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## TACTC Legislative Action Committee

### Meeting Minutes

Nov. 20, 2009, 9:00 a.m. to Noon – Olympia and Statewide via ITV

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#### IN ATTENDANCE:

Theresa Pan-Hosley, Bates

Mike Blakely, Big Bend

Roy Wilkinson, Cascadia

Judy Guenther, Centralia

Jack Burkman, Clark

Mary Moss, Clover Park

Reneé Finke, Columbia Basin

Gene Chase, Everett

Betty Cobbs, Everett

Rebecca Chaffee, Grays Harbor

Sherry Gates, Green River

Barbara Reid, Highline

Dan Altmayer, Highline

Mike Regeimbal, Highline

Bev Cheney, Olympic

Doug Sayan, Olympic

Pete Crane, Olympic (LAC Co-Chair)

John Miller, Peninsula

Jackie Rosenblatt, Pierce

Rich Zwicker, Renton

Tom Malone, Seattle

Dick Stucky, Shoreline

Roger Olstad, Shoreline

Debbie Lisser, Skagit Valley (TACTC President)

Don Piercy, Skagit Valley

Judy Blinn, South Puget Sound

Leonor Fuller, South Puget Sound

Carol Landa-McVicker, Spokane

Don Cox, Spokane

Patty Shea, Spokane

Don Dennis, Tacoma

Jerry Hendrickson, Walla Walla

Kris Klaveano, Walla Walla

Bob Myers, Wenatchee Valley

Kris Pomianek, Wenatchee Valley

Sue Cole, Whatcom

Tim Douglas, Whatcom (LAC Co-Chair)

Paul McDonald, Yakima Valley

#### GUESTS:

Rich Cummins, Columbia Basin President

Brett Thompson, Everett Student Body Pres.

Shirley Metcalf, Lake Washington Vice Pres.

#### SBCTC STAFF:

Charlie Earl

Chris Reykdal

Erin Brown

Candace Robbecke

Janelle Runyon

**CALL TO ORDER AND WELCOME:** *Debra Lisser (Skagit Valley trustee and TACTC President)*

President Debra Lisser called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m. and welcomed participants.

**LAC LEGISLATIVE ACTIVITIES:** *Pete Crane (Olympic trustee and LAC Co-Chair) and Tim Douglas (Whatcom trustee and LAC Co-Chair)*

Pete Crane explained that the Executive Committee is recommending to the full body a modification of TACTC's committee structure. The Legislative Steering and Creating Opportunities committees have been combined into the Legislative Action Committee (LAC). The LAC will have two functions: legislative messaging (legislative policy) and community messaging (advocacy). Pete will chair the legislative policy activities and Tim Douglas will chair the community outreach activities.

**Legislative messaging overview:** Pete noted the CTC message for the upcoming legislative session will be: "Keep the doors open." (Last year's message was "Don't starve the solution.")

**Action:** LAC members were asked to coordinate a meeting with their local legislative delegation, determine the legislators' issues and provide feedback to [Pete Crane](#) or [Erin Brown](#) (TACTC Administrator).

**Advocacy overview:** Pete explained CTCs are no longer the best-kept secret and now are widely regarded as the solution to economic difficulties. This part of the committees' function involves connecting with community influencers. Washington state has a high level of federal visibility due to leadership taken on the national level. Our work now is to maintain the momentum. Trustees will have an opportunity to learn more about federal issues at the February 8-10, 2010, [ACCT conference](#). Additionally, discussions are underway to bring congressional legislators to trustees within the state.

**Action:** LAC members were asked to meet with their local boards and develop local advocacy plans to garner community support for two-year college issues and to provide feedback to [Tim Douglas](#) or [Erin Brown](#) (TACTC Administrator) about these efforts.

**STATE UPDATE:** *Charlie Earl (SBCTC Exec. Dir.) and Chris Reykdal (SBCTC Deputy Exec. Dir. of Finance)*

- Fred Jarrett has resigned as state senator to accept a new position with the King County Executive. He has been supportive of higher education issues and his absence has created uncertainty about who will fill the role.
- The November forecast was released and the fiscal condition of the state has declined an additional \$760 million from the prior forecast. Legislators will be dealing with an approximate \$2.6 billion deficit the 2010 legislative session. There is speculation that the current federal funding protections may help offset some of the impacts of budget reductions to higher education.
- *Enrollment:* The system has seen an average increase of 9.4% from a year ago. Enrollments are projected to increase as much as 16% over the state level of funding. The current break-down of increases is as follows:
  - Pre-college – Up 6%;
  - Basic Skills – Up 5%;
  - Workforce – Up 10%; and
  - Academic Transfer – Up 11%.

*Worker retraining:* CTCs were funded for 6,200 FTEs last year, yet they served 9,000 FTEs. With unemployment expected to continue increasing through spring 2010, community and technical colleges expect 15,000 FTES will qualify for the Worker Retraining program in 2010 and 2011. Funding will be sought for 12,000 enrollments in the upcoming legislative session. The Legislature will also be asked to provide additional funding for financial aid.

- *Unemployment:* Unemployment projects were discussed, including the high unemployment rate among veterans.
- There was discussion about the threat economic stress places on basic skills and adult literacy programs. Trustees were encouraged to be frank with legislators about this risk.
- *Capital budget:* The message regarding capital construction is, "Restore our priority list." Restoration of past losses will be sought. A portion of building fees collected by the college goes into a building fee account line-item; however, the money is held by the Legislature. A request will be made to release the funding back to the colleges so it cannot be redirected to another agency.
- *Stimulus possibility:* There has been discussion at the federal level about an additional stimulus package that maybe developed in order to create jobs. More information will be provided as it becomes available.

