



BOARD HIGHLIGHTS

Board of Trustees • Betsy Bechtel • Pearl Cheng • Laura Casas Frier • Joan Barram • Bruce Swenson • Erica Anderson • Isabelle Barrientos Vargas

Board meeting of April 5, 2010

ACTION AND INFORMATION ITEMS

Layoffs due to lack of funds and lack of work: The board reluctantly approved the layoff of 24 full-time and 31 part-time hourly classified employees, and the reduction of one positions to 50 percent, effective June 30, 2010, because of the district's continuing budget deficit. Every board member expressed deep regret at having to eliminate positions and displace employees. Both student trustees voted against the layoffs. "None of us feels good about any of this," said Trustee **Joan Barram**, expressing board members' shared sentiments. President **Bruce Swenson** said the board acted with a heavy heart knowing that "there is no painless solution to this that doesn't affect our students."

The process to reach this point has been open and exhausting and the discussions thoughtful and careful, said Chancellor **Linda Thor**. She asked **Mike Brandy** to review the steps the district has taken to minimize the loss of positions, including reassigning positions to other funding sources, cutting B budgets, reducing faculty reassignment time, reducing part-time faculty teaching assignments and negotiating with employee unions to lower the district's costs of health benefits. Even after all that, Brandy said, the district is projecting a \$10.6 million budget deficit for 2010-11, which could grow even larger if the state makes additional cuts to community colleges.

Although the district expects to end the year with significant fund balances and reserves, Brandy said, they are needed for specific uses such as carrying 34 positions through June 30, 2011 (Escrow II, \$2 million), maintaining the recommended 5 percent General Fund reserve (\$10.3 million), helping defray medical benefit rate increases (\$5 million), maintaining an operating reserve in the self-insured benefits fund to cover higher-than-expected claims (\$2 million), and offsetting any further state funding reductions in 2010-11 (\$6.4 million).

Brandy said the district also is striving to generate additional revenue by exploring a possible parcel tax, installing energy-generating photovoltaic arrays, establishing a centralized office to pursue grants, and seeking more help from the Foothill-De Anza Foundation. Go to http://www.fhda.edu/about_us/board_presentations to see the full budget update.

Human Resources Director **Kim Chief Elk** described the district's extensive and continuing efforts to help displaced employees prepare for and find new positions. The goals, Chief Elk said, are "to mitigate job loss" and "safeguard employees who are being affected so dramatically."

Explanations gave way to expressions of sadness and regret as more than a dozen speakers addressed the loss of positions.

De Anza cooperative educational experience instructors **Bill Mathiasen** and **Wayne Dexter** joined **Carmen Pereida**, co-op education coordinator, in lamenting the loss of a cost-effective program that provides critical educational access and support for the students who need it. "It is more than just college credit for work experience," Pereida said. "It is a lifeline for them to support their kids, support their education and develop their skills." Students **Karrie Baylor** and **Halcyon de Bar** spoke about the achievements the co-op program has made possible for them. Among other things, Baylor said, "it has allowed me to stay in school." De Bar added that it is a particularly hard time for low-income students who are "being affected every which way" by state budget cuts.

Several artists and faculty members praised the work of the Euphrat Museum and its Executive Director **Jan Rindfleisch**. Artist **Corine Takara** described the unique opportunity the museum provides K-12 and community college students to see an art museum, interact with artists and have their work exhibited. Artist **Oksana Baumert**, who teaches in the museum's after-school art program, read a letter from De Anza instructor **Sal Breiter** about how the Euphrat ties De Anza to the larger community and its importance in the arts and humanities curriculum. Art history instructor **Catie Cadge Moore** said the Euphrat is integral to the college's instructional program and expressed hope that Rindfleisch's position can be preserved.

Foothill students **Lili Ruiz** and **Andrea Melendez** spoke of the professional help they and other Foothill students have received from the English writing center, which they said is essential to students whose first language isn't English. **Bhavi Patel**, who represented the Foothill Classified Senate at the meeting and is among those being laid off, shared her own story of being helped as a student by the writing center's **Nancy Gill**. Patel also expressed regret at the reductions being made to disabled student services.

Association of Classified Employees (ACE) President **Blanche Monary** thanked trustees for coming on recent ACE-guided tours of the campuses and for the removal of some positions from the layoff list. As new information comes in, Faculty Association President **Rich Hansen** urged the board to stay flexible in deciding how much ending balance is needed to carry forward into the next fiscal year and how much to expend to retain positions.

