



March 1, 2024

Dr. Nick Swayne  
President  
North Idaho College  
1000 West Garden Avenue  
Coeur d'Alene, ID 83814

Dear President Swayne:

This letter serves as formal notification and official record of action taken by the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU) at its meeting on January 30-February 2, 2024, concerning the Fall 2023 Special Report of North Idaho College.

### **Accreditation**

Accept the Report

### **Status of Previous Recommendations Addressed in this Evaluation**

- Recommendation 1: Spring 2022 Special Report - Fulfilled
- Recommendation 2: Spring 2022 Special Report - Continued as Non-Compliant and revised
- Recommendation 3: Spring 2022 Special Report - Continued as Needs Improvement and revised
- Recommendation 12: Spring 2023 Special Report - Fulfilled
- Recommendation 2: Spring 2023 Special Report - Continued as Non-Compliant and revised
- Recommendation 4: Spring 2023 Special Report - Consolidated into Recommendation 3: Spring 2022 Special Report
- Recommendation 5: Spring 2023 Special Report - Continued as Non-Compliant
- Recommendation 6: Spring 2023 Special Report - Continued as Non-Compliant and revised
- Recommendation 7: Spring 2023 Special Report - Continued as Non-Compliant

### **Recommendations Substantially in Compliance but in Need of Improvement**

The Commission recommends that North Idaho College:

- Recommendation 4: Spring 2023 Special Report is consolidated into Recommendation 3: Spring 2022 Special Report.
- Recommendation 3: Spring 2022 Special Report -
  - The institution works to rebuild its administrative and academic leadership team. The appointment of a permanent president utilizing a process that permits an appropriate level of engagement by institutional stakeholders. (Standards 2.A.3, 2.A.4)
  - Hiring for the currently vacant/interim Vice President positions after the permanent president is identified. (Standard 2.A.2) (2020 Standard(s) 2.A.2; 2.A.3; 2.A.4)
- Recommendation 8: Spring 2023 Special Report – As per NIC policy, the President should create a strong new board member on-boarding program as well as ongoing development related to board governance, roles and responsibilities, effective participation, conflict of interest identification and ethics. This Recommendation (part 1) is revised as Recommendation 1: Fall 2023 Special Report – The President should create a strong new board member on-boarding program for the Board of Trustees. (Standards 2.A.1)

### **Recommendations Out of Compliance**

The Commission finds that the following (revised) Recommendations are areas where North Idaho College is out of compliance with the NWCCU Standards for Accreditation. According to U.S. Department of Education Regulation

34 CFR 602.20 and Commission Policy, the Commission requires that North Idaho College take appropriate action to ensure these Recommendations are addressed and resolved within three years of the issuance of the first Sanction on April 1, 2022.

The Commission considered and approved a *Plan for North Idaho College* that includes non-compliant Recommendations identified in this letter and the rescheduling of the Special (Show Cause) Visit to October 2024. The Plan, attached, also provides guidance on the work and documentation required to demonstrate fulfillment of the Recommendations.

The Commission recommends that North Idaho College:

- Recommendation 2: Spring 2022 Special Report - The Board of Trustees adheres to institutional and Board policies, particularly those pertaining to appropriate roles and responsibilities, expectations, professional conduct and ethics, and grievance procedures. (2020 Standard(s) 2.A.1;2.D.2;ER 9)
- Recommendation 2: Spring 2023 Special Report - The Board of Trustees must resolve the issues underpinning all "No Confidence" resolutions and provide evidence of a willingness to work with and support faculty, staff, and students when their concerns are communicated. (2020 Standard(s) 2.D.2;ER 7)
- Recommendation 5: Spring 2023 Special Report - The Board must advance specific policies, procedures, and take timely and definitive action to mitigate or eliminate the risks identified in the NWCCU Show Cause letter. (2020 Standard(s) ER 9)
- Recommendation 6: Spring 2023 Special Report - The Board of Trustees works in partnership with college president, leadership, and stakeholders to identify, create, and execute internal and external strategic initiatives with clear goals, metrics, and milestones for achievement of the same. (2020 Standard(s) 1.B.4)
- Recommendation 7: Spring 2023 Special Report - The Board and College President should ensure that they adhere to the inclusivity articulated in the college's planning and decision-making processes. The Board and College President should demonstrate a commitment to an environment respectful of meaningful discourse, in their official capacities and when interacting with each other. (2020 Standards: Std. 2-Preamble)
- Recommendation 8: Spring 2023 Special Report – As per NIC policy, the President should create a strong new board member on-boarding program as well as ongoing development related to board governance, roles and responsibilities, effective participation, conflict of interest identification and ethics. This Recommendation (part 2) is revised as Recommendation 2: Fall 2023 Special Report – The Board of Trustees, should provide evidence of ongoing development related to board governance, roles and responsibilities, effective participation, conflict of interest identification and ethics that is sustainable. (Standards 2.A.1, 2.D.3)
- Recommendation 10: Spring 2023 Special Report - The Board of Trustees must act to unequivocally identify one CEO/President for the institution, with a valid contract and a clear understanding of conditions of employment, rights, responsibilities, and criteria and procedures for evaluation, retention, and termination. (ER 10, Standards 2.A.3, 2.F.1)
- Recommendation 11: Spring 2023 Special Report - The Board of Trustees in partnership with the college president and leadership should resolve current litigation, governance, and accreditation issues that have had a current and immediate impact on actual, current, and budgeted expenditures to ensure long-term financial stability of the institution. (Standards 2.E.2; ER 19)

#### **Future Evaluations**

- Special Report Fall 2024 (Show Cause Visit)
  - Recommendation 2: Spring 2022 Special Report
  - Recommendation 1: Spring 2023 Special Report
  - Recommendation 2: Spring 2023 Special Report
  - Recommendation 3: Spring 2023 Special Report
  - Recommendation 5: Spring 2023 Special Report
  - Recommendation 6: Spring 2023 Special Report
  - Recommendation 7: Spring 2023 Special Report
  - Recommendation 10: Spring 2023 Special Report

- Recommendation 11: Spring 2023 Special Report
  - Recommendation 2: Fall 2023 Special Report
- Mid-Cycle Review Fall 2025
  - Recommendation 1: Spring 2020 Mission Fulfillment and Sustainability
  - Recommendation 2: Spring 2020 Mission Fulfillment and Sustainability
  - Recommendation 3: Spring 2022 Special Report
  - Recommendation 1: Fall 2023 Special Report
- Year 6 - Standard 2 - Policies, Regulations, and Financial Review Spring 2026
- Year 7 - Evaluation of Institutional Effectiveness Spring 2027

NWCCU is committed to an accreditation process that adds value to institutions while contributing to public accountability, and we thank you for your continued support of this process. If you have questions about any of the information in this letter, please contact your staff liaison, Dr. Ron Larsen, at [rlarsen@nwccu.org](mailto:rlarsen@nwccu.org).

Sincerely,



Sonny Ramaswamy  
President

cc: Dr. Steven Kurtz, Accreditation Liaison Officer  
Mr. Mike Waggoner, Board of Trustees Chair  
Dr. Renee Coffman, President, Roseman University of Health Sciences  
Mr. Matt Freeman, Executive Director, Idaho State Board of Education