

Community Outreach Meeting
Northland Pioneer College
Little Colorado Campus
Minutes

2014
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We had a very positive and successful Outreach meeting on Wednesday, April 2, 2014. There were nine community members, one student and five NPC employees in attendance.

Dr. Swarthout welcomed the guests and explained that these meetings are scheduled to coincide with NPC strategic planning to gather input from community members throughout the College district. She also explained that NPC has changed its Strategic Plan from a 5- to a 3-year cycle to ensure planning strategies that are viable for NPC communities.

Blaine Hatch discussed College budget and facilities. He mentioned that State aid is largely down, with deep cuts since 2008 that haven't been restored. He mentioned \$2million in STEM funding that will be used for future capital equipment purchases.

Mark Vest discussed the four tuition initiatives recently approved by the District Governing Board and informed the group that he will be meeting with high school directors countywide to explain these initiatives and the positive impact they can have for high school students. He mentioned that NPC has chosen to focus on retention and completion in the coming year as a Quality Initiative from the Higher Learning Commission.

Dr. Hackler asked what factors caused students at LCC to drop out. Mark responded that student surveys have caused him to use the phrase *Stop Out*, rather than *Drop Out* because many students simply have too many life obligations at the time to go to school. Many do come back, others go on to other colleges, and some go on church missions. Unfortunately some don't come back because of family responsibilities, financial difficulties, and the lack of childcare and reliable transportation.

First-generation college students have a very difficult time attaining their college goals. They lack family support, confidence in their ability to succeed, and the skills needed to navigate the college system.

Theresa Warren, the manager of Alice's Place, suggested that training programs for college success be instituted at the junior and senior high school level to better prepare first-generation students for the college experience. She told us that she didn't attend college and when the time came for her daughter to enroll at NPC neither she nor her daughter had any idea of even what to do first.

She said it was very intimidating and overwhelming but they persisted, got help from other students, learned what needed to be done and managed to get her daughter enrolled and into classes. This experience demonstrated to her the great need to start teaching high school students the ins and outs of navigating the college enrollment system.

Dr. Hackler asked how NPC could address the child-care issue. Dr. Swarthout responded that this problem isn't new or unique to NPC. It's a widespread issue with complex liability and provider issues. The only way it could work for NPC would be through a partnership between the college community and parents, including the high schools.

Sterling West, student and Vice President of Student Government Association (SGA), told us that the SGA has discussed the childcare and transportation issue every semester he's been in SGA, and they've never been able to formulate a viable solution for either issue.

Penny West, a home-based business owner, brought up what she perceives as the problem of apathy in the public school system. Many students have no family support; educators and administrators lack energy and resources to support them, so they leave high school unprepared for college. She added that NPC is a jewel in the communities it serves that many people don't even know is available. She would like to see NPC generate excitement in Winslow to encourage pursuing and furthering education.

Bob Schlesinger, Navajo County Public Health and Winslow City Council member, asked how Navajo County and the City of Winslow can work with NPC to create a marketing point for potential businesses. Dr. Swarthout replied that communication is the key factor so that everyone is aware of potential training needs. Coconino Community College (CCC) is no longer offering Business and Industry Training. NPC is gearing up to fill that void, but intensive planning is required before the College can move forward.

John Zimmerman from Navajo County Public Health commented on how grateful Public Health is for well-trained, competent and confident nurses from NPC. Mark mentioned that since CCC has reduced its Nursing program by 50%, NPC anticipates receiving many of those students.

Mr. Schlesinger asked for an explanation of the purpose of the New Skill Center in Holbrook. Mark gave him a lengthy explanation of the four major programs that will be housed there and the great potential for training students and business and industry employees. He also explained that it was funded, in part, by a Get into Energy grant.

In response to this question, Dr. Swarthout mentioned that our Job Readiness programs are our most popular right now and they are critical to the success of technical career-seeking students.

Daniel Lutzick general manager of the LaPosada Hotel talked about his desire to create an internship program for training hotel/restaurant/museum management. Jeremy Raisor, NPC Career Services director, was in the audience and Mark suggested to Mr. Lutzick that he and Jeremy get together to discuss organizing an internship program that would be workable for the College and LaPosada. Jeremy responded that he was working with Mr. Lutzick and others at LaPosada to design an internship for them.

