



To: Faculty and Staff

From: Steve Kinslow

Date: October 4, 2005

Subject: GENERAL UPDATES

I hope everyone's semester is going well, it seems to be flying by too quickly for me. Some general information updates to share:

ENROLLMENT

ACC's official enrollment is nearly 32,000 credit students this Fall - an increase of 5.4%. Equally exciting is that we have experienced gains in high school graduates enrolling at ACC (36.2% increase over last Fall), and increases in attracting more minority students to the college (8.94% increase in Black/African American and 10.37% increase in Hispanic). Our *Closing the Gaps* efforts are working, and I thank you for your contribution to this success.

HURRICANES, CANCELED CLASSES LAST WEEKEND, & EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

ACC, UT Austin, and Texas State University canceled classes weekend before last based on concerns related to Hurricane Rita. While the weather changed and Austin had a very nice weekend, the decision made was rooted in concern that the storm's path could change multiple times, traffic related to evacuees, and a general decision to err on the side of caution. Departments were asked to contact Friday evening and weekend instructors, and the automated phone system was used to place calls to students in those weekend sections (in addition to signs posted on facilities' doors and information on our web and in the local media).

While we typically have only one or two closings per year related to inclement weather, I realize that any closing creates inconveniences for students, faculty and staff. I also realize that a decision to close, or a decision to remain open, will be subject to criticism anytime the decision has to be made. Your cooperation and understanding is appreciated.

Prior to Hurricane Rita I asked various ACC offices to come together to discuss ACC's emergency preparedness. While we have made great strides in this area, we still have things to do to ensure that in the event of any catastrophic event that the College is prepared to protect individuals, property and records and that we have multiple communications plans. The weekend closing allowed us a "practice run" in some of these areas, and we are continuing to develop a planning model. We will schedule some forums for student, faculty and staff input on these efforts sometime in the Spring Semester, through the Office of Risk Management.

RGC ABATEMENT COMPLETION

The asbestos and lead paint abatement project in Rooms 317, 318, and 318.1 and the cleaning of Room 221, as discussed in my August 15 memo, are now complete. The asbestos and lead paint abatement was performed by a licensed company and all regulatory requirements for asbestos and lead removal were met. As mentioned previously, the abatement was necessary before any of the third floor rooms could be remodeled. The remodeling is currently being planned.

During the abatement, licensed professionals also monitored for mercury vapors. This was done as a precaution since the third floor rooms had been used as a chemistry laboratory/storage area for a number of years. Prior to the abatement, containment systems were installed and crews operated under reduced air pressure to control the potential release of contaminants from the work areas during abatement activities.

Initial air testing in the adjoining third floor hallways prior to the abatement indicated there were no mercury vapor levels above recommended indoor air health guidelines. After demolition began and flooring materials were disturbed, mercury vapor levels in the enclosed work areas increased above the most stringent guidelines as recommended by the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS). Tests were conducted to ensure the vapors stayed within the containment and did not enter the hallways adjoining the work areas.

Faculty and staff are reminded that when the DSHS (then known as the Texas Department of Health) originally tested the building it suggested that the College do additional testing IF it did major renovations to this area, and ACC has done that. Once the flooring materials were removed, mercury vapor concentrations in the rooms rapidly decreased. As an additional mitigation measure, a mercury cleaning solution was applied in targeted floor areas. Within a few days, mercury vapor levels were reduced to below the guidelines in all areas. Room 221, located directly below Room 318.1, was cleaned using a similar work area containment and mercury levels remained below the guidelines at all times.

We are pleased with the outcome of the project and plan to move forward with renovations once the design phase is complete. Thank you for your patience. For more detailed

information on this project visit the Communications link on the Environmental Health and Safety website at www.austincc.edu/ehs or call EHS Manager Becky Cole at 223-1015.

ACC FOUNDATION/INSTITUTIONAL FUND-RAISING - “NAMING RIGHTS”

We have issued an RFP for proposals to assist the ACC Foundation in developing a future capital campaign for fund raising. The Foundation has agreed to expand its efforts from scholarships only to include fund raising for facilities and capital equipment, as well as for funding innovation and excellence projects. Fall will be the planning phase for this activity, which is important as we seek to respond to the Master Plan recommendation to expand resources for this college.

The Board delayed discussion on the proposed policy which relates to “naming rights” in which the College would allow organizations to have their names on classrooms, labs, and other college resources. Most colleges and universities with foundations or who have cyclical fund-raising efforts do this, and please be assured that there will be ample guidelines to govern how this would occur. It is not true that everything in the college would be “for sale” or that no screening criteria would be applied to this initiative, or that the College would sacrifice its integrity in the process - the intent is to broaden external fund raising, in an appropriate way, so that ACC can expand programs and services.

