

MEMORANDUM

DATE: February 19, 2020

TO: LCCC Board of Trustees

CC: President's Cabinet

FROM: Dr. Joe Schaffer, President

RE: FY20 Presidential/Institutional Goals Progress Update

Per your policy and my own expectations for myself and others, I appreciate the opportunity to share with you progress on the goals we have established for FY20. As I have mentioned in the past, while these goals reside at the level of the President's Office, the hard work and commitment of so many others here on campus help make the achievement of these goals a reality. I look forward to discussing the progress on these goals in more detail should you have questions or would like additional information.

FY20 Goals: Finish What We Started

1. **Guided Pathways** – FY20 will represent the final year of our three-year initiative to bring Guided Pathways to scale here at LCCC. Our goal is to transform our institution into a cohesive experience for students under the Guided Pathways model. This means that all students entering LCCC will experience a guided pathways structure beginning Fall 2020.

Progress Update: The College continues to make substantial progress on our multi-year Guided Pathways effort. The Board has had numerous updates during regular board meetings that included a variety of action or work items pertaining to the progress being made. In addition, an Academic and Student Affairs Committee meeting was also held that focused on Pathways. Although quite a bit of work remains to be done, we are moving ahead quite well with our plans to “go to scale” for the Fall 2020 semester. The biggest efforts for this spring include finalizing modifications to our discrete degree and certificate programs, finalizing changes to our college success course (STRT 1000: Strategies for Success), hiring and onboarding new Pathway Coordinator faculty, making changes to our website, and continuing internal and external communications. I am very pleased that LCCC's Pathways work continues to be recognized and consulted by other colleges and groups around the nation.

2. **Capital Construction** – While underway, the construction of the new residence hall and the renovation and expansion of the Fine Arts Building will substantially occur during FY20. The completion of these major construction projects will require consistent focus and hard work to assure they are completed on time and on budget. In addition, we will move forward with navigating the legislative and funding processes to bring our final, major capital construction project to fruition---the renovation of the Recreation and Athletics Complex.

Progress Update: If one were to write a story about LCCC's physical transformation over the past few years, it would be both an impressive tale and one whose primary theme is "overcoming adversity." I suppose that is fitting with the myriad of challenges our students face every day. The good news is we continue to overcome the challenges presented, mostly due to the credit of individuals like Vice President Rick Johnson and Physical Plant Director Bill Zink. We are still working to bring the residence hall online and completion for the start of the fall semester with about 90% of the rooms currently slated to be completed by then. We hope acceleration of the project through the spring will reach 100% completion. If not, we have contingency planning taking place and will be prepared. The Fine Arts project is moving forward well with the remodel slightly ahead of schedule. We celebrated the completion of the façade upgrade to the Business Building, and although the construction process was more disruptive than anticipated, people are excited with the outcome. Last, with considerable effort, the State funding for the RAC continues to successfully progress through the legislative process.

3. **Applied Baccalaureates at LCCC** – With the approval by the Legislature and direction of the Forward Greater Cheyenne initiative, we will move forward with the design and approval of the first Bachelor of Applied Science degrees to be offered by LCCC. I will play an active role in helping support, and where necessary, lead our efforts to establish at least one, if not two, Bachelors of Applied Science degrees at the College with an anticipated date for the first enrolled class to occur in Fall 2020.

Progress Update: At the time of this update, we are in the final approval step to offer our first bachelor's degrees at LCCC. With the leadership of Jeff Shmidl and Danielle Opp and assistance from many other faculty and staff, proposed program development has successfully received internal approvals and WCCC approval. The recent Higher Learning Commission visit also proved successful. We now await their final decision (anticipated in March or April) to determine if we move forward with enrolling students in the fall. I am cautiously optimistic that we will see a nod in the affirmative and be able to proceed. This has been a project that has truly elevated my pride in LCCC, our people, and the community. I also appreciate the involvement and support of the Board.

4. **Finalize the Strategic Program Plan** – This goal is directed at bringing the substantial work done in FY19 to conclusion. I will work closely with Academic Affairs to finalize our short-term and long-term plans for changes to our academic program offerings at LCCC. My goal is to have this presented and approved by the Board of Trustees in Fall 2019.