Penny West suggested the City pave Bales Avenue to make NPC more accessible to residents and students. Steve Pauken the new Winslow City Manager, promised to look into finding out why it wasn't paved and seeing what would be needed to take care of it.

It was a positive, effective and productive meeting. The guests seemed very comfortable talking about the roles they would like to see NPC fill in the Winslow community. There was a general feeling of cooperation and good will and the idea that the College could and should be a factor in the economic development of the Winslow area.

Community Members in attendance:

Dr. Greg Hackler, Hackler Chiropractic
 Lawrence Kenna, Kenna Enterprises
 Tess Kenna, Kenna Enterprises
 Daniel Lutzick, GM LaPosada Hotel and Chair of the Winslow Arts Council
 Steve Pauken, Winslow City Manager
 Bob Schlesinger, Navajo County Public Health and Winslow City Councilman
 Theresa Warren, manager of Alice's Place
 Penny West, owner of a home-based massage therapy business in Winslow
 John Zimmerman, Navajo County Public Health

Sterling West, NPC student and Vice President of SGA, attended the community meeting

Minutes prepared by:
 Ina Sommers
 Little Colorado Campus
 Campus Manager
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TUITION PROPOSALS

Proposal 1: No tuition for last twelve (12) credits of degree

Summary: Due to changes in federal Pell Grant criteria and ongoing difficult economic conditions, students who are attempting to complete a degree have mounting challenges. Current institutional priorities include addressing both enrollment and completion. Additionally, the previously offered tuition plateau allowed part-time students to move more quickly toward degree completion at an overall savings of up to half of the normal rate for the student.

A reduction in total tuition costs would allow the allocated funds for scholarship to benefit individuals who are close to completion. It is recommended that students be required to apply for participation in the last twelve credits program and an initial annual budget established not to exceed \$150,000. Applicants will be required to demonstrate that a Pell grant application has also been completed. Participation in the program is expected to grow as the option becomes more recognized and students begin planning to maximize the benefit.

Proposal 2: Seven general education (AGEC) credits each semester at no tuition for specific high school students

Summary: Dual enrollment course availability and participation is declining in part due to the reduced availability throughout the district of qualified high school dual enrollment instructors, statutory limitations to NAVIT offerings, and school district financial challenges. This proposal provides additional opportunities to qualified high school students and incentives to current dual enrollment students to participate in Arizona General Education Complete courses which meet general education requirements for transfer degrees. Increased participation in regular college courses at nearby NPC facilities will allow high school students to progress more quickly toward degree or certificate completion.

It is recommended that qualified high school juniors and seniors with a 3.0 GPA be required to apply for participation in the free seven-credit AGEC program and an initial annual budget established not to exceed \$150,000. Interest and potential participation is expected to grow as the benefits of the program become more apparent.

Proposal 3: Reduce tuition for Summer session courses by 50% of the applicable rate

Summary: In an effort to improve Summer enrollment a tuition discount for courses offered during Summer sessions will provide students with additional options to move more quickly to degree or certificate completion. The changes in PELL award criteria limit options to students to participate in Summer sessions. A reduction in total tuition costs would allow students to maintain necessary course work on a continuing basis and reach educational goals as soon as possible while reducing the cost to the student.

Net tuition revenues are expected to remain stable or increase if the reduced tuition rate is implemented.

Proposal 4: Establish a differential tuition rate for TLC (The Learning Cornerstone) courses.

Summary: Reduce tuition by 50% of the applicable rate for all courses with a TLC prefix. Due to the decrease in third-party payers, students with limited economic resources are finding it more difficult to attain a GED and seek out higher education opportunities. Currently, a student must have a GED or High school diploma to apply for Pell grant funding; as a result Adult Basic education (ABE) students have relied on third-party payers such as Work-force (NDWD), DES, tribal entities, and head start programs to fund their education. In the past, NPC has provided ABE students, who meet specific criteria, a scholarship to attend classes. However given the decrease in lab offerings over the last eight years and the elimination of the tuition plateau, a wait list has developed at numerous sites.

A reduction in tuition would allow the allocated funds for scholarship to benefit more individuals, which would reduce the wait list considerably, increase the number of students served, and provide a larger pool of students available to move to college level courses. It is expected that reduction of the wait list will generate additional enrollment.

Net tuition revenues are expected to decline less than \$15,000 in FY 2014-15 as a result of the proposed differential rate for TLC courses.