance-based pay structure.

Motion

Trustee DeLay motioned to approve the action items recommended by the Committee, and Vice Chair Vanek seconded the motion. A voice vote was taken, and the motion to approve the action items carried unanimously.

Committee Report: The Academic Affairs, Student Life, and Athletics Committee

Trustee Wade reported that the Academic Affairs, Student Life, and Athletics Committee met on November 11, 2025. The Committee approved the minutes from its August 19, 2025, meeting. The Committee report contained three (3) action items for the Board's consideration. Information items presented included four (4) topics: annual performance metrics and a presentation to add context to the Metrics; an update on Quantum and meetings with Oak Ridge National Laboratory; an update on the School of Nursing; and an update on Athletics. Materials outlining these actions were made available for review prior to the Board meeting and were contained in the Board notebooks.

Approval of Degree Program Under Consideration – Action

A Master of Health Care Administration in Health Care Administration was considered. Data and industry support letters demonstrate high demand for healthcare administrators. The Committee unanimously approved consideration of a Master of Health Care Administration.

Approval of New Academic Program Under Consideration – Action

A Master of Fine Arts in Film and Television was considered. The 60-hour program will provide advanced instruction in production, directing, editing, cinematography, sound design, and emerging technologies. The Committee unanimously approved the new Master of Fine Arts degree.

Approval of Modification to an Existing Academic Unit Under Consideration – Action

A proposal was presented to restructure the College of Education to ensure its academic programs are housed within departments that reflect their primary discipline and professional focus. The Committee unanimously approved the modification.

Motion

Trustee Wade motioned to approve the action items recommended by the Committee, and Trustee Jones seconded the motion. A voice vote was taken, and the motion to approve the action items carried unanimously.

Committee Report: The Audit and Compliance Committee

Committee Chair Boyd reported that the Audit and Compliance Committee met on November 11, 2025. The Committee approved the minutes from its meeting on August 19, 2025. The Committee report contained no action items for the Board's consideration. Information items presented included two (2) external reviews, which were completed with no findings or recommendations identified. The public meeting of the Committee adjourned, and the Committee went into executive, non-public session to discuss confidential matters as permitted by appropriate law.

Materials outlining this information were made available for review prior to the Board meeting and were contained in the Board notebooks.

Committee Report: The Executive and Governance Committee

Vice Chair Vanek reported that the Executive and Governance Committee met on November 11, 2025. The committee approved the minutes from its August 19, 2025, meeting. The Committee report contained no action items for the Board's consideration. Information items presented included a discussion of the 2025 Self-Evaluation results and action for improvement. Materials outlining this information were made available for review prior to the Board meeting and were contained in the Board notebooks.

2025 Self-Evaluation Results, Action for Improvement – Information

Under Section 11.4 of the Board's Policy on Committees, it is the responsibility of the Executive and Governance Committee to present and lead a discussion of the completed self-evaluations, including identifying board strengths, needs, and actions for improvement. This also meets our Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) responsibility

to define and regularly evaluate our responsibilities and expectations. As background, in October, Trustees received access to an online, anonymous evaluation survey consisting of twenty-four (24) questions designed to provide Board members with the opportunity to evaluate Board functions and operations, and six (6) questions soliciting comments.

At the November meeting, the survey results were presented for discussion and consideration of any potential action steps for improvement. The results included a bar graph of the responses for each survey question. The bar graph showed the number of individual responses to each of the four-point Likert Scale options (strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree). The majority of responses to each question were either 'strongly agree' or 'agree'. Overall, the comments indicated that members have a generally positive assessment of the Board's functions.

Board Secretary Floyd will conduct another survey in order to identify the top four (4) objectives.

Amendment to Board Bylaws – Information

Chairman Smith requested an addition to the agenda to include an update from Board Secretary James Floyd on revising the Board's bylaws.

