

Rating Action: Moody's places North Idaho College's ratings under review for downgrade

21 Dec 2022

New York, December 21, 2022 -- Moody's Investors Service has placed North Idaho College's A1 issuer and A2 revenue bond ratings under review for downgrade. The action affects \$7.9 million in rated debt.

RATINGS RATIONALE / FACTORS THAT COULD LEAD TO AN UPGRADE OR DOWNGRADE OF THE RATINGS

North Idaho College (NIC)'s A1 issuer and A2 revenue bond ratings are under review for downgrade. Governance considerations, including board structure risks, are a key consideration in this action. Due to board action, there has been significant turnover in presidential leadership, including recent placement of the current president, Dr. Swayne, on leave. The board itself has also experienced notable turnover with two members resigning triggering the state to appoint three members who were all replaced in November 2022 during a public election. Dysfunction of the board has resulted in NIC's loss of its insurer, a letter of warning from its accrediting body, NWCCU, in April, and again in December, and most recently, the resignation of NIC's legal counsel. The college also confronts litigation due to the placement of Dr. Swayne on leave. The board members' very public disputes with one another, college leadership and external parties are negatively impacting NIC's brand, which in turn, could negatively impact student demand and operations.

The college's board has not approved its fiscal 2022 audit, despite it being prepared and available for their review, resulting in deterioration of our assessment of the college's overall financial policy and strategy. However, performance is reportedly stable according to management, and in line with fiscal 2021. The college did benefit from a period of management stability during mid-2022 with three state-appointed members on the board and the hiring of a new president. However, healthy financial performance is less certain for fiscal 2023 despite increases in state aid and property taxes: ongoing board dysfunction, including the placement of the president on administrative leave, and the upcoming visit from NIC's accrediting body, has reportedly negatively impacted student interest, enrollment and retention.

Future reviews and resolution of the RUR will focus on receipt of timely financial information, including the fiscal 2022 audit, as well as a clear remediation plan as to how the college plans to stabilize its leadership vacuum, particularly in the office of the president, and address the concerns outlined by NIC's accrediting body, which is due to visit the college in April 2023. Notably, after the Board placed Dr. Swayne on leave and received a vote of no confidence from NIC's staff and faculty, NWCCU sent another letter to the college on December 17, 2022, cautioning that NIC may be out of compliance, with a deadline of January 4, 2023, to "show cause" for why they are actually in compliance with their accrediting body. Absent current financial information and meaningful steps taken to stabilize leadership and address accreditor's concerns, multi-notch rating action could be warranted.

NIC has historically played an important regional role as a provider of two-year education in northern Idaho. The college has historically reported good operating performance with increasing cash reserves and low debt. Further, NIC benefits from diverse revenue streams, including property taxes, state aid and tuition and fees. The student fee revenue bond ratings are currently rated one-notch below the A1 issuer rating, reflecting the limited pledge of specific student fees and auxiliary revenues and active management of the pledge, including the availability of auxiliary fund balance to support debt service coverage.

LEGAL SECURITY

The outstanding revenue bonds were issued by the North Idaho College Dormitory Housing Commission, which is a blended component unit of North Idaho College. The bonds are payable from a mandatory student union fee, net revenues of the dormitory system, and net revenues of the student union building, as well as fund balances from these revenues and fees. The bonds have a rate covenant requiring the college to generate pledged revenues sufficient to generate 1.25x annual debt service coverage. However, in recent years, the college has needed to utilize a portion of accumulated fund balances to reach the 1.25x covenant. In fiscal 2021, pledged revenues were approximately \$981 thousand, and the college designated \$353 thousand

in fund balance support in order to reach the 1.25x covenant.

PROFILE

North Idaho College is a community college with its main campus located in Coeur d'Alene, ID, and serving a five-county region. The college offers over 80 academic programs including associates degrees, certificates programs, and career and technical education. In fiscal 2021, the college generated nearly \$68 million in operating revenue and enrolled 4,577 students as of fall 2021.

METHODOLOGY

The principal methodology used in this rating was Higher Education Methodology published in August 2021 and available at <https://ratings.moody.com/api/rmc-documents/72158>. Alternatively, please see the Rating Methodologies page on <https://ratings.moody.com> for a copy of this methodology.

