

Dallas County Community College District

**A PROPOSAL
TO THE TRUST FUND BOARD
OF THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF COMMUNITY COLLEGE TRUSTEES**

Submission Date: October 26, 2007

Organization Name and Contact Information:

Dallas County Community College District

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Total Project Budget: \$12,500 (3 Year Total)

Organization's Fiscal Year: September 1-August 31

Project Time Frame: 30 months

Signatures:


Wright L. Lassiter, Jr., Ed.D.
Chancellor, DCCCD


Jerry Prater
Chairman of the Board, DCCCD

NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Volunteer elected Boards of Trustees are accomplished and engaged individuals whose civic service in that role often comes at the price of sacrificing other involvements, family time, and business needs. Community colleges are, by their very nature, complex organizations with myriad issues, constituents, purposes, and constraints. Providing high level governance to such an entity requires a thorough grounding in the environment of expectations and policies that provide the matrix for the college's service to students and the community.

The combination of complexity and scarce time is compounded by the reality that few board members have direct experience with community college education, an enterprise that shares some commonalities with other public educational institutions yet is uniquely framed by the challenges present in accessibility, governmental regulations and mandates, heterogeneous student groups, and customization of educational offerings to community and employer needs.

The 1947 Truman Commission Report "called for the establishment of a network of public community colleges which would charge little or no tuition, serve as cultural centers, be comprehensive in their program offerings, with emphasis on civic responsibilities, and were to serve the area in which they were located." The evolving community college is carrying out that charge with distinction, but with inherent policy issues that its governing boards must confront. Many of these issues, though not all, are summarized in *Keeping America's Promise*, published by the Education Commission of the States and the League for Innovation in 2004. In a concluding essay for state policymakers and local community college leaders, Dr. Katherine Boswell, wrote:

Undoubtedly community colleges must and will play a critical role in educating and training a growing percentage of our population for the requirements of a globally competitive workforce in the 21st century. But what is not as apparent is

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whether the public policy frameworks are in place that will support America's community colleges as they gear up to meet the challenges that lie ahead. The policy issues are clear, from funding and distribution of resources to student success and access (p. 47).

Boswell's analysis points to an array of policy issues at the state and local level. These range from funding mechanisms and participation rates at the state level to balancing the needs of traditional and employed students at the local level. Other policy analysis entities such as the Community College Research Center at Columbia University and the National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education provide perspectives on additional policy challenges for preparation, accessibility, affordability, learning, finance, and accountability. Creating seamless educational systems, allocating available education funding, and apportioning the state and local share of support are among the broad categories of inquiry to be addressed. As Cohen and Brawer noted in 1996, "No institution in American Education plays a more difficult role than the community college."

Very Like a Rope

The process for orienting new board members and continually updating current trustees typically includes topics and resources such as board policy manuals, strategic and master plans, accreditation, facts about the college, descriptions of college offerings such as transfer or continuing education, state regulations, and others of similar nature. There is a continuing challenge to provide information to new trustees while retaining the interest and engagement of more experienced board members. Whether presented during an intensive two or three days of orientation or spread across multiple sessions throughout the year, the focus on individual topics without a significant investment in context can produce an outcome similar to that of the blind men trying to describe an elephant, using the point of contact as the lens for understanding the whole. "Very Like A

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Rope" is the result of an encounter with an elephant tail and certainly does not capture the entirety of the beast.

Even with the benefit of sight, the elephant itself has to be placed in context, elevating the discussion from discrete actions and programs in an area into policy-level considerations. For example, a discussion on remediation can occur at an operational level as in what the college is doing to serve under-prepared students on the local campus or it can occur at the governance level considering the policy issue of open door admission, connections with K-12 developments, and the role that community colleges should be assuming in terms of meeting both a community and societal need. The latter approach is the appropriate realm of community college trustee deliberations, determining outcomes but leaving operational processes in the hands of the institution staff.

Summary

Time-constrained volunteer community college boards of trustees are challenged by the need to consider both the context influencing governance decisions at the policy-level and information on programs and outcomes designed to meet the multiple purposes of the local college.