During the past legislative session, the General Assembly updated the makeup of the Board, extending it from ten (10) members to twelve (12) members. Therefore, a quorum is now six (6) members for any action taken by the board, so the bylaws need to be updated to reflect this change. In addition, the Governor no longer has eight (8) appointees but now has six (6) appointees. The Speaker and the Lieutenant Governor now have two (2) appointees each.

The bylaws need to be updated now because the University is presently under accreditation review. By the end of the week, Board Secretary Floyd will provide the board with a written update of the bylaws consistent with the requirement for at least ten (10) days' written notice

prior to voting on any bylaw amendment. Following that, during the week of December 15, we will hold a special meeting, with the sole topic being the review of the amended bylaws.

Trustee Granbery requested clarification on the total number of appointees and the number of voting members. Board Secretary Floyd explained that there are twelve (12) total board members, including the faculty and the student trustees, explaining that the student trustee is non-voting.

Trustee Granbery further requested clarification on the appointment process for the faculty and student trustees. Board Secretary Floyd explained that the faculty senate selects the faculty member to serve on the board, while the University's President recommends the student trustee in conjunction with the Student Government Association. The Board then approves the appointment of the student trustee.

Chairman Smith also noted that there was one significant change: that if you were appointed by Governor Haslam to the initial Board, you are eligible to be an initial appointee of the Speaker or the Lieutenant Governor. As a result, Trustee Baker was reappointed by the Speaker to serve another term.

Report of the President

Dr. McPhee thanked the Board for the opportunity to give updates on matters and activities at the University since the last Board meeting.

Recruitment, Enrollment, and Admissions

Dr. McPhee specified that the report he is presenting contains early numbers for the fall of 2026. As of December 1, 2025, we have ten thousand three hundred and thirty-one (10,331) freshman applications, compared to eleven thousand two hundred and twenty-three (11,223) in 2025, and seven thousand four hundred and seventy-three (7,473) admits compared to seven thousand eight hundred and thirty-eight (7,838) admits for the fall of 2025.

While we are slightly below last year on December 1 in total applicants, it is pretty understandable given the past three (3) previous years we've had a significant increase in overall applications at the University. This is also quite an accomplishment, considering the smaller number of high school graduates the state is producing.

Dr. McPhee also shared that the 2025 True Blue Tour recently wrapped up. The tour included thirteen (13) luncheons for high school counselors and community college advisors, and fifteen (15) receptions for prospective students and their parents in seventeen (17) different locations throughout Tennessee, Kentucky, Georgia, and Alabama. A total of eight hundred and twenty-three (823) students and six hundred and eighteen (618) counselors representing three hundred and sixty-eight (368) high schools and community colleges attended the True Blue Tour receptions and luncheons.

Recent Awards and Recognition

One of the board's strategic goals is to pursue additional national rankings. Dr. McPhee was pleased to report that MTSU had added three (3) new national rankings for the 2026 academic year since our last board meeting. The Wall Street Journal's list of America's Best Colleges, U.S. News and World Report's list of Top Colleges and Universities in the United States and Top Performers of Social Mobility (in which MTSU ranked 87th as a premier destination for first-generation and transfer students), and Newsweek's list of America's Top Online Colleges were among the new rankings.

Earlier this year, MTSU was included in the Princeton Review's top three hundred and ninety-one (391) colleges and universities in the United States. Within that list, there were only five (5) universities in the state of Tennessee that made the list, including MTSU. Additionally, MTSU was listed in Forbes Magazine's top five hundred (500), which is quite the accomplishment, as there are two thousand four hundred and four (2,404) colleges and universities in the United States.

MTSU has also achieved status as a national college of distinction in several of its academic programs. For example, it was just released a couple of weeks ago that MTSU was designated as a top program in the recording industry by Billboard magazine for the thirteenth (13th) year in a row.