REGULATORY DISCLOSURES

For further specification of Moody's key rating assumptions and sensitivity analysis, see the sections Methodology Assumptions and Sensitivity to Assumptions in the disclosure form. Moody's Rating Symbols and Definitions can be found on <https://ratings.moody.com/rating-definitions>.

For ratings issued on a program, series, category/class of debt or security this announcement provides certain regulatory disclosures in relation to each rating of a subsequently issued bond or note of the same series, category/class of debt, security or pursuant to a program for which the ratings are derived exclusively from existing ratings in accordance with Moody's rating practices. For ratings issued on a support provider, this announcement provides certain regulatory disclosures in relation to the credit rating action on the support provider and in relation to each particular credit rating action for securities that derive their credit ratings from the support provider's credit rating. For provisional ratings, this announcement provides certain regulatory disclosures in relation to the provisional rating assigned, and in relation to a definitive rating that may be assigned subsequent to the final issuance of the debt, in each case where the transaction structure and terms have not changed prior to the assignment of the definitive rating in a manner that would have affected the rating. For further information please see the issuer/deal page for the respective issuer on <https://ratings.moody.com>.

Regulatory disclosures contained in this press release apply to the credit rating and, if applicable, the related rating outlook or rating review.

Moody's general principles for assessing environmental, social and governance (ESG) risks in our credit analysis can be found at https://ratings.moody.com/documents/PBC_1288235.

At least one ESG consideration was material to the credit rating action(s) announced and described above.

Please see <https://ratings.moody.com> for any updates on changes to the lead rating analyst and to the Moody's legal entity that has issued the rating.

Please see the issuer/deal page on <https://ratings.moody.com> for additional regulatory disclosures for each credit rating.

Heather Correia
Lead Analyst
Higher Education
Moody's Investors Service, Inc.
250 Greenwich Street
New York, NY 10007
U.S.A.
JOURNALISTS: 1 212 553 0376
Client Service: 1 212 553 1653

Rachael McDonald
Additional Contact
Housing
JOURNALISTS: 1 212 553 0376
Client Service: 1 212 553 1653

Releasing Office:
Moody's Investors Service, Inc.
250 Greenwich Street
New York, NY 10007
U.S.A
JOURNALISTS: 1 212 553 0376
Client Service: 1 212 553 1653



© 2023 Moody's Corporation, Moody's Investors Service, Inc., Moody's Analytics, Inc. and/or their licensors and affiliates (collectively, "MOODY'S"). All rights reserved.

CREDIT RATINGS ISSUED BY MOODY'S CREDIT RATINGS AFFILIATES ARE THEIR CURRENT OPINIONS OF THE RELATIVE FUTURE CREDIT RISK OF ENTITIES, CREDIT COMMITMENTS, OR DEBT OR DEBT-LIKE SECURITIES, AND MATERIALS, PRODUCTS, SERVICES AND INFORMATION PUBLISHED BY MOODY'S (COLLECTIVELY, "PUBLICATIONS") MAY INCLUDE SUCH CURRENT OPINIONS. MOODY'S DEFINES CREDIT RISK AS THE RISK THAT AN ENTITY MAY NOT MEET ITS CONTRACTUAL FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS AS THEY COME DUE AND ANY ESTIMATED FINANCIAL LOSS IN THE EVENT OF DEFAULT OR IMPAIRMENT. SEE APPLICABLE MOODY'S RATING SYMBOLS AND DEFINITIONS PUBLICATION FOR INFORMATION ON THE TYPES OF CONTRACTUAL FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS ADDRESSED BY MOODY'S CREDIT RATINGS. CREDIT RATINGS DO NOT ADDRESS ANY OTHER RISK, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO: LIQUIDITY RISK, MARKET VALUE RISK, OR PRICE VOLATILITY. CREDIT RATINGS, NON-CREDIT ASSESSMENTS ("ASSESSMENTS"), AND OTHER OPINIONS INCLUDED IN MOODY'S PUBLICATIONS ARE NOT STATEMENTS OF CURRENT OR HISTORICAL FACT. MOODY'S PUBLICATIONS MAY ALSO INCLUDE QUANTITATIVE MODEL-BASED ESTIMATES OF CREDIT RISK AND RELATED OPINIONS OR COMMENTARY PUBLISHED BY MOODY'S ANALYTICS, INC. AND/OR ITS AFFILIATES. MOODY'S CREDIT RATINGS, ASSESSMENTS, OTHER OPINIONS AND PUBLICATIONS DO NOT CONSTITUTE OR PROVIDE INVESTMENT OR FINANCIAL ADVICE, AND MOODY'S CREDIT RATINGS, ASSESSMENTS, OTHER OPINIONS AND PUBLICATIONS ARE NOT AND DO NOT PROVIDE RECOMMENDATIONS TO PURCHASE, SELL, OR HOLD PARTICULAR SECURITIES. MOODY'S CREDIT RATINGS, ASSESSMENTS, OTHER OPINIONS AND PUBLICATIONS DO NOT COMMENT ON THE SUITABILITY OF AN INVESTMENT FOR ANY PARTICULAR INVESTOR. MOODY'S ISSUES ITS CREDIT RATINGS, ASSESSMENTS AND OTHER OPINIONS AND PUBLISHES ITS PUBLICATIONS WITH THE EXPECTATION AND UNDERSTANDING THAT EACH INVESTOR WILL, WITH DUE CARE, MAKE ITS OWN STUDY AND EVALUATION OF EACH SECURITY THAT IS UNDER CONSIDERATION FOR PURCHASE, HOLDING, OR SALE.

