OFFICE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

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INTRADISTRICT CORRESPONDENCE

To: All Staff

From: Donna Hatchett, District Director of Public Affairs

Date: January 28, 2002

Subject: Strategic Conversation Summary

A summary of the Board's fourth Strategic Conversation, held on
October 23, 2001, is attached for your information. The topic of
demographic changes and how they impact our educational institutions
was explored by addressing two key questions:

"What are our challenges in serving the diverse students of the future?"

and

"What do we need to do to address these challenges?"

As with previous Strategic Conversations summaries, the attached
information will be reviewed by the Board of Trustees and utilized in future
decision-making and planning. Many of the ideas will also be useful for
campus-based planning processes.

Strategic Conversations Summary Report

Appearing below is a summary of the information gathered through the discussion of the two key questions that were explored in Strategic Conversation #4 "The Challenge of Change: Ready or Not, Here it Comes!" More than 100 faculty, staff and students participated in the discussion, which was held October 23, 2001. This Summary Report will serve as a resource for the Board of Trustees and staff in addressing the policy issues of responding to demographic changes within the community that the NOCCCD serves.

Question #1: ***What are our challenges in serving the diverse students of the future?***

ACADEMIC

Communication issues related to diverse cultural values, beliefs, and languages
- Understanding different cultural campus groups
- Lack of diversity training in different cultures for faculty and staff
- Mistrust of people who want to talk about diversity; fear of change
- Need for one definition of diversity to facilitate discussion

Student's lack of academic preparation
- Lack of appropriate skill assessment and remediation for changing student population
- Need for more cooperative (group) learning activities; diverse learning styles of students
- Low SAT scores
- Lack of time management skills
- Lack of high tech preparedness
- Broad range of cognitive ability or lack thereof

Curricular Issues
- Outdated curriculum and methodology unable to meet needs of changing student population; facilitating the adoption of rapidly changing curriculum
- Creating attainable goals
- Maintaining quality instruction
- Building critical thinking skills of students who are products of social promotion
- "Introducing" students to college
- Improving writing skills; establishing uniform writing standards
- Providing equal access to online education; using technology for global education
- Preparing diverse student body when skill needs of future employers are unknown; redefining basic skills for diverse population in global market
- Retention of all students, especially under prepared students
- Establishing indicators of success with diverse student population; measuring that success
- Making the learning environment inclusive; reaching quiet students
- Flexible scheduling
- Instilling desire to be a life-long learner
- Finding a balance between vocational and transfer programs
- Preparing students for reality
- Providing extra credit for community service
- Developing educational partnerships with colleges and universities in other countries
- Developing technology for interpreters in multilingual classroom
- Using scholarship other than white European across the curriculum
- Teaching to resolve issues without violence

Student Services
- Identifying and advertising services and programs to support diverse students
- Providing adequate student services, "round-the-clock"
- Encouraging students to apply for financial aid; expanding scholarships and grants
- Child care; elder care; health care
- Extra assistance for low-level students
- Providing transportation, job opportunities for low income students
- Providing bilingual and multi cultural counseling
- Creating mentor programs to assist students
- Evaluating support services in terms of the needs of a diverse student body
- Providing sufficient counseling for all students
- Helping to alleviate financial stress and higher education costs

Campus Climate—Improvement of Student Life
- Creating an inclusive climate reflecting awareness of community diversity
- Lack of student involvement; awareness
- Celebrating diversity in campus-wide activities
- Hosting speakers on diversity for students and faculty
- Sensitivity to other groups of people for both faculty and students
- Involving older, first generation immigrants
- Improving student satisfaction
- Integrating and assimilating different cultural groups
- Possible "balkanization" of the college community

ADMINISTRATIVE

Commitment and Leadership
- District and college encouragement to sustain efforts
- Paucity of time to devote to constructive thinking
- Providing motivation to meet needs
- Effective leadership
- Modifying organization if needed
- Banner issues
- Transcending the high school model for community colleges