Finally, just last night, the Tennessean had its 2025 Community Choice awards ceremony at the Music City Center in Nashville. There was a total of eighty thousand (80,000) votes for the best university in the area, and the finalists were: Vanderbilt, the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, and Middle Tennessee State University. Dr. McPhee was elated to announce that the winner was Middle Tennessee State University and noted that the event's master of ceremonies was an MTSU student who currently holds the title of Miss Tennessee.

The Division of Marketing and Communications ended the year with thirty-three (33) awards from five (5) state, regional, and national organizations. Dr. McPhee noted he is particularly proud of the University's work in video podcasting and digital media, which reflects our emphasis on new technology, as well as other traditional platforms such as graphic design and the MTSU magazine.

MTSU's 2024 Joys of the Season, our annual holiday program hosted by Andrew Oppmann, Executive Director and Producer, and Dr. Leah Lyons, Dean of the College of Liberal Arts, received two (2) Telly awards in national categories. The premiere of this year's show will be aired on Nashville PBS on Friday, December 19, at 8 p.m.

Lastly, the student project in the Scott Borchetta School of Media and Entertainment received nine (9) Telly awards in student categories for news, sports, and animation.

Southern Association of Colleges and Schools

The University is currently going through the process of reaffirmation of institutional accreditation by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC). MTSU submitted a compliance certification report for reaffirmation under the

SACSCOC differentiated review process on September 5, 2025. The off-site preliminary review committee issued its findings on November 17, 2025. The on-site review committee is scheduled to be on campus from March 23 to 26, 2026. The President's Office will send out notes as part of the review, which requires speaking with board members. Logistics are in place, and the communication plan for the on-site review will launch in January 2026. Dr. McPhee noted that Dr. Hoffschwelle and her colleagues have been working on this for at least two (2) years and took a moment to recognize her and her team for the incredible job they have done thus far.

Search for Vice President of Student Affairs and Dean of Students

The search for the new Vice President of Student Affairs and the Dean of Students is underway and in process. Recently, a search committee was established to include MTSU faculty, staff, and community members, chaired by Dr. Peter Grandjean, Dean of the College of Health and Behavioral Sciences, with the help of Parker Executive Search. Together, they are tasked with identifying qualified candidates for the position. The plan is currently to have candidates on campus by the end of February 2026.

Commencement

The December commencement will take place on Saturday, December 13, 2025. Two commencement ceremonies will be held, with sixteen hundred (1,600) graduates. Dr. McPhee highlighted that MTSU has four to five thousand (4,000-5,000) graduates each year, of which a majority remain within the community and become a part of the workforce.

The morning speaker will be Dr. Chris Whaley, an alumnus of MTSU and the President of Roane State Community College. The afternoon speaker will be Mr. Brady Cooper, Senior Pastor of New Vision Baptist Church, an institution with which MTSU has a great partnership.

Holiday Community Open House

Dr. McPhee invited the Trustees to attend the annual Community Open House at the President's Residence, taking place on Thursday, December 11, 2025, from 5-8 p.m.

Conclusion

Chairman Smith described the fantastic turnout for the Shelbyville airport groundbreaking ceremony. He went on to say that the hallmark of any great organization is its ability to pivot, praising MTSU's capacity to transform a problem into a huge success.

Furthermore, Chairman Smith noted that the football team is ranked among the highest in the country in terms of graduation success rate. Chris Massaro, Athletic Director, confirmed that we are again in the top ten (10). Clarifying that the majority of our student-athletes will not make a living playing football, Chairman Smith emphasized the importance of the degrees and education they earn at MTSU. Trustee Boyd added that we were recognized as having one of the top graduation success rates in the country in 2017 as well.

Adjournment

Chair Smith adjourned the meeting at 2:06 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



James C. Floyd, Board Secretary



**Middle Tennessee State University
Board of Trustees**

MEETING: Spring Quarterly Board Meeting

SUBJECT: **Minutes of December 15, 2025
Winter Quarterly Board Meeting**

PRESENTER: Chairman Stephen Smith

Background Information

Approval of minutes of December 15, 2025 Winter Quarterly Board Meeting

MIDDLE TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
MINUTES

The Middle Tennessee State University Board of Trustees met electronically on December 15, 2025, for a special called meeting.

