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Included below is a press release regarding a meeting of the Ferris State University Board of Trustees. Further information is available by contacting Leah Nixon, assistant director of News Services.

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Ferris Board of Trustees Approve 2009-10 Tuition Rates

BIG RAPIDS – The Ferris State University Board of Trustees voted to raise 2009-10 tuition by 5.33 percent at its regular meeting Wednesday, July 8. The trustees also voted to rebate to students all economic stimulus funds the university anticipates receiving. Taken together, these actions will result in a net tuition increase of 3.67 percent for resident undergraduates, or \$11 more per credit hour.

“At Ferris we are doing everything possible to keep the unique educational opportunities we offer affordable so that current students can continue progressing toward graduation and new students can begin their studies without delay,” said incoming board Chair R. Thomas Cook of Fife Lake.

Wednesday’s board action continues a pattern of tuition restraint at Ferris. For the past five years, tuition at Ferris has risen a cumulative 13 percent for students carrying 12 credits hours or fewer, a rate of increase that is the lowest in the state, university officials said. To help achieve this, since 2001 Ferris has trimmed \$15 million from its base budget. During the last academic year alone, Ferris made budget reductions of \$2.5 million and has budgeted for an additional reduction of \$2.5 million. The range of cost containment measures includes delaying equipment purchases, to enacting energy conservation measures, to consolidating some positions. Many of these measures have been put forward by faculty and staff during a series of meetings and open campus forums.

Despite a 12.4 percent reduction in state funding since 2003 – a \$6.9 million decrease – the university has managed to become Michigan’s fastest growing university.

“In Michigan, larger enrollments do not mean larger appropriations,” Cook added. “State support does not increase with enrollment growth, which means that we have been working hard to meet the goal of doubling the number of college graduates without funding to fully make that a reality.”

To maintain the affordability of a Ferris education, the university also has shifted resources to support a major increase in financial aid. Since 2004, Ferris has more than doubled its financial aid to students to more than \$14 million. Also, the university has begun its *Opportunity@125* initiative to raise additional funds for students during these tough

economic times and to mark the university's 125th anniversary.

“The strength of our enrollment growth is an indication that students see Ferris’ career-oriented degrees as a path to success in these difficult times,” said President David Eisler. “As a university community we have worked together to maintain and expand opportunity for students in the face of the competing demands of record enrollment and decreased funding.”

The start of the 2009-10 academic year marks the 125th anniversary of Ferris State University as an institution of higher education. Founded as the Big Rapids Industrial School in 1884 by Woodbridge N. and Helen Gillespie Ferris with a class of 15 students, the university today enrolls more than 13,000 students at its main campus in Big Rapids, at Ferris-Grand Rapids and at more than 20 satellite locations across the state, as well as online. In addition to founding the university, Woodbridge N. Ferris also served two terms as Michigan Governor and one term as U.S. Senator from Michigan.

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