MOODY'S CREDIT RATINGS, ASSESSMENTS, OTHER OPINIONS, AND PUBLICATIONS ARE NOT INTENDED FOR USE BY RETAIL INVESTORS AND IT WOULD BE RECKLESS AND INAPPROPRIATE FOR RETAIL INVESTORS TO USE MOODY'S CREDIT RATINGS, ASSESSMENTS, OTHER OPINIONS OR PUBLICATIONS WHEN MAKING AN INVESTMENT DECISION. IF IN DOUBT YOU SHOULD CONTACT YOUR FINANCIAL OR OTHER PROFESSIONAL ADVISER.

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED HEREIN IS PROTECTED BY LAW, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO, COPYRIGHT LAW, AND NONE OF SUCH INFORMATION MAY BE COPIED OR OTHERWISE REPRODUCED, REPACKAGED, FURTHER TRANSMITTED, TRANSFERRED, DISSEMINATED, REDISTRIBUTED OR RESOLD, OR STORED FOR SUBSEQUENT USE FOR ANY SUCH PURPOSE, IN WHOLE OR IN PART, IN ANY FORM OR MANNER OR BY ANY MEANS WHATSOEVER, BY ANY PERSON WITHOUT MOODY'S PRIOR WRITTEN CONSENT.

MOODY'S CREDIT RATINGS, ASSESSMENTS, OTHER OPINIONS AND PUBLICATIONS ARE NOT INTENDED FOR USE BY ANY PERSON AS A BENCHMARK AS THAT TERM IS DEFINED FOR REGULATORY PURPOSES AND MUST NOT BE USED IN ANY WAY THAT COULD RESULT IN THEM BEING CONSIDERED A BENCHMARK.

All information contained herein is obtained by MOODY'S from sources believed by it to be accurate and reliable. Because of the possibility of human or mechanical error as well as other factors, however, all information contained herein is provided "AS IS" without warranty of any kind. MOODY'S adopts all necessary measures so that the information it uses in assigning a credit rating is of sufficient quality and from sources MOODY'S considers to be reliable including, when appropriate, independent third-party sources. However, MOODY'S is not an auditor and cannot in every instance independently verify or validate information received in the credit rating process or in preparing its Publications.

To the extent permitted by law, MOODY'S and its directors, officers, employees, agents, representatives, licensors and suppliers disclaim liability to any person or entity for any indirect, special, consequential, or incidental losses or damages whatsoever arising from or in connection with the information contained herein or the use of or inability to use any such information, even if MOODY'S or any of its directors, officers, employees, agents, representatives, licensors or suppliers is advised in advance of the possibility of such losses or damages, including but not limited to: (a) any loss of present or prospective profits or (b) any loss or damage arising where the relevant financial instrument is not the subject of a particular credit rating assigned by MOODY'S.

