

Community Outreach Meeting for October 29, 2012 At Northland Pioneer College Whiteriver Center

In Attendance:

Dr. Jeanne Swarthout – President

Mark Vest – Vice President

Blaine Hatch – Vice President

Adalsteinn (A. J.) Taylor – Center Manager at the Whiteriver Center

Kelley Harvey Brannon – Advisor/Library Tech at the Whiteriver Center

Jeff Fuller – Superintendent of Whiteriver Schools

Leola Lazalere – Member of the Whiteriver School Board

Dustin Benavides – grant Writing Manager for WMAT

Derrick Wheeler – WMAT Planning Commission

Bernadette Clarkson – WMAT Housing Authority

Rosetta Lazalere – WMAT Housing Authority

Marco Lazalere – WMAT Housing Authority Director

The meeting began at 1:01pm with Dr. Swarthout asking the assembled what the community needs from Northland Pioneer College. She stated that the college listens to community members and tries to respond to those needs. She explained the renovations going on throughout the college, the impacts on the college budget from the state and federal levels, the accreditation process, and how the Strategic Plan is tightly connected to all of this.

She addressed the states rapid de-funding of education and that the college has had to work with less funding. She also addressed the cooperation between the four year universities in the state and the community colleges. When covering the K-12 educational levels, it was determined that K-12 graduates are better prepared to enter higher education, however, the standards to get to those levels needs to be addressed by all parties.

Dr. Swarthout concluded her opening remarks by stating that the college continues to plan its resources carefully by moving forward well within its budget.

Dr. Swarthout then gave the floor to Vice President Mark Vest who opened his remarks by discussing how funding for specialized programs like Certified Nursing Assistants has been cut. In fact, this spring there are no Certified Nursing Assistant classes available at the Whiteriver Center, but they will resume in the fall of 2013. This is possible through the generation of a Certificate of Proficiency program that will make the Certified Nursing Assistant program eligible for Pell funding for fall of 2013.

Vest also stated that the 3rd party payers for GED students have greatly diminished. GED is about to go to an online format. The cost to take the test will double. Northland Pioneer College will be completely out of the payment process. Further, all those who have partially completed the testing will have the results expunged and will have to start over again beginning in January of 2014. Pearson testing will roll all testing into a computerized format which will require the college to have a centralized testing area solely dedicated to GED.

Vest discussed the new educational delivery systems in the form of the Model Classrooms. This is projected to increase capacity of General Education programs by 25%. It is unclear at this time where the Model Classroom will be built in the Learning Center of the Whiteriver Center. It is believed at the time of the meeting to be Room 118. Confirmation of this by Center Manager A. J. Taylor is forthcoming.

Also addressed was the Construction Trades curriculum. Currently according to Vest, the program is under revision so as to meet national certification and WIA requirements. The college has begun

construction of the Skills Center in Holbrook, but is looking at a, and is in discussions with the White Mountain Apache Tribe about a facility in Whiteriver as a satellite Skills Center. This met with nodding approval of all in attendance. Negotiations, according to Dr. Swarthout, are ongoing and due to the sensitivity of the negotiations, nothing more could be released on the subject. It appeared that the general body of attendees understood and agreed.

Vest moved on to discuss how the BUS and AIS programs are going to merge, pairing down eleven (11) different majors into six (6). Vest agreed with those involved that this will simplify decisions on these majors by students. The impact on transferring degrees would be minimal which makes deciding on programs by a student much less of an issue.

With Mark Vest's opening remarks concluded, Dr. Swarthout then gave the floor to Vice President Hatch who addressed the attendees briefly by hoping that the facilities met the standards of the students and those in attendance. He explained the age of the center and gave a brief reference to its purpose. Hatch then invited all to a tour of the campus after the meeting to look and see the functionality of the center.

With the conclusion of Vice President Hatch's remarks, Dr. Swarthout opened the floor for discussion. The first question came from Dustin Benavides who asked how the GED test was going to be handled. Vest answered by saying that the cost for the test will double. He projected that the initial cost for a student to take the Pearson computerized test would be between \$120 and \$150. Northland Pioneer College would be completely out of the payment process. He reiterated that the students would need to be prepped for computers as well as the GED test through some sort of orientation.

Leola Lazalere stated that 65 parents were identified at Head Start as needing funding for the GED. Arizona Governor Jan Brewer has refused to match any funding for Adult Basic Education. Dr. Swarthout said that the college was waiting to hear from the state government on whether the feds will allow community colleges to match funds on behalf of the government.

Dustin Benavides asked how the GED testing would impact Whiteriver students and the population of the reservation. Vest answered that Northland Pioneer College could not continue to set up testing at each campus and center. Northland Pioneer College would set up the White Mountain campus for GED testing and that the computers will not be used for any other purpose than GED. Pearson, the company that has the testing contracts, is making all the mandates. Pearson, said Vest, is the sole GED testing source now. The regions this affects the most are the rural areas.

Leola Lazalere asked about continuing education and professional development courses at Northland Pioneer College and whether these would transfer to four year institutions. Her concerns centered on, as an example, a group of students who may need to collectively take an ENL 101 over the summer. Vest replied that if the college, specifically, the Center Manager of a site, be given a far enough advance notice, such classes could be accommodated for. Taylor stated that such courses had been done before, specifically Emergency Medical Technician courses, which were intended solely for hospital employee enrollment. The course was eventually opened to the general public, but the classes nonetheless, were and are being held.

Vest stated that the college needed time to prepare such courses because of the need to hire adjunct or off contract faculty to instruct the course. There is also the issue of whether the course is accredited or not which would determine whether it is transferrable. Vest explained the faculty attend Articulation Task Force (ATF) meetings annually to review and agree on articulation agreements. Sometimes the college has to rewrite curriculum to meet the ATF needs.