



## Leadership Report

Interim President Dr. Jodi Kupper

September 30, 2025

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### Greetings

Welcome to the September edition of the CSC Leadership Report. Updates from each of the functional areas of the campus are provided below to assist you in staying up to date on all that is happening at CSC.

### Strategic Plan Update

The Strategic Plan Steering Committee met Sept. 16 to review updated drafts of the CSC Strategic Plan. These drafts included four-category and five-category options for the steering committee to consider and discuss. The group also evaluated the outcome statements listed for each category that further define and establish the context for each category, as well as potential metrics for assessing these statements. Since this meeting, the task force members have completed a short survey to provide their individual feedback on the various components of the plan, with the next meeting scheduled for Oct. 14. During that meeting, the results of the survey will be shared with the group, and further development of the plan will occur. The tentative timeline for completing the 2030 CSC Strategic Plan in Dec. 2025 is still in place.

### Enrollment Management

The Admissions office is on the move and traveling across our service region. Admissions Counselors have attended more than 65 college fairs in Nebraska, Colorado, Wyoming, and South Dakota in September, and represented CSC at Chadron High School and Alliance High School football games. Over the next few weeks, we will be at high school football games at Hay Springs, Gering, Douglas (Box Elder), Sidney, Bridgeport, and Potter-Dix. If you have a free evening and would like to support our admissions office by helping at the table at one of these games, please reach out to [Dr. Derry Ebert](#). You will be passing out coupons for free popcorn, sharing gifts with alumni, answering questions about CSC, and supporting our local schools. We will be adding more schools as we confirm dates, so please reach out if you are interested.

We are currently nine percent up on admitted students for the Fall 2026 semester. October is typically a big month for students to apply to college across the state, and we are expecting to keep the momentum over the next several weeks. If you would like to encourage students to apply to CSC, please send them to [www.csc.edu/admissions](http://www.csc.edu/admissions).

Thank you for supporting our first Eagle Experience Day last week. A special thanks to Dr. Teri Marrow, Dr. Jamie Wada, and Jordan Haas for providing a simulated class for students to attend and get an idea of what a college class is like. We also want to thank our faculty for spending time with our guests Friday afternoon and sharing their enthusiasm for their discipline. The next Eagle Experience Day is Nov. 7.



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### Academics

**HLC Reauthorization of Accreditation:** The campus is beginning to gear up for its HLC visit, scheduled for spring 2027. A self-study committee comprised of faculty and staff has been formed. The committee is broken into criteria groups and each group will meet with our colleagues to identify what policies, practices, and processes demonstrate compliance with the 2025 revised HLC Standards. Updates will be provided periodically to keep the campus informed.

**Assessment and Data Informed Decision Making:** This year, we will continue to address the deficits in our academic, co-curricular, and operational assessment practices. This important work is about more than accreditation compliance. A culture of assessment is crucial to continuous quality improvement using data driven decision making.

Please remember that a culture of assessment is one that ties data to desired outcomes and uses that data as part of the continuous quality improvement process. We are asking questions such as “are we measuring the right things,” “does the data we are collecting measure what we are trying to measure,” and “what does the analysis of our data over time tell us about possible improvements.”

Foundational work doesn’t always feel like you are making progress, but rest assured you have. We know you have worked hard, and we are excited by the progress we have seen over the past two years and are even more excited to see what this next year brings. Pat yourselves on the back!

As previously shared, the following assessment work will be happening in 2025-26:

1. The following departments will be participating in the Canvas assessment tool pilot collecting data based on rubrics tied to their learning outcomes:
  - Legal Studies
  - Criminal Justice
  - Rangeland Management
  - Art
  - Business

This is an exciting pilot and will lead to improved data collection for all our programs over time. Thank you to those departments for jumping in, helping work out the kinks, and leading the way.

2. All academic departments will be creating formal assessment plans in Weave.
3. All departments across campus will continue to collect and analyze their assessment data as they have done in the past. Please make sure you are documenting the collection, analysis, and how the process informed key decisions you are making in your departments.
4. Our co-curricular group will continue developing outcomes and collecting data in Weave.
5. Essential Studies pillar 1 will begin collecting data in Canvas based on rubrics tied to the pillar 1 learning outcome.
6. We will begin developing operational assessment plans.