TARGET POPULATION

The Dallas County Community College District Board of Trustees consists of seven elected members. The board defines the vision of the district, serves as a liaison between the district and the community, approves annual budgets and sets policies, among other responsibilities. Board terms are six years in length with two-three seats up for election every two years. In any given year, the composition of the board can include long serving members as well as those just assuming the positions.

PURPOSE AND OUTCOMES

This project is designed to provide a model curriculum for community college trustees that integrates general orientation information with policy issues in a series of modules that can be used on a monthly basis for trustee training in a variety of venues. Each module will include brief preparatory executive summaries and a seminar discussion format that begins with policy issues related to the topic and concludes with local college information. Sessions will be grouped in clusters of topics such as fiduciary responsibility that could include affordability, tax policy, and previous board guidelines on spending ratios. The seminars will be led by the District chancellor and/or guests selected for that session and will be scheduled at times most suited to the board but limited to 45 minutes. The templates developed for the modules as well as the policy summary items will be adaptable by other community colleges in the nation.

METHODS

In consultation with Board members and executive staff, a sequential series of topics will be developed that logically address the scope of trustee responsibilities and college information. Board members will be interviewed both individually and in small groups to determine needs. Examples would include: What have been the most difficult/important things to understand about community colleges; what is most challenging about our responsibilities; what would I/we have liked to know within the first year; what topics do we need to revisit again and again?

Relevant policy issues will be determined and used as the context for each module with the assistance of external consultants who are well versed in the issues. Balancing information needs for new trustees before policy-level discussions can be held will require a flexible design that can accommodate the needs of novice and experienced trustees. Modules may have a menu of preparatory reading that can be customized for

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the recipient board member and may use a brief questionnaire to direct trustees to appropriate background resources. Preparation of documents, both hard copy and for on-line access, will be provided by DCCCD Board Relations staff.

The timeline for development for this 30 month project is as follows:

January-March 2008	Conduct trustee interviews and develop final list of 24 topics Design module templates Identify policy resources for topics Contract with consultants, as needed, for policy issues papers
April -June 2008	Prepare draft materials for first six topics. Prepare test version of modules 1-3 for piloting with trustees including preview questionnaire, on-line resources, and evaluation forms Continue policy paper/local background materials development for remaining topics
July-September 2008	Pilot first three modules with board of trustees, gather feedback, and modify as appropriate Complete final versions of modules 1-3 Prepare drafts of modules 7-9 Continue policy paper/local background materials development for remaining topics
October-December 2008	Pilot modules 3-6 with trustees with modifications as needed Complete final versions of modules 3-6 Prepare drafts of modules 10-12
January-March 2009	Pilot modules 7-9 with trustees with modifications as needed Complete final version of modules 7-9 Prepare drafts of modules 13-15
April-June 2009	Pilot modules 10-12 Complete final versions of 10-12 Draft modules 16-18
July-September 2009	Pilot modules 13-15 Complete final version of modules 13-15 Draft modules 19-21
October-December 2009	Pilot modules 16-18 Complete final version of modules 16-18 Draft modules 22-24
January-March 2010	Pilot modules 19-21 Complete final version of 19-21
April-May 2010	Pilot modules 22-24 Complete final version of 22-24 Compile completed series of trustee policy education modules in two versions: DCCCD and National Distribution with policy materials and suggested outlines for local materials.

ORGANIZATIONAL HISTORY AND 2006 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

History: The Dallas County Community College District was part of this country's bold and decidedly successful social experiment -- the American junior college movement. The movement took root in Dallas in May 1965 when voters agreed to pay taxes to establish public junior colleges. The Dallas County Junior College District opened in September 1966 with 4,028 students. In 1972, the Board of Trustees changed the name to Dallas County Community College District. By 1978, seven comprehensive, separately accredited colleges were operating. Today, over 60,000 students enroll in DCCCD colleges each fall semester. DCCCD has touched the lives of over 1.5 million students since 1966.