Call to Order

Chairman Steve Smith called the meeting to order at 1:02 p.m.

Roll Call

Board Secretary James Floyd called the roll. The following trustees were in attendance: J.B. Baker, Tom Boyd, Pete DeLay, Jimmy Granbery, Bill Jones, Kari Neely, Steve Smith, Christine Vanek, Chad White, and Michai Mosby. Consistent with Tennessee Code Annotated § 8-44-108(c)(3), the trustees were asked and responded in the affirmative that they could hear clearly and confirmed that no one else was in their location. A quorum was declared. Trustee John Floyd and Trustee Michael Wade were absent.

President Sidney A. McPhee and Kim Edgar, Executive Assistant to the President and Chief of Staff, also participated electronically in the meeting.

Approval of Proposed Board Bylaws Revision – Action

The sole action item on the agenda was approval of the proposed revision to the Board Bylaws. Board Secretary Floyd provided the board members with proposed revisions to the MTSU Board of Trustees Bylaws on December 5, 2025.

Board Secretary Floyd summarized the revisions, stating that they are needed to bring the Board Bylaws into compliance with T.C.A. § 49-8-201, which was recently amended during the last session of the General Assembly, and to reflect that the Board meets accreditation

governance standards. In particular, Article 4, Membership Officers of the Board, is amended to align the composition of the Board of Trustees, the terms of office, and the conditions of membership with state law. Board Secretary Floyd noted that there is also a technical, grammatical edit in Article 5.6.

Lastly, Article 8, Meetings of the Board, is amended to specify that the quorum for the Board to conduct business is six (6) voting members, rather than five (5). Board Secretary Floyd clarified that the University is currently undergoing its reaccreditation process and that, as part of that review, an assessment of our governance principles is underway. He noted that the Board Bylaws state that, at present, five (5) members constitute a quorum; however, with the state law change in Board membership to twelve (12), six (6) members now constitute a quorum. Board Secretary Floyd shared that the Board has been operating its meetings under the six (6) member quorum requirement since the amendment of the state law. The Board Bylaw revision will ensure that the Board operates in compliance with accreditation standards and specifically incorporate in writing our compliance with state law.

As background, Board Secretary Floyd also advised that Article 10 provided that the Bylaws may be modified by amendment at any special meeting called for that purpose, provided a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Board members is obtained.

Motion

Trustee DeLay motioned to approve the revisions to the board bylaws, and Trustee Vanek seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken, and the motion to approve the action item carried unanimously.

Chairman Smith observed that special meetings are the exception, and Board Secretary Floyd advised that this meeting was needed because steps in the reaccreditation process will occur in February, prior to the next board meeting.

Adjournment

Chairman Smith adjourned the meeting at 1:11 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "James C. Floyd". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent "J" and "F".

James Floyd, Board Secretary and University Counsel

DRAFT



**Middle Tennessee State University
Board of Trustees**

MEETING: Spring Quarterly Board Meeting

SUBJECT: **New Business**

DATE: March 17, 2026

PRESENTER: Dr. Sidney A. McPhee

-
- Permanent Appointment of the Vice President for Business and Finance



**Middle Tennessee State University
Board of Trustees**

Action Item

MEETING: Spring Quarterly Board Meeting

DATE: March 17, 2026

SUBJECT: **Permanent Appointment of the Vice President for
Business and Finance**

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Policy 808 – Compensation Reporting and Approvals – requires the appointment and salary recommendation of Vice Presidents or other executives reporting directly to the President be approved by the Board of Trustees.

Included is a request to make a title change and compensation adjustment for Drew Harpool, Interim Vice President for Business and Finance.

