KISHWAUKEE COLLEGE

Agriculture (AGT) and Horticulture (HOR) Advisory Committee

Meeting Date: November 5, 2026

External Participants:
Matthew Fredrickson – Vice President of Operations, Hampshire Farms
Josh Pepping – Section Grower, Hampshire Farms
Karson Paris – Associate Director, Rooted for Good
Zack Tentinger – President, Tentinger Landscapes
Larry Hubbard – Owner, Pepper Creek
Vicky Hubbard – Owner, Pepper Creek
Matt Ewert – Landscape Architect, Western DuPage Landscaping
Jenny Wold – District 2 Program Advisor, FCAE Local Program Support
Chris Bausman – General Manager, Crimson Valley
Catherine Marsh – Horticulturist, Anderson Japanese Garden

Internal Participants:
Dr. Jessica Berek – Interim Vice President of Instruction
Jescelynne Gibbons – Dean of Instruction
Kristine Adzovic – Associate Dean of Instruction
Janet Gallagher – Horticulture Faculty
Sean Walters – Biology and Horticulture Faculty
Kimberly Rotella – Greenhouse/Grounds Specialist
Julie Griffith – Academic Advisor
Laura Gregory – Coordinator of Employment & Job Placement Services
Catherine Macias – Administrative Specialist I

I. College Updates

A. FY27 College Goals
   i. Student Learning Outcomes (SLO) are being revised to emphasize essential employability skills across all courses.

B. College Events
   i. Evening at Kish is scheduled for Thursday, November 5, 2026, from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.
   ii. The Career Technical Education (CTE) Open House was held on Thursday, October 15, 2026, for prospective students and community members.

C. Digital Badges
   i. Digital badges are verified credentials that showcase specific skills, allowing employers to view and verify a candidate's competencies and achievements.

ii. The College is exploring software that could support digital badging so students could highlight specific skills or the completion of the AI credential, for example.

D. Spring Advisory
   i. College-wide advisory committee meeting will be held on April 7, 2027, from 11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

II. Department Updates

A. Fall Semester Updates
   i. Overall college enrollment is down slightly (-1.7%).
   ii. Department Enrollment
      1. Agriculture credit hours decreased from 131 in Fall 2025 to 116 in Fall 2026, a decline of approximately 15 credit hours.
      2. Horticulture credit hours decreased from 338 to 326 between Fall 2025 and Fall 2026, a decline of approximately 12 credit hours.
   iii. Compeer Grant
      1. The College was offered the opportunity to apply for a grant from the Compeer Foundation, up to $100,000.
      2. The College opted to wait until the second round of the grant which is scheduled to open summer 2027.
         a. This will allow for the completion of the Greenhouse and sufficient time to see what may be needed to support that space.
         b. There is no penalty for waiting to apply; funds are available in round 2.

B. Greenhouse
   i. The new greenhouse is nearing completion but not yet complete.
   ii. A ribbon cutting event will be rescheduled during the Spring semester. Additional information will be communicated throughout Kishwaukee's marketing platforms.

III. Partner Updates

A. Hiring/Labor Market Needs
   i. Businesses across industry are doing well and busy with the holiday season approaching.
   ii. Middle schools and high schools are seeing an increase in agriculture and horticulture courses. The goal is to expand opportunities younger, starting in middle school. National Future Farmers of America (FFA) is in high demand in high school and now middle schools are exploring programs.