Recent accomplishments: In May 2006, DCCCD's Board voted unanimously to name Dr. Wright L. Lassiter, Jr. the 6th DCCCD chancellor. Throughout 2006-07, he and the Board of Trustees provided leadership for beginning construction of new buildings and five new campuses in DCCCD's \$450 million bond program. During this past year, DCCCD was honored with ACCT's Western Region Equity Award, and was reaffirmed as a member of the League for Innovation in the Community College, of which it was a founding member in 1968.

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PROJECT BUDGET

This is a multi-year request encompassing the 30 month span of the project. Funds are requested to defray the cost of preparation of policy curriculum materials by acknowledged experts. It is anticipated that the average cost of a cluster of policy briefings will be \$2,500. The actual amount, topics, and selection of experts will depend on the needs identified in the development process with the trustees. The DCCCD will be contributing significant in-kind support for the project. Each of the 24 modules, from pilot version to completed product, will require approximately 30 hours of staff time at an average cost of \$30 per hour. Additional costs for materials reproduction will be absorbed by the DCCCD as well at an approximate cost of \$250 per module. Funds received for the project will be held in a restricted account in the DCCCD Foundation.

	ACCT TRUST	DCCCD IN-KIND
Year 1:	\$5,000	\$11,500 (10 Modules)
Year 2:	\$5,000	\$11,500 (10 Modules)
Year 3:	\$2,500	\$4,600 (4 Modules)
Total:	\$12,500	\$27,600

Major Donors

DCCCD Foundation

\$500,000 - \$999,000

Lyn and John Muse

\$100,000 - \$249,999

Greater Texas Foundation

United Way of Metropolitan Dallas, Inc.

Lumina Foundation for Education

\$50,000 - \$99,000

Gillani, Inc.

The Estate of Mary Anne Hennessey

Hewlett-Packard Company

Dallas After-School All-Stars

Baylor Health Care System Foundation

The Eugene McDermott Foundation

\$10,000 - \$49,000

Miles Foundation

Friedkin Business Services

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American Association of Community Colleges

Patsy Pike

Erin Tierney Kramp Encouragement Foundation

Toyota Motor Sales, U.S.A., Inc.

Roxan and Randy Staff

Merrill Lynch, Pierce, Fenner & Smith Inc.

Metrocrest Medical Foundation

American Institute of Wine and Food

Art Institute of Dallas

The Mike A. Myers Foundation

Bill and Ann Priest

Allstate Foundation

Baylor Medical Center - Irving

KeyBank National Association

Town North Bank, N.A.

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DCCCD Foundation Operational Budget

	<u>2007 - 2008 Budget</u>
INCOME	
Contributions/Gifts	
Foundations/Trusts	1,500,000
Corporations/Business	300,000
Individual	300,000
Faculty/Staff	30,000
Club/Organization	<u>150,000</u>
TOTAL	2,280,000
Indirect Public Support	
Other Fund Raising Contributions - SECC	130,000
Contributed Salaries	<u>542,825</u>
TOTAL	672,825
Other Revenue	
Interest Income	110,000
Transaction Gains/(Losses)	500
Realized Gains/Losses	1,000,000
Unrealized Gains/Losses	500,000
Interest/Dividends Income	<u>350,000</u>
TOTAL	1,960,500
TOTAL REVENUE	<u><u>4,913,325</u></u>
EXPENSES	
Program Services	
Scholarships/Awards	1,400,000
Grants	<u>676,554</u>
TOTAL PROGRAM SERVICES	2,076,554
Operating Expenses	
Donated Salaries	224,981
Postage and Shipping	4,000
Supplies	2,000
Community Representation	1,000
Training/Travel	1,500
Meetings	2,600
Audit	11,000
Insurance	6,000

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Professional License/Membership	1,000
Miscellaneous Expenses	2,000
Administration Department	25,000
Development Department	315,500
Investment Management Expenses	125,000
Other Investment Expenses	<u>200</u>
TOTAL NONPROGRAM	<u>721,781</u>
TOTAL EXPENSES	<u><u>2,798,335</u></u>