Evaluation of Programs
- Establishing whether or not we have met the needs of our diverse student population
- Student learning outcomes
- Increasing degree completion rates
- Evaluating PFE goal completion
- Accountability through retention, student success, and student persistence
- Class size too large to reach individuals

Marketing
- Attracting students who reflect the diversity of the community
- Disseminating/coordinating information
- Increasing program awareness
- Advertising a "new image"
- Creating an identification with the college(s) and SCE

Staff Development
- Lack of diversity training for faculty and staff; understanding needs of different groups
- ESL training needs
- Need for more events to discuss and problem-solve issues of demographic change
- Serving disabled students, such as hearing-impaired or sight-impaired
- Apathy toward the community
- Understanding the culture of students of different sexual orientations; generational learning styles; needs from an economic and cultural point of view
- Dealing with prejudice
- Knowledge of welfare laws and regulations
- Teaching faculty to empower students, not just enable
- Creating empathy with students' struggle to just survive
- Challenging our assumptions of what works to explore new ways to facilitate learning
- Orienting young teachers with doctorates from research universities

Personnel Issues
- Hiring of staff to reflect diversity of community; Lack of role models
- Time and energy to address changing demographics
- Awareness of career trends to better address cultural diversity

Safety
- Gang problems
- Campus discipline
- Hate crimes on campus
- Providing a non-hostile environment for gay-lesbian staff and students

RESOURCES

Community
- Community support and involvement
- Establishing working relationship with middle, elementary, and high schools
- Dialogue with high school and middle school counselors
- Allowing easy access to programs
- Getting teachers to have a stake in the community
- Strengthening the connection between the college and the larger community

Facilities
- Shortage of facilities for increasing number of students
- Outdated buildings and equipment
- Facilities don't accommodate student differences and disabilities
- No on-campus housing
- Campus radio broadcasts in English only
- Availability of different ethnic foods
- Adequate parking
- Redefining classroom as spacial (not temporal) in post-modern period

Fiscal
- Need to rethink resource allocation; channel money toward effective uses
- Escalating costs; lack of adequate state funding
- Increasing or funding for consistency, i.e. International Students
- Preparing for economic downturn to maintain programs

RECOGNIZING AND ADDRESSING THE MULTIPLICITY OF DIVERSITIES

Communication Issues

- Provide suggestion box for students to ask for needed support
- Provide communication workshops/instruction groups for understanding sexual preferences and its impact on traditional values
- Increase our sensitivity to questions we ask or approaches we take
- Educate faculty on procedures when working with disabled students
- Teach staff and faculty to make no assumptions about different cultures, but seek information about hidden diversity: psychological disability, non-evident ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, socio-economic divide, digital divide, and literacy/academic skills
- Give permission to students to correct name pronunciation
- Create an environment of mutual respect
- Use "Big Brothers" or literacy volunteer approach to link community volunteers and staff to learn about each other
- Create effective marketing plan that does outreach for surrounding ethnic communities

Campus Climate - Improvement of Student Life

- Offer cultural activities to learn more about different cultures and develop sensitivity to belief systems of diverse cultures
- Use oral histories for students to interview parents, and grandparents to create personal histories and then write them down—storytelling
- Have diverse students produce a video of their stories to share their college experiences
- Become a role model—everyone has value
- Provide disciplinary action for those who are insensitive

Curricular

- Integrate educational modules dealing with diversity into appropriate curriculum
- Explore whether teaching preferences and learning styles make a difference in learning
- To heighten awareness of diversity, create commendation for exemplary behavior

Student Services

- Provide jobs for college students to tutor high school and junior high students and mentor them to think "community college"

INSTRUCTIONAL & CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT FOR DIVERSE STUDENTS

Curricular

- Create more classes, with smaller class sizes, to meet remedial needs
- Create a better system of assessing student needs by working with counselors to identify those needs and developing more courses to meet specific needs
- Examine different methods to identify learning styles of students and "match" learning styles to teachers' teaching styles. Post these in course schedule.
- Define most appropriate ratio of teacher to student based on course content
- Focus on the goals of the institution
- Identify "exit" competencies

