



Oregon Community College Association
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September 26, 2007

To: Oregon Presidents Council
From: Kathryn Dysart, Communications Director
Re: 40-40-20 and Accountability Conversations

The following is a preliminary communication plan to support the strategic conversations the OPC has set as a work plan for the coming year. As with any plan, additions and changes can be made as we progress through it and discover areas that need change.

Purpose: Engage our internal and external communities in discussions about the need for Oregonians to have post-secondary education at some level to ensure that the state and its citizens are prepared to thrive in the 21st economy and, contemporaneously, to hold discussion about accountability and what it means to the mission of community colleges.

Rationale: The Governor, with the guidance of the Oregon Business Council, has set an ambitious goal for Oregonians' post secondary education. The goal states that by 2025 (just 18 years from now) 40% of adult Oregonians will have a bachelor's degree or higher, another 40% will have a post-secondary professional certification or an associates degree, and the remaining 20% will have a high school diploma as the highest level of education. This goal is ambitious because of its distance from our current standing and because most citizens are not currently aware of the need for that level of attainment.

Secondly, budget notes attached to the 2007 community college support fund raised a number of questions about accountability and reflect the growing interest among legislators that the increasing appropriations to community colleges be in proportion to State identified needs. We need, as a community college community, to talk about what and to whom we are accountable and how such measures might change our academic landscape. We will use the reports of these conversations to help craft OCCA's response to the legislature and to advance our standing as proactive leaders within the K-20 educational continuum.

Objectives:

- Increase awareness among constituents of the need for higher levels of educational attainment.
- Inform community college faculty and staff of the issue so that they can understand the goal the Governor has set and engage each other, as well as their friends and neighbors, in conversations about what such a level of educational attainment could mean for community colleges.



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- Prepare College Board members to engage their communities in conversations about what the 40-40-20 goal means for community colleges, what our role is in accomplishing such a goal and what will it mean for the overall community college mission. Support similar conversations among the board members and college leaders related to accountability to prepare for guiding our response to the budget notes.
- Identify changes and resources needed for colleges to advance toward the goal as they understand their role in it.
- Advocate for those changes and resources identified by the colleges before the legislature, the State Board of Education and other partners to create a climate in which the Governor's goal can be reached and the colleges' local interests preserved.

Tools:

- 1) At the 2007 OCCA Convention in October, Board members, presidents and other attendees will receive training in the conduct of strategic conversations. Various protocols for such conversations will be discussed and the World Café protocol will be modeled.
- 2) Shortly after convention, the colleges will receive "kits" including:
 - Selected research papers on the changing global economy and the needs for higher education levels
 - Materials to support the conduct of strategic conversations
 - A list of links that can be added to college websites
 - A list of Oregon Business Council members in their communities who can reinforce the need for more post secondary education
 - Draft language for use in Board Agenda packets to describe the topic to be discussed before Boards move to hold community conversations
 - Sample communications to faculty and staff describing the issue and the steps the college is going to take to engage the community
 - Mock-ups of postcards inviting people to attend conversation meetings
 - Talking points for use with editorial boards
 - Sample "letters to the editor" for use in local publications
 - Draft media releases for distribution to local print and electronic media
 - A script for presentations to civic clubs
 - Printed material or the template for printed material for distribution at presentations
 - Sample letter from college president to high school and middle school counselors about the issue



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- Suggested flyer for inclusion in community college enrollees' registration materials
- Display ad slicks for use in college publications

3) In November, provide additional materials to support the conversations about accountability.

Process: After the distribution of the tool kits, the colleges will need to begin immediately to put the plan into action. OCCA staff will assist local Boards and Presidents in any way they can to make these conversations successful.

In March 2008 at the OCCA Board meeting, the colleges will report the results of their community conversations and identify the changes and resources that they want from the 2009 legislature. This will begin the process of formulating the OCCA ask for the coming biennium. In May of 2008, the colleges will report at the OCCA Board meeting the results of their conversations about accountability. Based on those reports, plans for next steps in community engagement will be formulated.