- *SBCTC 2010 Legislative Policy Principles*: The draft principles included in the meeting materials packet were developed to provide colleges with common messages around broad topics. It will be presented for final adoption at the December State Board meeting. Policy principles around governance are underway. They will establish that any governance changes made will focus on student access and ensure communities will be well served.

**LAC ADVOCACY ACTIVITIES:** *Pete Crane and Tim Douglas*

Pete drew attendees' attention to a one-pager in the packet entitled "Enrollment Up. Funding Down." The State Board's communications office creates these one-page issues documents that provide information in a compact format. They are for college advocates to use as advocacy tools with legislators and community leaders. (**Note:** *One-pagers are on the State Board web site at: [www.sbctc.edu](http://www.sbctc.edu), select [Legislature], scroll down and select [one-pagers.](#)*)

To prepare for the upcoming legislative session, Tim asked LAC members to:

- Meet with legislators and community leaders prior to session;
- Review and complete items listed on the TACTC Legislative Action Committee – Advocacy Checklist;
- Devise a work plan for the year with set priorities;
- Reach out to groups and determine what their goals are and how to engage with them in support of those goals;
- Reach out to editorial boards; and
- Determine how best to illustrate local messages.

**STUDENT RALLY:** *Pete Crane*

CTC students will hold their student rally at the Capitol in Olympia on January 25, which is the same date trustees will be in town for the TACTC Winter Conference. The issue of whether to join the rally was discussed by the TACTC Education and Executive Committees, during which members expressed both support and some reservations owing to the possibility of setting a precedent that might obligate boards to lobby with other college groups and concern over a difference of opinion regarding the issue of student representatives on college boards. Feedback was gathered from members of the Legislative Action Committee. The Education Committee will discuss the issue further and reach a decision about participating in the rally at its next meeting.

*Student representation on college boards:* One of the students' priorities is to obtain voting rights on college boards for student representatives. A similar effort in the 2009 legislative session was defeated. Trustees expressed several concerns, including:

- Students are already well-represented on several boards.
- It takes a long time to really understand the broad range of issues trustees must know to be effective and these students are generally on campus for just two years.
- The function of the college boards is policy-oriented. It appears students actually want more input in administrative matters.
- There was some support for having students on boards as an advisor and not a trustee.
- Adding a student to a board would create an even number of trustees, whereas an odd number of trustees has been the norm in order to minimize the possibility of tie votes.

Charlie noted there is some time pressure to collect and share trustee feedback with the State Board because the students will present this issue to the Board on December 2.

**Action:** LAC members were asked to discuss the matter of student representatives with their boards and provide feedback to [Erin Brown](#) on their boards' positions as well as current practices (whether they are in policy or not) by **December 1**.

Tim and Pete identified activities TACTC will undertake, on behalf of trustees, which are in support of students' interests, including:

- Postcards will be developed for students who are unable to travel to Olympia to share with legislators the impact of their education at a two-year college.
- Rain ponchos will be purchased to give students a common look so they can be easily identified and will stand out to legislators at the rally.
- Student body presidents will be invited to participate at the TACTC Winter Conference.

#### **CONGRESSIONAL MEETINGS:**

[ACCT National Legislative Summit](#) – February 8-10, 2010:

TACTC traditionally schedules meetings of Congressional legislators and the Washington delegation. The visits are scheduled in conjunction with, and as a part of, the ACCT summit. It was noted, because legislators are typically returning to Washington, D.C., from break, they are sometimes not available and the meetings end up being with their staff. The importance of building relationships with staff was discussed. The high cost of travel, combined with budget issues on campuses, has reduced the number of Washington delegates. It was generally agreed that Hill visits might be gradually phased out in favor of meeting with Congressional legislators in the state.

*Possible Washington state meeting with Congressional legislators:* Consideration has been given to inviting the new Deputy Assistant Secretary for Community Colleges Frank Chong and the Washington congressional delegation to come to an event in Washington state to have an idea and information exchange, build relationships and set the stage for the roll out of the American Graduation Initiative. Most Congressional leaders are back in the state the week of Presidents' Day, which is Monday, February 15. There was wide-spread support for this idea.

*Planning committee:* A planning committee was established to plan in-state meeting(s) with Congressional legislators. Members are:

- Tim Douglas, Chair;
- Theresa Pan-Hosley, Bates;
- Judy Guenther, Centralia;
- Mary Moss, Clover Park;
- Carol Landa-McVicker, Spokane;
- Jerry Hendrickson, Walla Walla;
- Erin Brown; and
- Candace Robbecke.

#### **NEXT MEETING:**

Due to a higher-than-usual amount of technology problems during this meeting, other meeting modalities were discussed, including Elluminate, face-to-face, and continued use of ITV – possibly with a reduction in the number of sites. No decision was reached on this matter.

**NEXT STEPS:**

*LAC members' role:* The TACTC Executive Committee is seeking more structure from this committee and increased feedback from LAC members. LAC members' role is intended to be more empowered in terms of meeting with legislators and working closely with TACTC to provide feedback on visits.

Tim reviewed next steps as outlined in the advocacy checklist.

**Action:** *LAC members were asked to:*

- 1) *Set up meetings with state legislators, preferably on campus (offer a tour, introduce them to inspirational students, etc.);*
- 2) *Work with presidents and PIOs to find compelling data and real-life stories (over-enrollment, wait-list costs, etc.);*
- 3) *Use the legislative [one-pagers](#) to advocate for college issues and get the message out on keeping our doors open;*
- 4) *Sell the college; and*
- 5) *Report back.*

**ADJOURNMENT:**

Seeing no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:11 a.m.