DEVELOPING ASSESSMENTS TO MEET DIVERSE STUDENT NEEDS

Academic Preparation
- Assess holistically the needs of the student, the community, and the job market
- Assess math, reading and English according to minimum standards and required remediation
- Provide specialized mentoring, perhaps in the form of learning communities
- After student progresses within a class, assess by portfolio instead of classic paper or multiple choice exam

SUPPORT SERVICES FOR DIVERSE STUDENTS

Student Success
- Take a holistic approach to support services, providing tutoring, supplemental instruction, mentoring, critical thinking and freshman experience classes, along with the establishment of learning communities, and a requirement for college survival courses, combined with life support such as child care, off campus housing, financial aid, and counseling for parents who have never experienced college. Create measures for student outcomes and establish benchmarks for all services.
- Teach self respect and respect for others;
- Expand successful programs like TAP and Puente; student mentoring
- Increase hours for support options: Writing Center, Library, and computer labs
- Require early progress report: faculty reporting on students and students evaluating faculty
- Teach students how to be good students
- Increase textbooks on reserve in Library, including emergency book loans and books on line
- Have all classes open to disabled students

Effective Student Services
- Create focused services for a target population
- Create a centralized one-stop shop for student services
- Restructure child care and reduce fees
- Increase health services and DSP&S staff
- Provide adequate staff and training opportunities
- Increase classified staff support
- Increase online access by including online forms and class materials
- Increase parking

CREATING AN INCLUSIVE CAMPUS CULTURE

Campus Climate - Improvement of Student Life
- Define and measure inclusion
- Encourage the willingness to change and modify individual thought
- Create class assignments that focus on diversity as incentive to explore diversity
- Develop a climate where students feel comfortable asking for help at any time along their path
- Utilize action training through role playing
- Provide ground rules for each class
- Increase acknowledgment and welcoming of all diverse groups
- Eliminate hate crimes

MARKETING & RECRUITING DIVERSE FACULTY

Personnel Issues
- Publish job descriptions in ethnic publications, web list services, and job fairs
- Conduct strategic planning for future faculty
- Ensure diversity in the hiring of adjunct faculty; provide career planning services
- Create counseling classes on careers in teaching
- Prepare existing faculty to understand diverse groups
- Emphasize teaching and learning and serving as role models for future instructors
- Create and increase internships and mentoring programs for community college teaching
- Improve web site recruitment including completing the application process online
- Make salaries competitive with surrounding colleges
- Allocate resources for recruiting
- Develop protocol and good questions for "sensitivity to diversity"component of the interview part of hiring process, i.e. case study scenarios.

ONGOING STAFF DEVELOPMENT TRAINING

Staff Development
- Develop a district-wide approach to training for diversity/varied learning styles
- Mandatory focus groups and panel discussions for faculty; invite MLKing Center to train
- Disseminate information about demographic changes to all staff
- Promote diversity of mindsets and thinking when considering color, gender, and ethnic groups
- Teach faculty and staff to listen to students and try to inspire them
- Re-define success
- Encourage staff and faculty to teach students that it is okay to try something and fail

OPTIMIZING RESOURCES

Fiscal
- Secure new unrestricted funds for additional staff programs and services
- Prepare for reduced state support; increase efficiency with current base funding
- Promote bond issue
- Develop college foundations and corporate partnerships
- Increase enrollment
- Expand legislative advocacy efforts; educate legislators about efficient use of funding
- Recognize and address primary needs of students in expending resources
- Institutionalize service providers across the District in a generic fashion

Physical
- Fund new buildings: SCE, Libraries, Wilshire and Cypress labs
- Centralize computer labs, but keep smaller labs for instruction
- Create smart classrooms; increase use of mobile computer stations
- Create complete inventory of existing resources; coordinate physical resources
- Maximize use of space by offering weekend and Friday courses
- Optimize distance/online learning; compress curriculum/class length using online format
- Ensure that computers have microphone capability and language software
- Consider more self-paced classes
- Create flexible scheduling in terms of time and location