REORGANIZATION UPDATE

In the discussion of district-wide reorganization I shared that Honors, Service Learning, Learning Communities and Weekend College would be assigned to Deans. The assignments are as follow and take effect October 3:

Honors Program	Dean Hazel Ward Dr. Judy Sanders continues to lead this program.
Service Learning	Interim Dean Gaye Lynn Scott Linda Tobin and Robin Lake continue to lead this program.
Learning Communities	Dean Linda Smarzik
Weekend College	Interim Dean Charles Quinn

The ad hoc advisory committee on campus-based reorganization has met many, many hours. I am very proud of how seriously and diligently they have worked on their task. They will finalize recommendations to me in the next week or so, and then will schedule campus-based forums for feedback before I make final decisions on Phase II of reorganization.

SACS

We have sent notification to SACS regarding the new South Austin Campus, since we will need to go through the Substantive Change process required for new campuses. A prospectus report will be submitted in the next few months, and SACS may or may not choose to come to visit the campus (we expect they will, since that was the case with Eastview).

COMMUNITY UPDATES

- The San Marcos Steering Committee on annexation is on target for May 2006.
- A group in Caldwell County is working hard on exploring ways to increase enrollments and to pursue establishing an expanded ACC Center. They are discussing annexation in the future. I met with this group last week, and they are very enthusiastic. Pat Patton, adjunct instructor, is chairing this Higher Education Committee and Luanne Preston is ACC's committee representative; they are doing excellent work in Caldwell County.
- Some Round Rock parents have expressed interest in exploring how to bring the remainder of RRISD into ACC's taxing district. I met with this group last week and we'll also continue our work with other Round Rock leaders, and are pleased with the positive relationships between the community and ACC.
- Pflugerville's Steering Committee to pursue annexation of the remainder of PISD into ACC's taxing district is in the early stages of their deliberations. I am attaching a copy of an FAQ related to this initiative.
- I have accepted an invitation to join the board of the Austin Area Research Organization (AARO). This group is influential in public policy in the region and is interested in strengthening the regional role of ACC.
- President's Community Breakfast Dialogs have been established for me to meet with community leaders on a monthly basis this year. AMD is underwriting the cost.

TRAVEL MONEY

As part of FY06 budgeting, I informed supervisors that we would move to a formula-based travel allocation process for this year. Some administrative departments have less money and some have more – the good news is that an additional \$58,497 has been added to support faculty travel. \$50,000 of this comes from additional money included in the board-approved FY06 budget, which was designated for faculty only; the remaining \$8,497 is reallocated from administrative travel to faculty travel.

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In Closing

L'Shanah Tovah, "A Sweet New Year," is the Jewish traditional greeting associated with Rosh Hashanah, which is being celebrated by many of our students, faculty and staff. Ramadan is also being celebrated by many of our constituents. I wanted to borrow the sentiment of these celebrations as we have launched our new academic year, and extend best wishes to all. Thank you for your dedication to making ACC a great college.

SK/pws

Attachment

FAQ on POSSIBLE PFLUGERVILLE ANNEXATION

Is the Pflugerville Independent School District in the ACC District?

PISD is in ACC's state-defined service area. About one-third of PISD, the area located within the City of Austin boundaries, became part of the ACC taxing district in May 2005.

- Approximately 31 percent of Pflugerville ISD residents already pay taxes to the Austin Community College District (those who live within PISD boundaries and who reside in the City of Austin).
- Of that 31 percent, more than half of the residents (67 percent) voted in favor of joining the ACCD.

Did ACC initiate discussions regarding the annexation of the rest of PISD into the ACC taxing district?

No. Several local residents expressed interest in the remainder of the Pflugerville school district joining the ACC taxing district and are serving as a steering committee to explore this possibility.

- ACC hosted two information meetings on 5-26-05 and on 8-9-05 in response to community members who asked for more information about the College. These were not public hearings, although a public hearing will be required by ACC if an election is to be held.
- From those meetings, five individuals declared their interest in moving forward with an effort to join ACCD.

Why is the steering committee interested in having all of PISD in the ACCD?

The steering committee is interested in this annexation for various reasons:

- One-third of PISD already exists in the ACCD and receives a much lower in-district tuition rate and free Early College Start classes.
- ACCESS to higher education and training, at a more AFFORDABLE tuition rate (\$102 per credit hour for out-of-district v. \$39 for in-district), will occur if the entire ISD becomes a part of ACC's taxing district.
- A belief that a strong community college presence benefits the entire community. As education levels rise, people with higher education levels typically earn more and thus contribute more to local tax bases and the local economy, thereby helping local businesses and lowering social services costs.
- An interest in increasing the number of high school graduates who enter higher education. (More than 50 percent of ISD grads start higher education at ACC.)
- A belief that a strong community college is an investment in economic development as indicated in Comptroller Strayhorn's study which shows that for every dollar invested in community colleges, the community sees a return of over \$5.
- Interest in meeting the state's *Closing the Gaps* goals.

