

Resolution No. 26-20**Approval of President's Annual Goals for
Fiscal Year 2026**

WHEREAS, The Board of Trustees of Governors State University (the "Board" and "University," respectively) was created on January 1, 1996, by Public Act 89-4 to operate, manage, control, and maintain Governors State University in accordance with the rights, powers, and duties vested by law in the Board; and

WHEREAS, The Board is comprised of eight members, seven of whom are appointed by the Governor of Illinois with the advice and consent of the Senate, and one of whom is a Governors State University student selected by student peers; and

WHEREAS, In accordance with Governors State University Law, 110 ILCS 670/15-190, and Article I, Section 4 of the Board Bylaws, the Board is required to periodically assess the president's performance; and

WHEREAS, Pursuant to Paragraph D of that Employment Agreement by and between the Board and Joyce C. Ester, PhD with a term beginning July 1, 2025 ("Employment Agreement"), the president has a contractual duty to submit her goals to the Board annually and the Board has a contractual duty to provide feedback on and approve said goals annually; and

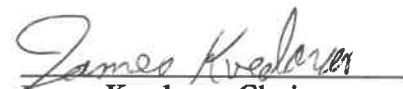
WHEREAS, President Ester has submitted those goals attached hereto as Exhibit A for fiscal year 2026 (the "Goals"); and

WHEREAS, The Board finds that approving the Goals is appropriate and in the best interests of the University.

Now, therefore, it is:

Resolved, that the Board approves the Goals.

Approved October 27, 2025


James Kvedaras, Chair
Board of Trustees
Karen Nunn, Secretary
Board of Trustees

2025-2026 Annual Goals for President Joyce C. Ester, PhD
As Approved by the Board on October 27, 2025

Below are the agreed-upon goals and related expected activities to help the Board of Trustees (the Board) evaluate President Ester's first year as the seventh president of Governors State University (the University). In the future, these goals will align with the four pillars of the University's Strategic Framework: *Better Together*, the KPIs for which are still in development. The goals below reflect the realities of being in her inaugural year and the nascent stage of the new Strategic Framework.

While the Board retains the sole discretion in its reviews of the president's performance and determination of progress made as part of its annual review, the following items present a framework of focus areas for the president's actions, in alignment with the University's Strategic Framework. It is acknowledged that some items may take an extended period of time to realize significant success or to be fully implemented, and that outside influences beyond the University's control may positively or negatively impact the president's performance. The Board will take these factors into consideration as it conducts its annual reviews, but will look to focus areas below as the primary guidelines for its deliberations.

For this, her first year, President Ester's focus should be on evaluating the University's operations and results relative to its mission, to determine areas of future focus, which will be the basis for determining areas of focus for future years of her tenure.

I. Establish a Leadership Presence on Campus and Beyond

It is expected that President Ester will engage in the following types of activities as she establishes herself in her new role:

- Establish a strong presence on campus through leading and participating in campus events
- Meet regularly with inside and outside stakeholders , including but not limited to students, alumni, trustees, employees, shared governance senate leaders, union representatives, elected officials, local employers, community members, and donors to understand their priorities and areas of concern
- Establish strong working relationships with the Board, relying primarily on the Board Chair as her point of contact, with an emphasis on timely and transparent communication

- Evaluate, and establish strong working relationships with the President's Cabinet to understand members' key accomplishments in their roles and strategic plans for their respective areas
- Meet regularly with representatives of the Illinois Board of Higher Education, other Illinois State Universities, and public Community Colleges to establish relationships and a shared understanding of opportunities and challenges facing public higher education in Illinois

II. Develop Deep Understanding of Current University Operations and Student Success Metrics

It is expected that President Ester will engage in the following types of activities as she learns the University's operations and student performance indicators:

- Conduct a deep dive to understand the operations of and challenges facing core University areas, including academic planning, athletics, communications, enrollment planning, finance and fundraising, government relations, human resources, legal and regulatory risks, and student affairs to ensure that University operations are aligned with the Illinois Board of Higher Education's strategic plan: *A Thriving Illinois*
- Review and evaluate accessibility of data and effectiveness of data-informed decision-making processes
- Review and evaluate the economic impact of the University on the region and state and assess methods for increasing the University's impact, as well as its reputation in the state and beyond
- Explore new programmatic/degree offerings that align with workforce needs in the region and state
- Review and conduct root cause analysis of key student performance metrics to the extent they require improvement, including drops/fails/withdrawal rates (DFWs), retention, persistence, and completion rates, and graduate outcome rates (i.e., first destination surveys)
- Evaluate the relationship between the University and the University Foundation and identify opportunities for alternative revenue growth
- Evaluate need and opportunities for additional on-campus housing
- Review and evaluate campus culture and climate relative to mission, vision, and values

III. Establish Multiyear Plan for Strategic Success

It is expected that President Ester will engage in the following types of activities to aid in her planning for future years:

- Manage the continuing development of the Strategic Framework, ensuring appropriate, departmental-level KPIs are adopted, measured, and pursued
- Evaluate and, as necessary, enhance the budgeting process, including establishing multiyear financial goals and focusing on clarity, accuracy, transparency, financial responsibility, and transparency
- Evaluate and, as necessary, enhance existing processes for Cabinet member performance reviews with the goal of measuring individual performance in alignment with University goals
- Propose multiyear goals and KPIs for future years of presidency