Progress Update: This project has not advanced as quickly as I had hoped. For the most part, this falls squarely on my shoulders, because it has not been the top priority of work for this past fall. I am pleased to report, however, that Dr. Clark Harris is working on substantially improving the plan that will be presented to the Board for its first reading sometime in the very near future. Part of the challenge has been the quickly changing economic and employment landscape that has required a fully updated analysis of job projections as well as greater consideration of programming interests because of our Guided Pathways work. My goal remains to have this vetted by relevant stakeholders on campus, by the Academic Leadership Team, President's Cabinet, and ultimately you, the Board of Trustees, all before the end of the fiscal year.

5. **Golden Eagle Athletics** – With a transition in both the Vice President of Student Services and the Director of Athletics and Campus Recreation positions, I have the opportunity to help stabilize and position LCCC athletics to rise from being good to great. In collaboration with the Interim Director of Athletics, Recreation, and Exercise Dr. Cindy Henning, the coaching and athletics staff, the LCCC Foundation, the Golden Eagle Booster Club, and you, I will aspire to help establish a strategic vision and focus for LCCC athletics and assure this is translated into a comprehensive analysis to include short- and long-range plans for competitive sports at LCCC. This work should result in a formal plan to be approved/adopted by the Board of Trustees in the late Fall 2019 or early Spring 2020.

Progress Update: In all honesty, I have found the realignment of Athletics under me to be educational and rewarding. Certainly, it has come with its challenges, but I have been very pleased by the leadership of Dr. Cindy Henning in her interim role over Golden Eagle Athletics, as well as the involvement and contributions of the coaches and Athletics Department staff. The development of an institutional plan for athletics, focusing on defining what we mean by “excellence” in athletics as well as identifying strategic priorities, has come together nicely. A draft of this plan is scheduled to be presented to the Board at your February 2020 meeting. I truly appreciate the participation of Trustees Soto, Salazar, and Erickson, as well as individuals from the Foundation and our community. They, along with the Athletics Staff have made this plan a solid foundation on which to build our future.

6. **Reaffirmation of Accreditation** – FY20 includes substantial work on preparing for our reaffirmation of accreditation. Much of this effort involved the successful completion and submission of our 2018 Systems Portfolio. However, this fall we will have one of the most significant steps leading up to our reaffirmation of accreditation, and that is a Quality Checkup site visit from the Higher Learning Commission (HLC). Thus, this goal is focused on assuring a successful visit, and from there, successful reaffirmation of our accreditation from HLC.

Progress Update: This past fall, under the leadership and guidance of Dr. Kim Bender, we prepared for and held a successful site visit from the Higher Learning Commission for reaffirmation of accreditation. This visit is considered a Comprehensive Quality Review as part of our AQIP accreditation pathway. I believe the visit was a success and early indications from the review team suggest the only area that we have substantial work to do is with ensuring consistency and quality across all of our online learning offerings. We anticipated and welcomed this feedback, and I know that our folks in Academic Affairs, especially through the Center for Excellence in Teaching, are already working on this. We now await the final determination by HLC’s Institutional Actions Council (the same group that will determine the outcome of our bachelor’s degree proposals) and anticipate we will learn more about the reaffirmation of our accreditation in March.

7. **Strengthening LCCC’s Leadership** – I will continue to work on strengthening the executive leadership of the College. This will start with me by focusing on campus involvement and engagement and becoming better at building, developing, and strengthening the President’s Cabinet. It will also include securing the best candidate for the Vice President of Administration and Finance position.

Progress Update: I will be brief here. I believe that we continue to have and develop one of the strongest, most comprehensive executive leadership teams in Wyoming. Of course, we have been very fortunate to bring on Dr. Melissa Stutz as our new Vice President of Student Services. She has hit the ground running and is leading effectively and in alignment with our values. We were also fortunate to welcome back Rick Johnson as our Vice President of Administration and Finance, after his short “sabbatical” this past summer. Last, our Interim Vice President of Academic Affairs Kari Brown-Herbst has proven her competency and stepped in to shoulder the work in this division with out missing a beat. I hope you are as proud of the executive team’s leadership as I am.

I sincerely thank you again for the opportunity to lead Laramie County Community College and to work with such a fine group of trustees, executive leaders, faculty, staff, and students. Having just celebrated my eighth-year anniversary this past January, it is rewarding to see just how much we have accomplished over that time. However, more work needs to be done and I will continue to provide my utmost effort towards the progress and ultimate achievement of our mission, our strategic plan, and the goals set for me this year.