Office of the President
Middle Tennessee State University
204 Cope Administration Building
Murfreesboro, Tennessee 37132
615-898-2622
FAX: 615-898-2507



February 26, 2026

MTSU Board of Trustees:

This is a request to make a title change and compensation adjustment for **Drew Harpool, Interim Vice President for Business and Finance.**

Drew Harpool has been employed within the Division of Business and Finance at MTSU since November 2021. This division represents a large portion of the University. Drew incorporates his area into the overall picture of the University by providing the support needed to accomplish the mission of the University and he consistently displays the highest level of performance in his work.

Drew has served as interim vice president since Alan Thomas' retirement in June 2025. In addition to his responsibility for managing a financially sound institution with a budget of more than \$500 million, over the past year much of his time has been devoted to leading two major projects – the on-campus hotel and Shelbyville Airport project. Drew methodically moved these projects forward through various committees, the Tennessee Higher Education Commission, the State Building Commission, and the General Assembly, to best position our university for decades to come.

Aside from university finances, the following units fall under Drew's area of responsibility: Campus Planning, Facilities Services, Human Resource Services, University Police, Administrative and Business Services, and Events and Transportation. Drew is a key member of the university's executive team. His loyalty and dedication to MTSU is unmatched.

After consultation with and support from Chairman Smith, I am seeking your approval to appoint Drew Harpool as Vice President of Business and Finance and to adjust his salary to \$280,210, an increase of \$22,192, equal to that of the previous vice president, effective retroactive to January 1, 2026.

I appreciate your consideration of this request, and I thank you for your ongoing support.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Sidney A. McPhee".

Sidney A. McPhee
President



**Middle Tennessee State University
Board of Trustees**

MEETING: Spring Quarterly Board Meeting

SUBJECT: **New Business**

DATE: March 17, 2026

PRESENTER: Dr. Sidney A. McPhee

-
- Change in title and compensation adjustment for James Floyd, University Counsel and Board Secretary



**Middle Tennessee State University
Board of Trustees**

Action Item

MEETING: Spring Quarterly Board Meeting

DATE: March 17, 2026

SUBJECT: **Change in Title and Compensation Adjustment for James Floyd, University Counsel and Board Secretary**

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Policy 808 – Compensation Reporting and Approvals – requires the appointment and salary recommendation of Vice Presidents or other executives reporting directly to the President be approved by the Board of Trustees.

Included is a request to make a title change and compensation adjustment for James Floyd, University Counsel and Board Secretary.

Office of the President
Middle Tennessee State University
204 Cope Administration Building
Murfreesboro, Tennessee 37132
615-898-2622
FAX: 615-898-2507



February 26, 2026

MTSU Board of Trustees:

This is a request to change the title and adjust compensation for **James Floyd, University Counsel and Board Secretary**.

I am requesting a change of James Floyd's title to Vice President for Legal Affairs, General Counsel, and Secretary to the Board of Trustees. The current title of University Counsel and Secretary to the Board does not fully reflect James' contributions and impact on University pursuits. He serves as the chief legal advisor to the president, the Board of Trustees, and the University administration, advancing our mission by leading the office's collaboration on academic/business initiatives and providing sound legal counsel. This name change better reflects his duties and aligns with higher education title norms for those obligations. Equally important, he is a peer to my direct reports who have the title of Vice President: Vice President for University Advancement; Vice President for Information Technology and Chief Information Officer; Vice President for Business and Finance; Vice President for Student Affairs and Dean of Students; and Vice President for Marketing and Communications.

Additionally, James serves in a dual capacity as chief legal officer and board secretary. No other LGI legal counsel performs both of these responsibilities except for TSU, which pays a considerable amount more than James' salary. Moreover, MTSU's legal office serves the highest combined student and employee number based on a per attorney basis amongst the LGIs.