The 31 readiness teaching assistants at De Anza are being laid off as the result of a reorganization to six full-time positions. An accounting of all the positions being eliminated, employees being laid off, and employees subject to layoff as a result of bumping rights can be found on the board agenda under item #6 at http://www.fhda.edu/about_us/board/agenda.

Open educational resources: Foothill Dean of Global Access **Judy Baker** presented an update on open educational resources (OER), including adoptions of open textbooks at Foothill and De Anza. Among her examples was Collaborative Statistics, by De Anza mathematics instructor **Barbara Illowsky** and former instructor **Susan Dean**, which she reported is saving De Anza students more than \$70,000 a quarter in book costs.

Since the book became available in fall 2008 through Rice University's Connexions, about 50 instructors at 30 different colleges, universities and high schools have adopted it. Baker gave an overview of barriers to open textbook adoption and announced an upcoming survey of Foothill-De Anza faculty. She reviewed plans for the OER Center for California that was launched earlier this year at Foothill and the accomplishments of the national Community College Consortium for Open Educational Resources, which has grown to more than 150 member colleges under her direction. To see the presentation visit http://www.fhda.edu/about_us/board_presentations.

International travel: The board approved two international travel requests from faculty members, but asked that the form accompanying future requests be changed to include information about how the travel is being funded and an explanation of the benefits.

Accreditation update: The board received a progress report prepared by the colleges' accreditation liaison officers, **Kurt Hueg** at Foothill and **Marisa Spatafore** at De Anza. The campuses are doing an incredible amount of good work and there's more to come, said De Anza President **Brian Murphy**. The presentation is available at http://www.fhda.edu/about_us/board_presentations.

Polling for parcel tax: The board authorized Vice Chancellor **Andy Dunn** to move forward with an agreement with **TBWB Strategies** to conduct a feasibility poll of district residents to determine their support for a Foothill-De Anza parcel tax. Cost of the polling will range \$26,850 to \$36,830. The consultant has proposed conducting the poll toward the end of April to allow ample time for analyzing the results before the board has to decide whether to pursue a November election.

Trustee **Laura Casas Frier** said that while she supports gathering information about voter attitudes toward a parcel tax, she would not support the contract if the polling were done before the results are in on upcoming May and June parcel tax elections. A subcommittee of Trustees **Pearl Cheng** and **Betsy Bechtel** will work with the administration and consultants on developing polling questions and resolving the issue of when to conduct the poll.

Middlefield campus: Trustees discussed some of the key issues surrounding the possible purchase and development of eight acres at the Cubberley Community Center in Palo Alto to build a permanent home for Foothill's Middlefield campus. The city of Palo Alto recently responded to a district query about purchasing the land with a suggestion that the city, district and the Palo Alto Unified School District, which owns the rest of the Cubberley property, meet to discuss planning issues. Trustees said they saw many exciting possibilities in the potential for collaboration, but wanted to proceed carefully and keep the district's options open for other sites.

Board President Swenson said it would be important to proceed in a way that enhances and supports the Palo Alto school district's plans. He said that building 100,000 square feet, as discussed in the past, is beyond what Foothill-De Anza could afford, and the district needs to develop a smaller, more realistic option that could be expanded in the future. He also suggested forming a citizens' advisory committee and developing a timeline for the discussions. Foothill President **Judy Miner** said developing the

Middlefield campus presents a number of opportunities to leverage diminished resources through partnerships.

HUMAN RESOURCES AND PERSONNEL

Trustees approved the employment of **Gaeir Dietrich** as director of De Anza's High Tech Center Training Unit for the California Community Colleges; **LeeAnn Emmanuel** as a counselor at Foothill; and **John Fox** and **Benjamin Stefonik** as business and social sciences instructors at Foothill.

The board approved promotions for the following employees: At Foothill, **John Atkins** to lab technician in biological health sciences and at Central Services, **Nancy Chao** to payroll supervisor.

The following employees were approved for professional growth awards: At Foothill, **Mazier Almasi** at the Middlefield campus, **Karen Oeh** in counseling and student services and **Jenny Vela** in CTIS, and at De Anza, **Susan Edman** in language arts and **Dawna O'Malley** in student services.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Board of Trustees is Monday, May 3 at 6 p.m. in the District Board Room. Please check the agenda for the location. Agendas are posted 72 hours in advance at: http://www.fhda.edu/about_us/board/agenda/.

Board Highlights is designed to communicate board meeting news to faculty and staff across the district. This publication is not the official minutes. For more comprehensive information, you may consult the official minutes, which generally are available at http://www.fhda.edu/about_us/board/minutes after their approval at the subsequent board meeting. Please contact Becky Bartindale at bartindalebecky@fhda.edu or extension 6107, with comments or questions about *Board Highlights*.