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**Student Retention & Persistence:** Thank you for your ongoing efforts to improve our student retention and persistence. We continue to identify intentional actions tied to current research to help improve this important measure. We have several ongoing initiatives to support retention and two initiatives have originated from feedback received from employees and students. We continue to work with advisors to implement more relational interactions vs. transactional ones. In addition, we are offering more face-to-face opportunities for our campus students through blended courses vs. requiring the students to enroll in online sections.

Everyone impacts student retention, not just faculty and advisors. Keeping our campus clean, greeting students with a warm smile and hello on the sidewalk, timely processing of financial aid and refund checks, offering a variety of activities outside of class time, policies that support student success, keeping our campus safe, setting expectations during recruitment that match the campus experience, are just a few ways we all work together to ensure student success.

Retention is calculated by comparing first-time, full-time freshman who began in the fall semester to the number who returned the following fall. Our census data is not final until Oct. 15, however, when comparing our retention as of Sept. 9, 2025, to the same time last year, we improved by 4.84%.

Year	CSC	Peer Group Median*	Peer Group 25 <sup>th</sup> Percentile*	Peer Group 5 <sup>th</sup> Percentile*
2024	63.49%	72.34%	64.28%	48.42%
2025	68.33%	72.34%	64.28%	48.42%

*\*HLC designated peer group*

An area of noted concern is graduate student persistence. Our continuing student numbers for graduate programs saw a 22.62% decrease over last year. We will continue to analyze this data and determine the best course of action to address this decline moving forward.

**START Update:** Each START advisor has been assigned a cohort of students based on their degree program. They assist with academic advising, registration, basic financial aid questions, and have engagement goals to ensure we are connecting with all our students. Currently, our START team is hard at work creating meaningful connections with our new incoming class of freshman, graduate, and transfer students. The role of faculty advisors has not changed. We continue to review our policies and practices to ensure alignment with common practices and maximizing student success. Of the Eagles360 referrals received to date, 74% have been successfully resolved through connecting students with the appropriate campus resources, 18% needed help changing classes, and the remaining 9% are actively being addressed. Please continue to refer students through Eagles 360 as soon as you suspect the student may be in need of additional support and/or resources. Together we are stronger! In addition to working student referrals, this amazing group of individuals follow-up on feedback received through our Elmo the Eagle tool. We appreciate all the work START is doing to connect with and support our students.



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**FERPA Training:** With support of the Chadron State College administration and the Nebraska State College System, we are providing our annual Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA) training. In an effort to educate faculty and staff about the importance of FERPA and protecting our student information, this is a mandatory training for those of you who received an email from the Registrar on Sept. 9, 2025. The training must be completed on or before Oct. 15.

**Software Updates:** After several months of planning, training, and programming, the new *Stellic* graduate-student degree audit platform became available in early September. This will replace the existing one (for graduate students only), and it includes a 'Plan' feature that will take place of the "paper" plans of study that have previously been used. Substitutions can be requested through the degree audit system as well, so the traditional substitution form for graduate students will be eliminated in the near future. This is phase one of our *Stellic* implementation with additional enhancements to come.

*CourseDog* is a package that incorporates scheduling software, among other features, that will allow us to make better projections for course demand, room capacity utilization, and balancing days/times of course offerings. We plan to start rolling it out in November for building courses for Summer and Fall 2026.

**Happenings Across Academic Affairs:** Sutton Pohlman, an RHOP student and current graduate student in the MBA program, was highlighted by the Chadron Community Hospital as he successfully completed his summer internship.

Dr. Cassie Ritzen's Principles of Marketing students hosted the Child Development Center on Sept. 12 for an "Imagination Workshop." The goal of this experiential learning project was to remind all learners of the importance of using one's imagination.

### **Athletics**

Chadron State athletics is back in full swing with competition dates underway for football, volleyball, women's golf, rodeo and cross country.

The football team is off to a 3-0 start in conference play after a Homecoming win over Colorado Mesa. This week, the Eagles will play at Adams State.

