

**EAST CENTRAL COLLEGE
BOARD OF TRUSTEES RETREAT
Wednesday, October 30, 2019
ECTC 114**

CALL TO ORDER: The Board of Trustees retreat was called to order at 5:11 p.m. by Board President Ann Hartley. Other Board members present at the meeting were Joseph Stroetker, Prudence Johnson, Cookie Hays, Eric Park and Audrey Freitag. Also present were President of the College Jon Bauer; Administrators - Vice President of Student Development Heath Martin, Interim Vice President of Academic Affairs Robyn Walter and Vice President of External Relations Joel Doepker; Other Staff – Executive Director of Institutional Effectiveness Michelle Smith, Athletic Director Jay Mehrhoff, Director of Early College Programs Megan Strubberg and Executive Assistant to the President Bonnie Gardner.

RECOGNITION OF GUESTS: There were no guests present.

CHRONICLE SURVEY: Michelle Smith provided a year over year review of ratings from the employee satisfaction survey conducted for the *Chronicle of Higher Education* by ModernThink. Michelle noted the document provided in the agenda packet was an extracted data set that removed some staff and the adjunct faculty to provide a comparison nationwide; her presentation is based on the full data set. Michelle provided survey data for the last four years sorted from the strongest area to the weakest area. The 2019 data shows most dimensions ranking in the good and fair/mediocre ranges; this is an improvement across the board. The shared governance indicator has experienced the most improvement, which indicates the model approved by the Board is working. Communication has also shown a significant increase.

Dr. Bauer noted that time has been spent in Shared Governance Council discussing specific initiatives that can be undertaken to address the survey results. Some of those conversations focused on supervisory and administrative relationships with direct reports; Dr. Bauer has made intentional efforts to address this with leadership.

This data will be used as a metric to determine progress toward strategic planning goals under the employee strategy. The survey will be administered again in March with preliminary results returned in May. Comparison data is provided at the beginning of the academic year and is shared at the fall in-service meeting. The data set is huge and includes two-year and four-year colleges across the nation. ECC includes ten self-chosen questions specific to the institution. Ms. Hartley stressed that it is important for employees to understand this information is being used to help improve the campus. Dr. Bauer noted that more detail is on the website and results will be shared with the Board annually.

ATHLETICS: Dr. Bauer noted that it is important to continually review what is offered to students and look for ways to enhance opportunities. The strategic plan specifically mentions an investigation of athletics; it also includes goals related to increasing enrollment and degrees awarded. The Budget Advisory Committee has been reviewing data related to the expansion of athletics and has met with staff from State Fair Community College to discuss their experience with adding sports. In addition, area high school counselors and principals mentioned in a recent meeting that athletics is way to attract more of their students. The addition of athletic teams is one enrollment strategy being explored.

Vice President Heath Martin and Athletic Director Jay Mehrhoff presented rationale for exploring the expansion of sports on campus. ECC athletes perform at high levels in the classroom and represent

the college with pride and distinction. There are two reasons guiding the desire to expand: enrollment growth and success/retention. Enrollment has declined about 41% over the last ten years; 1,650 additional credit hours would be generated by the expansion plan. Approximately 40 additional degrees would be awarded per year with the plan. Athletes tend to bring additional students with them, which would further boost enrollment.

The two biggest sports offered by other colleges are baseball and women's soccer; several community colleges have recently added sports teams. The proposed teams would be at the Division 2 level, which does not require provision of room and board or housing. This would attract more local athletes who could take advantage of the A+ program. ECC promotes the academic success of the athletes; successful course completion by athletes was at 86.4% last year while the general student body success rate was 76.4%. The past year, 28 of the 52 athletes were A+ participants; this reduces scholarship costs.

A pro forma was provided and reviewed. Revenues include tuition/fees (119 students taking 30 credit hours = \$460,530) and the allocated portion of the student activity fee (\$252,000) with a total of \$700,000 in revenue. A part-time staffing model was used and about 53% of the tuition costs were discounted. The revenue exceeds expenses by about \$100,000; revenue will fluctuate based on college enrollment. Renovation of the baseball field would be approximately \$80,000 and a commitment will be made to fundraise that amount before moving forward.

It was noted that some of the expenses would occur before athletes could be on the field. Positions will need to be advertised and the soccer coach would be a full-time position coaching both teams with an assistant. Scholarships would cover tuition and fees for 30 credit hours; not every athlete would be given a scholarship to play. The more A+ students who are recruited, the less discounting will occur. Some A+ athletes are provided \$1,000 for books.

Concern was expressed about asking the general student population to pay for athletics through the activity fee; it was suggested attention be focused on expanding academic programs with good retention and graduation rates. It was also suggested that much of the student body is older and not interested in participating in sports. Concern with the pro forma was also expressed in that the entire tuition/fees amount is applied to sports expenses when there are other expenses involved, there is no guarantee of running a surplus, and overhead is not included. There was also concern about the ability to fundraise a sufficient amount to renovate the baseball field.

It was noted that there are some fixed costs that will be paid regardless of the number of athletes; these don't increase when the teams expand. Also, student activity fees over numerous years have been divided with a specific percentage allocated to athletics and other percentages going to student government, the student newspaper and student clubs. Therefore, the general student population also benefits from the fees.

Ms. Hartley asked that administration review the pro forma to make it as accurate as possible. It was suggested a separate pro forma be developed for each year; the first year will be different from subsequent years due to the start-up timeline. It was also requested that some percentage of fixed costs be included.

Board members expressed the opinion that the benefits of sports programs are many, but they cannot be implemented to the detriment of academic programs.

