



**BALL STATE
UNIVERSITY**

Office of the President

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES
COMMENTS BY GEOFFREY S. MEARNs
May 2, 2025**

I want to begin my remarks by expressing my gratitude to you, our trustees, for reappointing Dave Heeter as a member of the Muncie Community Schools Board of Trustees. As all of you know, Dave has served on the board since the partnership between MCS and our University began in 2018. Dave's business experience and leadership experience have been of great benefit to the school board, and he is a proud graduate of Muncie Central High School. I am grateful for his willingness to continue serving in a role that demonstrates his commitment to the children of Muncie and to our community.

I am also grateful to my colleagues as we work to develop a balanced budget for fiscal year 2026.

As you know, our annual operating appropriations were reduced by 5%, and the state budget director may also hold back an additional 5%. While these reductions are unfortunate, I am confident that we will manage this fiscal challenge

without impairing our ability to support our students and to continue serving our community.

Our budget proposal for the next fiscal year will be presented to the Board on June 13, 2025. During this same meeting, we will also make our recommendation for proposed tuition rates and student fees for the next two years.

During that meeting, I will also present my recommendation for the next iteration of our long-term strategic plan.

As we prepare the path to our bright future on a strong fiscal foundation, I am all the more grateful to our benefactors for their generous support of our University. As you just heard from Jean Crosby and her team, we had another successful One Ball State Day—our “lucky number seven,” in terms of this annual event.

This year, we raised approximately \$1.3 million and received more than 7,800 gifts—making April 2, 2025, our largest single day of giving yet. These gifts enable us to continue empowering our students, supporting our faculty and our staff, and serving our friends and neighbors. As always, I remain grateful to Jean and to our colleagues at the Foundation—and to all of our campus partners—for all they do to ensure that our donors continue to answer the call to Beneficence.

Finally, I am excited to welcome everyone to tomorrow’s Spring Commencement ceremony. It will be a privilege to recognize those graduates who

have completed their degree requirements this Spring. Tomorrow, we will honor approximately 2,800 women and men for the various degrees that they have earned. I am proud of their accomplishments.

And I look forward to seeing all of you tomorrow morning on our beautiful—dry and sunny—Quad.

Thank you.