The volleyball program began the season by successfully hosting the Eagle Classic, a 12-match, six-team tournament that brought five other visiting schools to the Chicoine Center from September 4-6. Volleyball began Rocky Mountain Athletic Conference play last week and pushed defending RMAC tournament finalists Colorado Christian to five sets in its first match. The Eagles are also coming off a Homecoming and Hall of Fame win against Western Colorado in three sets.



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Women's golf has competed three times, in Colorado, Minnesota, and Wyoming. Youth is a theme for that program, with just one competing senior, three competing sophomores and two true freshmen in the starting lineup. One of the freshmen, Macy Kleve, was CSC's top finisher at the Travis Roy Memorial Invite. This past weekend, the team finished in second place behind Minnesota State.

The Eagle rodeo team has had multiple event winners at the opening two rodeos of the season, with Cinch Kiger winning bareback riding at the Chadron rodeo and Bridget Romey winning barrels at the Riverton rodeo. The Eagles, as usual, kicked off the season by hosting the Chadron rodeo at the Dawes County Fairgrounds from September 5-7.

### **Administration and Finance**

**Budget:** We are still in the process of finalizing the budget for this fiscal year. The enrollment decline of approximately 8% has had a significant impact on our financial planning, and as a result this will be a particularly challenging year.

Given these constraints we are asking all departments to prioritize spending strictly on essential activities. Every decision must be made with fiscal responsibility in mind.

As part of the efforts to respond effectively to this enrollment decline, Academic Affairs has been working diligently to align our course offerings with current student demand. Our goal is to ensure that students remain on track for graduation. This work is ongoing, and adjustments will continue as we monitor enrollment trends and student needs.

We recognize that the months ahead may involve difficult conversations and decisions. We appreciate your continued commitment, flexibility, and collaboration as we navigate this together.

**Success Factors:** Human Resources has been working with the University of Nebraska and the System Office on the implementation of Success Factors and a new Position Description tool. The soft launch of Success Factors and the Position Description tool began in late June, and all future positions will be posted with Success Factors. There will be no changes to the bi-weekly posting/hiring process for at least the Fall semester, and additional updates will be provided as more information is available.

**Drug and Alcohol Training for Supervisors:** Human Resources emailed Drug and Alcohol training for supervisors Sept. 15. If you are a supervisor, this is required training.

**Math Science COIL:** The drainage work around the south side of the building started a couple weeks ago. There is some electrical work that also needs to be completed in the same area. A timeline will be developed once the electrical subcontractor has analyzed the area.

The 1% for Art installation project, Field Work(s) is complete. The 1% for Art committee will publicly dedicate the three-part sculpture in steel Thursday, Oct. 9 at 1 p.m. at Math Science COIL. A reception will follow.



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**Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (CSLFRF) water main replacement:** The second phase of this project started in May with the replacement of the water main between the Student Center and Burkhiser and the addition of a water main between 10th St. and Shelton St. to the Student Center in front of Kent Hall. These sections were completed in June and put into operation in the beginning of August. There is still some landscaping to be repaired. The second phase also included the replacement of the water main at 10th and Main St. to the Heating Plant. This section started in July and was delayed to the first week of September. The last section of main street had the concrete poured Sept. 5 and main street was opened one week later. This project is funded by federal funds passed through the State of Nebraska to CSC.

**Old Admin elevator repairs:** The elevator equipment arrived on campus Sept. 8 and TK Elevator's crew arrived on campus a day later to start work on this project. The project is estimated to take 2-3 months. This project is funded by the 309 Task Force for Building Renewal.

**West Court and Brooks Hall asbestos abatement:** Asbestos abatement projects are moving forward for both West Court and Brooks Hall. Abatement is complete at West Court, and we are awaiting a price estimate for the demolition of the building. We would like to have the demolition completed by the end of the Fall 2025 semester, but it will depend on the estimate and contractor availability. This demolition is funded through facility fees.

For Brooks Hall, the College received a proposal for abatement monitoring, with abatement to be bid out in Fall 2025 and completed in early 2026, followed by demolition. This project is funded through contingency maintenance funds.