Dr. Bauer noted that state aid and local tax revenue are not reflected in the pro forma; tuition is reflected because it is directly associated with the athletes' enrollment. State aid and tax revenue support the fixed costs of operation. Athletes are majoring in academic programs, not sports. The College also supports the arts programs, but that is not of interest to every student. No one thing

being done applies to every student enrolled. There is a need to invest in new programs; expanding sports does not mean other things will not be done as well. This is a small portion of the total budget. Dr. Bauer indicated the information would be further refined and brought back for consideration. Dr. Mehrhoff emphasized that expanding athletics will provide a return on investment with publicity and community awareness as well as additional enrollment. ECC is potentially losing students to other colleges offering the sports they desire. Vice President Martin added that research shows students who are invested in co-curricular activities are more likely to be successful in college.

FREE DUAL CREDIT FOR STUDENTS QUALIFIED FOR FREE/REDUCED LUNCH: Vice President Martin and Megan Strubberg stated that part of the strategic plan is to increase early college opportunities for area students. The cost of dual credit is a barrier to the neediest students. A strategy being implemented by other colleges is to provide dual credit at no cost to high school students qualified for the free/reduced lunch program. A recent discussion with high school staff indicated this would be a “game changer” for their students. Free dual credit would allow ECC to serve more students in a more effective way and to be accessible to as many as possible.

Students participating in dual credit are more likely to attend college and complete; it shortens the time to a degree and reduces the cost of a college education. Of the top participating dual credit schools, about 897 students are on free/reduced lunch and 58 of those are currently enrolled in ECC dual credit classes (a participation rate of 6.4%). Those not on the free/reduced lunch program total 1,766 of which 278 are enrolled in dual credit (a rate of 15.7%). Requirements for the free dual credit program would include being qualified for the free/reduced lunch program, junior or senior rank in high school, and a minimum GPA of 3.0.

If the program had been in place for Fall 2019, about 13% of the current dual credit participants would have qualified. Seventy-three students would have received free tuition for 365 credit hours. The financial impact would have been \$18,615. Dr. Bauer noted that students in the free program would be in courses already offered where there is capacity. In addition, the school districts involved may be interested in using ECC as their sole dual credit provider, which could increase course offerings. This is consistent with ECC’s mission, although there may be some revenue loss to the college.

It is forecasted that this program would increase free/reduced lunch dual credit participants as well as those participants not on free/reduced lunch. Missouri State University added this program in the fall and increased their enrollment by 295 students. More schools are likely to offer free dual credit in the future; ECC needs to find ways to be more competitive. St. Louis Community College has experienced sending schools moving all their dual credit offerings to STLCC rather than dividing the offerings among other colleges. About 25% of students taking dual credit return to take college classes after high school graduation.

The Board was generally supportive of the free dual credit program but expressed concern with possibly stigmatizing students by tying the program to the free/reduced lunch program at the high school. Dr. Bauer assured the group that the program would be handled confidentially. He noted that students who graduate high school have funding sources available to them such as Pell, A+ and scholarships. Legislation has recently authorized A+ funding for dual credit courses; however, there is no money attached to the legislation at this point. It was noted that promoting the free dual credit program might encourage students to utilize the free/reduced lunch program, which would qualify them for other benefits such as free ACT testing. It was agreed that a formal proposal for free dual credit would be developed and presented at the December Board meeting.

ACCT TRUSTEE GOVERNANCE LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE: Dr. Bauer and Board Secretary Cookie Hays presented information from the ACCT GLI conference they attended in August. This

conference was designed with new trustees in mind; it focused on governance and leadership from the board's perspective. Much of the information from the conference was shared in the Board agenda packet and members were encouraged to read the material. The presentation focused on the nine principles of leadership:

- Act as a Unit – members have no legal authority individually
- Represent the Common Good – know the community well and have no personal agenda
- Set the Policy Direction – the Board is not involved in daily operational matters
- Employ, Evaluate and Support the CEO – open communication is key; a succession plan for the president should be considered
- Define Policy Standards for College Operations – set expectations and goals for the institution; it was suggested a code of ethics and board bylaws be developed
- Create a Positive Climate –value the staff, attend events
- Monitor Institutional Performance – focus on student learning, be aware of accreditation requirements
- Support and Advocate for the College – board members are ambassadors for the college and the foundation
- Lead as a Thoughtful, Educated Team – ask questions, analyze options and make decisions based on thorough deliberation

Dr. Bauer noted that ACCT provides a national view while MCCA provides a state perspective; both are important.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Motion: To **enter** into executive session per RSMo 2004,1 Section 610.021 (2) Real Estate at 7:50 p.m.

Motion by Audrey Freitag; Seconded by Cookie Hays

The following roll call vote was taken, and the motion carried.

<u> yes </u> A. Hartley	<u> yes </u> C. Hays
<u> yes </u> J. Stroetker	<u> yes </u> E. Park
<u> yes </u> P. Johnson	<u> yes </u> A. Freitag

Motion: To **resume** open session at 8:48 p.m.

Motion by Audrey Freitag; Seconded by Eric Park

The following roll call vote was taken, and the motion carried.

<u> yes </u> A. Hartley	<u> yes </u> C. Hays
<u> yes </u> J. Stroetker	<u> yes </u> E. Park
<u> yes </u> P. Johnson	<u> yes </u> A. Freitag

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion: To **adjourn** the October 30, 2019 public Board of Trustees retreat at 8:48 p.m.

Motion by Joseph Stroetker; Seconded by Eric Park; carried unanimously.

President, Board of Trustees

Secretary, Board of Trustees