TO        : Carolyn Gabel
FROM : Kent Hanson, Vice President of Academic & Student Affairs
DATE  : June 15, 2009
SUBJ  : NCTC Response – OLA Report on Occupational Programs-Advisory Committees

Northland Community and Technical College’s approach to findings related to the legislative audit regarding program advisory committees is as follows:

1. Update the college’s advisory committee’s policy (#3330). This policy is planned to be updated to better reflect and align with key elements of the MnSCU Office of the Chancellor and Minnesota State College Faculty Program Advisory Committee Handbook. With high levels of turnover in the academic deans positions as well as turnover in key faculty positions now and into the future, a much more detailed college policy will assure compliance with the expectations of the system and key aspects of the Handbook. It is expected that this policy revision will be taken to the college academic affairs and standards council in the fall semester of FY10.

2. A review of key elements of the Program Advisory Committee Handbook is planned to be conducted during a dedicated session during pre-service in August 2009.

3. Program advisory committee rosters will be updated in the fall semester FY10. Advisory committee rosters will also be discussed during the August in-service.

4. The college has also made significant efforts to elevate the importance of and support for program advisory committees by hosting campus program advisory committee meetings where many advisory committees meet on the same evening on each campus. The meetings are launched by a welcome statement from the president and/or vice president of academic and student affairs outlining the importance of advisory committees and their role in the college. Advisory committee members have dinner together with representatives of the college prior to breaking out into their respective committees. This practice has existed on the Thief River Falls campus, but was just recently introduced in April 2009 on the East Grand Forks campus with positive results. This process gives administration a chance to get an overall feel for how productive the committees are. Additionally, it gives administration a chance to connect with several key advisory committee members; both formally by attending meetings and informally during dinner. In the future the plan is to utilize this format to relay important information regarding the college’s updated advisory committee policy and practices.