



995 North Reed Avenue, Reedley, CA 93654 Phone: 559-638-3641 FAX: 559-638-5040

President's Office

December 21, 2011

Dr. Barbara A. Beno, President
Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges
Western Association of Schools and Colleges
10 Commercial Boulevard, Suite 204
Novato, CA 94949

RE: Supplemental information regarding Reedley College accreditation and the Willow International Community College Center application for candidacy

Dear President Beno and Commission Chair Michael Rota:

I am requesting, along with Dr. Deborah G. Blue, Chancellor of the State Center Community College District (SCCCD), the Commission's approval to forward this correspondence and the additional referenced information to the Commissioners for their consideration of Reedley College's accredited status and the Willow International Community College Center's candidacy status. Chancellor Blue was advised by Commission Vice President Pond via e-mail dated December 15, 2011, that presentation of this information to the Commission in a letter format does not require attendance at the Commission's meeting. This abbreviated update was prepared per instructions in the document titled *Appearing before the Commission*, "... keeping in mind the Commission cannot read and absorb large amounts of material on short notice."

This letter provides updates on the work Reedley College, Willow International Community College Center (Willow), Fresno City College and SCCCDC had initiated prior to the comprehensive accreditation evaluation visits October 17-20, 2011, and has continued at an accelerated pace since the team visits to address the observations, conclusions and recommendations to strengthen institutional effectiveness of Reedley College, Willow, and the District. During the visit, the coordinating team chair noted that planning for the transition of Willow through its application for candidacy and pursuit of initial accreditation should address the impacts of the separation of Willow from Reedley College on the college and its centers in Madera and Oakhurst, as well as the potential impacts on Fresno City College. He further noted that the District should consider the impacts of Willow's candidacy and initial accreditation in all its planning and resource allocation decisions.

The District recommendation in the final Reedley College and Willow International Community College Center evaluation reports is as follows:

"In order for the colleges and District to fully meet the intent of the previous recommendation, the State Center Community College District (SCCCD) must engage in continuous, timely, and deliberative dialogue with all District stakeholders to coordinate long-term planning and examine the impact of the planned increase in the number of colleges and the future roles of the centers on the existing institutions. This includes

creating, developing and aligning District and college plans and planning processes in the following areas:

- District strategic plan
- facilities
- technology
- organizational reporting relationship of centers
- location of signature programs
- funding allocation
- human resources
- research capacity (E.R. 4. Standards I.B.5, II.A, II.C.1a-c, II.C.2, III.A.2, III.B.2.a-b, III.C.1.c, III.D.1.a-c, III.D.2.a., IV.B.1.b, IV.B.3.c).”¹

The following summarizes the processes in which the Reedley College, Willow, Fresno City College and District leadership teams, councils, committees, and task forces are engaging to address districtwide governance, planning and resource allocation decision-making.

District Strategic Plan

The District strategic planning process is led by a district strategic planning workgroup under the guidance of consultants from the College Brain Trust: Dr. Fran White, retired Superintendent/President of the Marin Community College District; Ms. Julie Slark, retired Vice Chancellor for Planning and Research and Educational Services; and Ms. Dona Boatright, retired Vice Chancellor for the California Community Colleges System Office. The comprehensive process for development of the 2012-2016 District Strategic Plan is proceeding according to the schedule presented to the Board of Trustees on July 5, 2011 ([July 5, 2011 minutes](#), p. 10-11: *Approval of Recommended Timeline and Update for 2008-11 Strategic Plan*). At its special meeting, the Board received an update on the 2012-2016 District Strategic Plan timeline and process, which will be completed in May, 2012 ([December 13, 2011 Board agenda: 2012 - 2016 District Strategic Planning Process and Timelines; College Brain Trust Strategic Plan presentation](#)). The Colleges’ and Centers’ strategic plan updates are scheduled for 2013 to ensure alignment of District, College and Center strategic plans.

During spring 2011, a draft operating agreement was developed to establish and institutionalize a district strategic planning committee with representative membership from all colleges and centers. The operating agreement was discussed at the Chancellor’s Cabinet on [May 9, 2011](#). The draft document was presented to the District “governance body,” Communications Council, on [October 25](#) and [November 29](#), 2011. The draft agreement will be reviewed by Chancellor’s Cabinet and will then be presented to Communication Council for final review and consensus to approve in January, 2012.