What is “Closing the Gaps” and how does it apply to Pflugerville?

- Closing the Gaps is a state initiative created to increase college enrollment among Texans. The state warns that Texas must get serious about higher education and enroll an additional 630,000 people into college if the State is to remain economically competitive.
- 49 percent of high school graduates in PISD are not attending an institution of public higher education.
- 53 percent of adult population in Pflugerville is non-college-degreed.

What is Early College Start (ECS) and does it have tax implications to Pflugerville residents?

- ECS is a program that allows high school juniors and seniors residing in the ACCD Service Area to take up to two ACC courses per semester, earning college credit and often satisfying the high school diploma requirement.
- The ECS program has no tax implication on Pflugerville residents. The ACC budget pays for the program. However, joining ACC would have a tax implication on residents living within PISD.
- ECS classes are free to ACC's in-district residents (about 1/3 of PISD students are eligible.) Students who are out-of-district must pay \$40 per course (about 2/3 of PISD students have to pay.)
- Currently PISD students are enrolled in more than 170 ECS courses.

What is *College Connection* and does it have tax implications?

- A program in which ACC delivers a variety of college services to high school campuses in an effort to remove the mysteries of how college works.
- Provides high school seniors with individual assistance with filling out ACC application in the comfort of their own classrooms.
- By the end of the program, every participating and eligible high school senior receives a letter of acceptance to ACC at their high school graduation.
- Helps create an expectation that college is possible for all students.
- Provides individual assistance with completing financial aid forms and career planning.

Like ECS, *College Connection* has no tax implications on a community. Residents pay taxes to the ACCD only when a community or ISD chooses to join the ACCD.

What is the process for PISD to be annexed into the ACCD?

For annexation to occur, Texas law (HB 2221, Section 130.65 of the Annexation Code) requires the completion of several steps, summarized as follows:

1. 5% of registered PISD voters sign petition calling for the election.
2. ACC Board must hold a public hearing before issuing the order to call for an election and a service plan must be published.

3. If petition is in order, election is called by ACC Board (May or November).
4. Election is held.

What would the ACC tax impact be in Pflugerville?

Rate per \$100 valuation

Pflugerville ISD	1.83
City of Pflugerville	.64
Travis County	.49
Travis County ESD	.10
ACC	.0991

- The ACC tax rate is capped at \$.09 per \$100 assessed property valuation. There is a .0091 tax for retirement of facilities bonds. The ACC tax rate cannot be increased without voter approval.
- The annual ACC tax on an average priced Pflugerville ISD home valued at \$140,386 would be **\$134** (homestead exemption of \$5,000 included.) For disabled and elderly living within the PISD, the annual ACCD tax would be **\$60** for the average priced home.
- ACC’s taxes would represent only 3 percent of the collective Pflugerville property tax rate.

How much of ACCD funding comes from property taxes?

The College has three sources of funding: state appropriations, tuition and fees and property taxes. Currently state appropriations comprise only 26.2% of the ACCD budget; tuition and fees, 30.7 percent; and property taxes, 37.8 percent; other, 5.3 percent.

Why should I pay ACCD taxes if I do not plan to attend the College and if I do not have children who would attend either?

Just as PISD residents support PK-12 education by paying taxes to the ISD, regardless of whether they have children who attend, the community college is an important resource for increasing community education which impacts economic prosperity.

The more educated a community is, the higher individual’s earnings are; this increases the tax base and money is reinvested into the local economy, supporting local businesses. This trend also decreases the cost of social services.

In summary, community colleges have a unique role in higher education, and a direct impact on the economic well-being of a community.

Does the ACCD plan to build a campus or center in Pflugerville if the remaining portion of the ISD is annexed?

- Access to ACC, at lower in-district tuition, improves opportunities for thousands.
- The Steering Committee has not formally approached the ACC Board regarding a campus or center.

How would ACC impact/benefit Pflugerville?

ACC is the GATEWAY to improved lives and improved communities

- More than 50 percent of all area ISD graduates who enter higher education do so through ACC.
- More than 50 percent of adults in the area who start college start at ACC.

Increased ACCESS to higher education and training

- ACC offers degrees and certificates in more than 180 areas.
- ACC has trained more than 60 percent of the firefighters currently working in Pflugerville.

AFFORDABLE tuition

- In-district tuition is 54 percent less than out-of-district tuition.
- ACC's tuition is among the lowest in the state.

Increased numbers of high school graduates entering higher education

- ACC was the top choice among Pflugerville ISD high school graduates in fall 2003, according to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board.
- More than 1,800 residents from the Pflugerville area enrolled at ACC in fall 2004.