**Sparks Hall:** This project is substantially complete and the contractor is working through the final punch list. There were several sections of sidewalk damaged as part of this project, so the contractor has been busy replacing these sections of sidewalk. The project should be completed before the middle of October. This project is funded by the 309 Task Force for Building Renewal.

**King Library and Nelson Physical Activity Center:** A 2022 windstorm caused roof damage to both the King Library and the Nelson Physical Activity Center. While temporary repairs were made, permanent fixes are still needed. CSC submitted both projects for emergency funding through the 309 Task Force for Building Renewal; however, due to competing priorities, we were asked to resubmit this fall. We are optimistic the 309 Task Force for Building Renewal will assist with these repairs or replacements. If we are awarded funding for these projects, we will work on bidding the projects out as quickly as possible so that we can hopefully have the work completed next summer.

**Deaeration tank replacement in the Sheaman Heating Plant:** TSP is finalizing the design for the tank replacement. Once the design is complete, the project will be bid out with the intent for work to be started after Spring 2026 commencement. This tank replacement will require a portion of the Heating Plant roof to be removed and replaced. The project is funded by the 309 Task Force for Building Renewal.



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**Boiler #3 replacement and Boiler #4 repair in the Sheman Heating Plant:** The repair to boiler #3 was completed in May, and TSP's design for the boiler #4 replacement is complete. CSC received the estimated cost for the replacement of boiler #4 and is working through options. Due to the cost, it is possible the college will have to adjust the design of the replacement boiler. Due to the lead time for the boiler and the length of installation, this replacement will likely occur after the Spring 2027 commencement, as this project will require a portion of the Heating Plant roof to be removed and replaced. The project timeline is 45-55 weeks after finalizing the contract. The project is funded by the 309 Task Force for Building Renewal.

The college has also contracted with TSP to complete a study concerning the four boilers and chillers in the Sheaman Heating Plant. This study will allow the college to make decisions regarding a phased replacement of boilers #1, #2, and #3 in the Heating Plant. This portion of the project is funded with facility fees.

**Dining Hall renovation:** The dining hall renovation is complete with the exception of the installation of a graphic. Students have been using the newly renovated space since the end of July. This project was funded by Fresh Ideas and contingency maintenance funds.

**Backyard project:** The Backyard project kicked off with Lee Davies Architecture at the end of April. Lee Davies completed the schematic design and is currently working on design development. CSC is hopeful the design development and construction documents can be completed in time to bid the project out this fall, so that the project can be completed next summer. This project was requested by the Student Senate and is being funded with student activity fees.

**Utility tunnel repair along Main Street:** The utility tunnel north and south along the west side of Main Street requires repair. There is a degraded section of this tunnel running in front of the Sandoz Center which requires a sidewalk closure. We submitted an emergency funding request with the 309 Task Force for Building Renewal, and we are optimistic they will provide funding for this repair.

**Other Maintenance/Facility Updates:** Several projects are ongoing. Please read below for further information.

- The NPAC weight room received upgraded LED lights this summer with funding provided by the 309 Task Force for Building Renewal. Maintenance staff installed new ceiling tiles after the LED lights were installed. Additionally, the lobby and upper-level hallways were painted.
- Rasmussen Mechanical installed the Work Hall and Wing steam hot water heat station this summer but there are some steam reducing and relief valves that still need to be installed. CSC is finalizing the contract with TSP and the work will be completed as soon as possible.
- Maintenance staff will be removing some diseased cedar trees on the west side of the Sandoz Center. These trees are impacting the foundation of the building and have cedar rust. The only option is to remove these trees.
- The CDC fence has been repaired, and parking barricades have been installed.
- CSC is working through elevator challenges in High Rise and the King Library. We are hopeful the parts and repairs can be completed soon.



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### Student Affairs

Students are encouraged to utilize the Eagle Rewards app for the most up to date campus event information and to earn points towards prizes.

Campus Security will assist students and employees by providing a jump pack to help start vehicles with dead batteries. Requests can be made by calling Security at 308-432-6037. As a reminder, please lock office doors when not occupied and upon departure each day.