To the extent permitted by law, MOODY'S and its directors, officers, employees, agents, representatives, licensors and suppliers disclaim liability for any direct or compensatory losses or damages caused to any person or entity, including but not limited to by any negligence (but excluding fraud, willful misconduct or any other type of liability that, for the avoidance of doubt, by law cannot be excluded) on the part of, or any contingency within or beyond the control of, MOODY'S or any of its directors, officers, employees, agents, representatives, licensors or suppliers, arising from or in connection with the information contained herein or the use of or inability to use any such information.

NO WARRANTY, EXPRESS OR IMPLIED, AS TO THE ACCURACY, TIMELINESS, COMPLETENESS, MERCHANTABILITY OR FITNESS FOR ANY PARTICULAR PURPOSE OF ANY CREDIT RATING, ASSESSMENT, OTHER OPINION OR INFORMATION IS GIVEN OR MADE BY MOODY'S IN ANY FORM OR MANNER WHATSOEVER.

Moody's Investors Service, Inc., a wholly-owned credit rating agency subsidiary of Moody's Corporation ("MCO"), hereby discloses that most issuers of debt securities (including corporate and municipal bonds, debentures, notes and commercial paper) and preferred stock rated by Moody's Investors Service, Inc. have, prior to assignment of any credit rating, agreed to pay to Moody's Investors Service, Inc. for credit ratings opinions and services rendered by it fees ranging from \$1,000 to approximately \$5,000,000. MCO and Moody's Investors Service also maintain policies and procedures to address the independence of Moody's Investors Service credit ratings and credit rating processes. Information regarding certain affiliations that may exist between directors of MCO and rated entities, and between entities who hold credit ratings from Moody's Investors Service, Inc. and have also publicly reported to the SEC an ownership interest in MCO of more than 5%, is posted annually at www.moody.com under the heading "Investor Relations — Corporate Governance — Charter Documents - Director and Shareholder Affiliation Policy."

Additional terms for Australia only: Any publication into Australia of this document is pursuant to the Australian Financial Services License of MOODY'S affiliate, Moody's Investors Service Pty Limited ABN 61 003 399 657AFSL 336969 and/or Moody's Analytics Australia Pty Ltd ABN 94 105 136 972 AFSL 383569 (as applicable). This document is intended to be provided only to "wholesale clients" within the meaning of section 761G of the Corporations Act 2001. By continuing to access this document from within Australia, you represent to MOODY'S that you are, or are accessing the document as a representative of, a "wholesale client" and that neither you nor the entity you represent will directly or indirectly disseminate this document or its contents to "retail clients" within the meaning of section 761G of the Corporations Act 2001. MOODY'S credit rating is an opinion as to the creditworthiness of a debt obligation of the issuer, not on the equity securities of the issuer or any form of security that is available to retail investors.

Additional terms for Japan only: Moody's Japan K.K. ("MJKK") is a wholly-owned credit rating agency subsidiary of Moody's Group Japan G.K., which is wholly-owned by Moody's Overseas Holdings Inc., a wholly-owned subsidiary of MCO. Moody's SF Japan K.K. ("MSFJ") is a wholly-owned credit rating agency subsidiary of MJKK. MSFJ is not a Nationally Recognized Statistical Rating Organization ("NRSRO"). Therefore, credit ratings assigned by MSFJ are Non-NRSRO Credit Ratings. Non-NRSRO Credit Ratings are assigned by an entity that is not a NRSRO and, consequently, the rated obligation will not qualify for certain types of treatment under U.S. laws. MJKK and MSFJ are credit rating agencies registered with the Japan Financial Services

Agency and their registration numbers are FSA Commissioner (Ratings) No. 2 and 3 respectively.

MJJK or MSFJ (as applicable) hereby disclose that most issuers of debt securities (including corporate and municipal bonds, debentures, notes and commercial paper) and preferred stock rated by MJJK or MSFJ (as applicable) have, prior to assignment of any credit rating, agreed to pay to MJJK or MSFJ (as applicable) for credit ratings opinions and services rendered by it fees ranging from JPY100,000 to approximately JPY550,000,000.

MJJK and MSFJ also maintain policies and procedures to address Japanese regulatory requirements.