After consultation with and support from Chairman Smith, and based on this background and James' accomplishments, I am seeking your approval to appoint James Floyd as Vice President for Legal Affairs, General Counsel, and Secretary to the Board of Trustees and adjust his salary to \$281,394, an increase of \$30,000 annually, effective retroactive to January 1, 2026.

I appreciate your consideration of this request, and I thank you for your ongoing support.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Sidney A. McPhee".

Sidney A. McPhee
President



**Middle Tennessee State University
Board of Trustees**

MEETING: Spring Quarterly Board Meeting

SUBJECT: **Academic Affairs, Student Life, and Athletics Committee**

DATE: March 17, 2026

PRESENTER: Chair Michael Wade

-
- Approval of New Academic Program – Master of Science in Mechatronics Systems Engineering



**Middle Tennessee State University
Board of Trustees**

Action Item

MEETING: Spring Quarterly Board Meeting

DATE: March 17, 2026

SUBJECT: **Approval of New Academic Program – Master of
Science in Mechatronics Systems Engineering**

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The proposed Master of Science (M.S.) in Mechatronics Systems Engineering is an interdisciplinary thesis-optional graduate program housed in the College of Basic and Applied Sciences. Originally approved for development by the MTSU Board of Trustees in September 2025, the 30-36 credit hour program will be delivered in flexible formats and will provide advanced instruction in robotics, autonomous systems, artificial intelligence, advanced control, reinforcement learning, and systems modeling. Pending approvals, the first cohort is anticipated to enroll in Fall 2026.

The M.S. in Mechatronics Systems Engineering builds on MTSU's robust industry network, with active partnerships spanning global manufacturers, advanced automation firms, utilities, and regional employers. Employer demand for mechatronics and automation engineers continues to grow, fueled by Tennessee's expanding manufacturing, automotive, logistics, and clean energy sectors. Companies across the region have expressed support for the program and identified

a need for graduate-level expertise in robotics integration, autonomous systems, digital manufacturing, and AI-driven automation.

**2025 Annual Report of
Academic Program Actions/Modifications and
Approvals of Bureaus, Centers, and Institutes
January 1 - December 31, 2025**

New Degree Programs

- M.A.T. in Teaching
- M.S. in Biomedical Sciences
- M.S. in Digital Media (August 2025)
- M.S. in Legal Studies (May 2026)
- M.S. in Project Management (August 2025)

Elevation from Concentration to Major

- Ed.S. in Curriculum and Instruction, School Psychology concentration to Ed.S. in School Psychology

New Concentrations

Undergraduate

- B.A/B.S. in History, History 6-12 Teacher Licensure Concentration
- B.S. in Computer Science, Artificial Intelligence Concentration
- B.S. in Cybersecurity Management, Data Analytics Concentration
- B.S. in Early Childhood Education, Integrated PK-3 Teacher Licensure Concentration
- B.S. in Leisure and Sport Management, Esports Coaching Concentration
- B.S. in Mathematics, Advanced Mathematics Concentration
- B.S. in Mathematics, General Mathematics Concentration
- B.S. in Mathematics, Statistics and Data Analysis Concentration
- B.S. in Media and Entertainment, Esports and Gaming Content Creation
- B.S. in Middle Level Education, English 6-8 Teacher Licensure Concentration
- B.S. in Middle Level Education, Math 6-8 Teacher Licensure Concentration
- B.S. in Middle Level Education, Science 6-8 Teacher Licensure Concentration
- B.S. in Middle Level Education, Social Studies 6-8 Teacher Licensure Concentration

Graduate

- Ed.S. in Administration and Supervision, Leadership in Teaching Data Literacy Concentration
- M.A.T. in Teaching, Elementary Education Concentration
- M.A.T. in Teaching, English as a Second Language Concentration
- M.A.T. in Teaching, Secondary Education Concentration
- M.B.A. in Business Administration, Data Analytics Concentration
- M.B.A. in Business Administration, IT Project Management
- M.P.H. in Public Health, Dietetics Concentration (May 2027)

Implementation date was May 2025, unless otherwise noted.