Facilities

In 2009-10, Educational Master Plans were developed and approved by the Board of Trustees for the colleges and centers. In 2010-2011 SCCCD initiated a request for proposals to develop Facilities Master Plans for the colleges, centers and District Office. In June, the Board of Trustees approved a contract with an architectural firm, and the facilities master planning process was initiated with site assessments and review of the Educational Master Plans ([June 7, 2011 meeting minutes](#), p. 19: *Consideration to Authorize Agreement for Facilities Master Planning Services*). The facilities master planning processes have been discussed by the Chancellor’s Cabinet at its [July 11](#), [September 26](#), and [December 12](#) meetings.

¹ Page 25, *Evaluation Report, Reedley College*

At the SCCC Board of Trustees special meeting on December 13, 2011, the Associate Vice Chancellor of Business and Operations reported on the Districtwide Facilities Master Plan process, progress and timelines ([December 13, 2011 agenda: Facility Master Plan Update/Future District Bond Measure](#); [Facilities Master Plan presentation](#)) The report highlighted the facilities master planning organizational structure, activities to be carried out, progress to date, and the timeline for completion. The consultants, chief facilities officer, staff members at the colleges, centers and district office, the Chancellor's Cabinet and the Board of Trustees have been, are and will be engaged in the following activities: project initiation, site assessments, demographic analysis, educational program needs and alternative analysis, prioritization and funding analysis, staff and community dialogue, Board input and review, and final report for dialogue, review and final approval by the Board of Trustees by summer 2012.

Technology

On June 1, 2011 a district wide Technology Summit was convened for all information technology staff across the District ([June 7, 2011 Board meeting minutes, p. 6: Chancellor's Report](#)). This was the first initiative to engage in more deliberative dialogue among our technology staff regarding the issues and needs for more coordination of technology planning and initiatives at the colleges, centers and District Office.

At the initiation of the Chancellor, the technology firm Campus Works, Inc. conducted a "first look" districtwide Technology Assessment December 5-9, 2011. The Chancellor presented the SCCC Information Technology Assessment Summary Points at the Special Board of Trustees Meeting on December 13, 2011 ([December 13, 2011 agenda: Technology Assessment Update; Technology Assessment presentation](#)) The summary report will be followed by a presentation to the Board of Trustees by the CEO of Campus Works, Inc. and the team leader who conducted the assessment at a Special Board of Trustees Meeting on January 24, 2012. On that same day, campus forums will be held at the colleges and centers at which time the faculty, staff, administrators and students will hear the reports as well and have the opportunity to ask questions specific to their interests.

Organizational Reporting Relationship of Centers

On December 13, 2011, Dr. Terral Kershaw, Vice Chancellor of the North Centers, announced his retirement scheduled for June 30, 2012. The board began discussing the recruitment to replace him in closed session. ([December 13, 2011 agenda](#)). At that time, Chancellor Blue updated the Board of Trustees regarding the organizational reporting relationships that must be changed and the planning issues that must be addressed by Reedley College and the centers, Willow, Fresno City College and the District to advance the candidacy of Willow and demonstrate its readiness for being granted initial accreditation. In addition, the Board expressed an interest in the Chancellor bringing forward a title change recommendation for Dr. Kershaw's position. Dr. Kershaw's recommended title change to Campus President, as well as other recommended updates to the organizational charts of Reedley College and the District, will be presented to the Board for their discussion and further direction on January 10, 2012.

On December 5, 2011, a transitional staffing plan was discussed by the presidents, vice chancellors and chancellor with timelines for implementation in phase one by July 1, 2012, and phase 2 by July 1, 2013. The draft plan, will be presented to the Board during closed session on January 24, 2012. The faculty and staff at Reedley College, Willow, the Madera and Oakhurst Centers, as well as the Board of Trustees, have been informed that the North Centers must be separated, and that the proposed Campus President must have 100% responsibility for the Willow International Community College Center exclusively. The Board of Trustees have also been informed that transitional planning is in progress to realign administrative reporting

relations for the Madera and Oakhurst Center to Reedley College administrators, effective July 1, 2012.

The Chancellor has formalized the convening of weekly transitional staff planning meetings for Willow that include the presidents, vice chancellors, chancellor and other administrators on an on-call basis as needed. The meetings are identified on the Chancellor's Cabinet agenda and the outcomes will be noted in the meeting notes so there is evidence and transparency for the faculty, staff, administrators, students and Board of Trustees.

Location of signature programs

The Educational Coordination and Planning Committee (ECPC) is the district-wide body, led by the Associate Vice Chancellor for Educational Services and Workforce Development, that considers curriculum changes, including new courses and programs, modifications to courses and programs, and deletion of courses and programs for presentation and approval by the Board of Trustees. The Chancellor has discussed with the Associate Vice Chancellor the expansion of the scope of work of the ECPC to include location of signature programs at each college and center, commencing in the spring, 2012.