The Title IX Coordinator search process is in progress, and the current Interim Title IX Coordinator is Jody Motz. A reminder that violations can be reported by:

- Calling the 24/7 Title IX Helpline at 308-430-0980
- Submitting concerns through the Eagles360 reporting form
- Emailing [titleixcoordinator@csc.edu](mailto:titleixcoordinator@csc.edu)

September was Mental Health Awareness month, and campus recognized that with a variety of events and resource highlights:

On Sept. 2, a pinwheel garden event was hosted, where students and employees decorated and planted pinwheels along the sidewalk between the Student Center and COIL in remembrance of those individuals who have been lost to suicide.

On Sept. 17, Question, Persuade, Refer (QPR) suicide prevention training was provided. The next QPR training opportunity will be hosted Feb. 11, 2026, from 10 a.m. to noon. Sessions will be facilitated by Amy Carnahan and Christina Winters.

On Sept. 20, Student Affairs staff collaborated with the Cross Country team and DOVES to host a 5k run or 1 mile walk to raise awareness for suicide prevention awareness month and domestic violence awareness month. Non-perishable food and hygiene items were collected to support victims of domestic violence.

TimelyCare, CSC's new mental health support platform for students including virtual therapy sessions, has 143 registrations and counting. Please encourage students to download the app and utilize the digital mental health support options it has to offer 24/7. Students have the same access to CSC's three Licensed Student Counselors, as well as the Licensed Student Counselor dedicated for Strive/TRIO students.

Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) training will be conducted Oct. 13 from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Additional MHFA training opportunities are scheduled for Jan. 23, 2026, and April 29, 2026. All trainings are scheduled in the Student Center, Scottsbluff Room. Sessions are facilitated by Chelsea Turner.



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Fresh Ideas, CSC's contracted food provider, is eager to employ student workers looking for work opportunities. Fresh Ideas strives to be flexible with student schedules and provides a meal to each employee at the conclusion of every shift. Students can gain valuable food preparation and customer service skills.

### College Relations

College Relations has been busy partnering with many campus departments with their communication and marketing requests, and members of the department are actively meeting with academic chairs to discuss the college's brand identity. The department continues to produce content for a variety of audiences and encourages you to complete the information form for Chadron State College's [specialty license plate](#).

Employees are welcome to add information for display on their directory pages using the Update Your Directory Information form, which is [available online](#).

As a reminder, CSC's Brand Book is available for designers, vendors, and campus partners to apply CSC's visual and messaging standards consistently. If you have any questions about branding or how to apply the standards, please reach out to [College Relations](#). Please also feel free to download [brand assets online](#).

Also, please be sure to continue using the [CSC Digest](#) to promote your campus event.

### Information Technology

Updates from Information Technology include:

- [Board Policy 7018](#) was approved by the Board of Trustees during their September meeting. This policy was substantially revised to address IT product and services purchasing and contracting. Please take a few minutes to read the policy and feel free to contact Ann Burk with any questions. Please note that all technology purchases and contracts must have pre-approval from Ann Burk before proceeding with orders and contracts. Board Policies 6400 and 6401 were also modified to direct IT purchase and contracting guidance to Board Policy 7018.
- October is Cyber Security Awareness month. Information Security activities will take place including annual training. Please keep an eye on your email for announcements.
- The upgrade of CSC computers from Windows 10 to 11 is nearing completion and is on target to meet the Microsoft End of Support date of Oct. 14. If you have a personal computer running Windows 10, you can upgrade for free provided your computer meets the minimum hardware requirements and you have compatible Windows 10 version. You can [check your PC eligibility from your computer](#).
- Plans are underway to replace the network infrastructure (switches and wireless access points) in the Library and Edna Work Hall and Wing. Work will be scheduled to minimize disruption. Advance notification will be provided via email. Please contact Ann Burk with questions.



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- IT continues to work with functional offices to implement *Coursedog* curriculum software and *Stellic* degree management software. Thanks to all of the exceptional and hard work going into these implementations!

### Conclusion

With mid-term break right around the corner, I hope that everyone's fall semester is going well. I'm looking forward to seeing the fall colors of the region and the cooler weather that comes with it. Soar Eagles!