New Certificate Programs

- Agri-Analytics Certificate, Undergraduate
- Using Artificial Intelligence Certificate, Undergraduate

New Undergraduate Minors

- Cybersecurity Management
- Live Video Production
- Video Post-Production

Termination or Inactivation of an Existing Academic Program or Concentration

- B.A./B.S. in Communication, Health Communication Concentration (inactivation)
- B.A. in English, Writing Concentration
- B.S. in Nutrition and Food Science, Dietetics Concentration
- M.Ed. in Administration and Supervision, Agricultural Education Leadership Concentration
- M.Ed. in Curriculum and Instruction, Digital Teaching and Learning Concentration
- M.Ed. in Special Education, Special Education Comprehensive Concentration
- M.Ed. in Special Education, Special Education Interventionist Concentration
- Not-for-Profit Management, Minor

Change in Instructional Delivery Mode

- B.A./B.S. in History (includes concentrations), On-Ground/Hybrid
- B.B.A. in Marketing (includes concentrations), Traditional/Online
- B.S. in Cybersecurity Management, On-Ground/Fully Online
- B.S. in Elementary Education, Majority Online/Hybrid
- B.S. in Middle Level Education (all concentrations), Majority Online/Hybrid
- B.S. in Public Health, Traditional and Online
- Ed.S. in Administration and Supervision, Instructional Leadership Concentration, Fully Online
- M.A. in History, History Education Concentration, Hybrid
- M.Ed. in Administration and Supervision, Instructional Leadership Concentration, Fully Online
- M.S. in Information Systems (includes concentrations), On-Ground/Fully Online

Program Name Changes

- B.S. in Journalism, Social Justice Journalism Concentration to B.S. in Journalism, Investigative Journalism Concentration
- Ph.D. in Human Performance, Health Concentration to Ph.D. in Human Performance, Public Health Concentration

Program Credit Hour Changes

- Ed.S. in Administration and Supervision, Instructional Leadership Concentration (from 33 to 30 CH)
- M.Ed. in Administration and Supervision, Higher Education Concentration (from 33 to 30 CH)

Implementation date was May 2025, unless otherwise noted.

- M.Ed. in Administration and Supervision, Instructional Leadership Concentration (from 33 to 30 CH)
- M.Ed. in Literacy (from 33 to 30 CH)
- M.Ed. in Special Education (from 33 to 30 CH)
- M.S. in Chemistry (from 31-43 to 30-40 CH)

Bureaus, Centers, and Institutes

- Center for Cybersecurity Management (April 2025)
- Consumer Research Institute (January 2025)
- Quantum Research, Interdisciplinary Science and Education Center (September 2025)

Implementation date was May 2025, unless otherwise noted.



**Middle Tennessee State University
Board of Trustees**

MEETING: Spring Quarterly Board Meeting

SUBJECT: **Board Secretary's Report**

DATE: March 17, 2026

PRESENTER: James Floyd, Board Secretary

- Discussion of Board Objectives Identified in the 2025 Self-Evaluation Results, Action for Improvement



**Middle Tennessee State University
Board of Trustees**

MEETING: Spring Quarterly Board Meeting

SUBJECT: **Discussion of Board Objectives Identified in the
2025 Self-Evaluation Results, Action for Improvement**

DATE: March 17, 2026

PRESENTER: James Floyd, Board Secretary

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The MTSU accreditation body, SACSCOC, requires a governing board to define and regularly evaluate its responsibilities and expectations. Standard 4.2.g. As evidence of compliance with that standard, SACSCOC recommends a regular board self-evaluation. After completion of the 2025 self-evaluation survey, the trustees completed an additional survey to identify the top four (4) objectives for the Board. Those results are presented for discussion and consideration of any potential action steps for improvement.