Funding Allocation

In May, 2011, the Chancellor convened a district-wide task force consisting of administrative, faculty, and classified staff from the colleges, centers and district office to develop a recommendation for a resource allocation model for the district. The task force has met bi-monthly since August, 2011, to review resource allocation models in place at other multi-campus districts statewide and to identify components of various models that might meet the needs of the district and its colleges and centers. The work of the Task Force will conclude with a recommendation to district-wide governance groups in the spring of 2012 ([RAMT agenda and meeting notes](#), November 4, 2011).

Human Resources

Willow International Community College Center (Willow) has developed a transitional staffing plan to insure adequate staffing if candidacy is granted in January 2012, as the center moves toward college status. This expedited plan includes seeking Board approval and the allocation of resources to initiate the hiring process in spring 2012 for new positions, and employment as well as transfer of existing employees from other campuses where overstaffing exists effective fall, 2012. The additional human resource allocation requests include: increasing a half-time Institutional Researcher shared with Reedley College to a full-time position for Willow; increasing staffing to insure all the operations of a college business office will be in place by fall 2012; re-classifying the Associate Business Manager position to a Vice President of Administration/Finance; hiring or transferring a staff member to create a new full-time Administrative Assistant to support the Vice President of Administration/Finance; hiring an Account Clerk III to assist with issuing checks and handling the co-curricular accounts; and hiring a curriculum analyst to assist the Vice President of Instruction and Student Services with setting up the curriculum database, establishing the Datatel course database for a separate college, revising the Reedley College Catalog to be reflective of Willow programs and services and assisting the Curriculum Committee with clerical duties as necessary.

Academic Senate release time will be granted starting in spring 2012 so faculty can begin transitioning the Faculty Association to a Faculty Senate and developing other committees as appropriate. The faculty will work collegially with the College Center Council to modify the current joint Reedley College Committees for Program Review and Student Learning Outcomes to separate Willow committees in these areas.

The staffing plan also includes additional positions that will need to be functional by fall 2014 should initial accreditation be granted by ACCJC. These positions include increasing a part-time Accounting Technician II to a full-time position. Willow International will also upgrade a Financial Aid Manager to a Director; establish new positions for a Financial Aid Assistant I, Financial Aid Assistant II and an Office Assistant III for the Financial Aid Office. The Technology Director will be increased from a part-time position currently shared with Reedley College to full-time position for the new college. The Admissions and Records Office will establish a new position for an Admissions and Records Specialist to handle evaluations. Part-time librarian assistance will be added to cover evening hours.

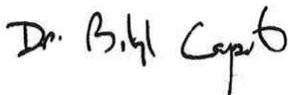
To increase the number of full-time faculty at Willow the Chancellor, Presidents of Reedley College and Fresno City College and Vice Chancellor of the North Centers have begun discussions in the Transitional Planning meetings that include reviewing vacant faculty positions across the District to identify existing full-time faculty assignments that can be transferred to Willow and new positions that must be created, recruited and filled and the timeline for doing so. In March 2010 the Board of Trustees was presented the first transitional staffing plan. The updated plan with associated budget projections for salary and benefits will be presented in spring 2012, commencing with the January Board of Trustees meetings on January 10 and 24, 2012.

Research Capacity

Currently, Reedley College and Willow share a full-time research coordinator who spends approximately 50% of her time at each location. The Willow transitional staffing plan includes adding a new full-time research coordinator to improve research capacity for the Center as it seeks accredited status.

As the colleges, centers and district office align districtwide planning processes to strengthen institutional effectiveness, structures will be put in place for building research capacity across the district to meet increased planning, resource allocation and decision-making needs. The District Office Admissions, Records and Institutional Research unit is undergoing its Administrative Services Unit Review (ASUR) this semester, to be concluded in January, 2012 ([ASUR presentation](#)). Findings from the ASUR process, as well as recommendations from the organizational study of district office services, conducted by The College Brain Trust in the fall of 2010, will be considered in planning for improvements of the district's research capacity. Chancellor Blue and I appreciate the opportunity to present this supplemental information to the Commission to assist in the consideration of the reaffirmation of accreditation for Reedley College and the application for candidacy of the Willow International Community College Center. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Dr. Mitjl Capet, President
Reedley College



Dr. Deborah G. Blue, Chancellor
State Center Community College District

Cc: State Center Community College District Board of Trustees
Dr. Jim Hattois, Reedley College Team Chair
Dr. Ron Taylor, Willow Team Chair
Mr. Peter Garcia, Coordinating Team Chair