



Oregon Community College Association
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November 14, 2007

To: Oregon Community College Presidents
From: Andrea Henderson

Re: Having conversations about increasing educational attainment in Oregon

At its October 2007 meeting, the OCCA Board of Directors adopted the Statewide Decision Making Report of its Governance Study Committee. In part the Governance Study Committee recommended that local boards have “meaningful conversations on identified issues” to develop policy recommendations on statewide issues.

The OCCA 2007-2008 Goals, which were reviewed by the Board in October and are slated for adoption at its December meeting, include additional information about the intent of these strategic conversations. They say, in part:

Have strategic conversations about the role of community colleges in accomplishing the vision of 40/40/20 educational attainment by 2025 in order to develop a policy recommendation.

At that same December 7th OCCA Board meeting, there will be an opportunity to delve more deeply into the issue of increased educational attainment so that Presidents and Board Representatives become more comfortable with the issue before hosting their own conversations.

On January 18th, the OCCA Board will again meet and at this time preliminary reports on the conduct of the conversations will be received and any additional assistance local Boards need identified. At this meeting we will also begin the information provision on the second conversation slated for this year which will be on accountability.

Final reports on the first series of conversations on educational attainment will be given at the March 14th OCCA Board meeting. At that time, the Board will discuss their intent for a policy statement on the issue. OCCA staff will draft a policy statement based on that discussion and send it out to Board members for their review. The policy statement will come back to the Board at its May 16th meeting for adoption.

To assist you with the successful implementation of this strategy, OCCA staff has created a kit of materials for you to use. In this packet you will find:

An overview of strategic conversation processes to help you decide what sort of process will work best for holding conversations in your community,

Sample wording that you can use in your local Board packets describing the proposal and how you intend to move forward,

A sample letter for you to adapt and use to invite members of your faculty/employee community to participate in the conversations,

A sample speech for you to adapt and use with local civic organizations, business groups or whomever you are addressing on this issue,

A selected reference list on the changing global economy and the need for higher education levels,

A postcard template for you to personalize, print and mail to community members you hope to involve in this process,

A pdf file of the layout for the four folders and envelope to use as handout to support your presentations and discussions,

Talking points on Higher Levels of Educational Attainment to use with editorial boards and others, and

Six sample letters to the editor of local papers highlighting different aspects of the issue.

Also included are additional copies of the communication plan on this issue that was presented at your September OPC meeting and another copy of the State Board of Education's brief on the Education Enterprise.

Your packet has hard copies of the materials as well as a CD with the original files so that you can edit them for personalization purposes. The materials are also available on the OCCA website in pdf format.

Please let us know how OCCA staff can further assist you in these efforts. We will do whatever we can to help you be successful.