

AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY

AGENDA ITEM

Update on State Fair Community College's Programming Commitments in Jefferson City
Coordinating Board for Higher Education
April 8, 2004

DESCRIPTION

Concerns surrounding State Fair Community College's (SFCC) program commitments in Jefferson City continue to be a focus of attention by students, parents, legislators, educational policymakers, and the media. The intent of this board item is to provide an update on the status of future programming commitments by SFCC for delivery in Jefferson City.

Background

The following programs are offered by SFCC in Jefferson City:

- Computer Information Systems Accounting, AAS
- Computer Information Systems Networking, AAS
- Computer Information Systems Programming, AAS
- Computer Information Systems Web Development, AAS
- Industrial Electronics/Electricity Technology, One-year certificate and AAS
- Industrial Maintenance Technology, One-year certificate and AAS

State Fair's outreach site in Jefferson City is in a leased facility. Course assignments for this site are designed in collaboration with Lincoln University (LU), which as the local provider in Jefferson City is given the right of first refusal to teach courses that duplicate offerings on the LU campus. SFCC and LU have signed periodic agreements outlining the financial arrangements associated with the working relationship between these two institutions. Requests for course approval are submitted to DHE for approval on a semester-by-semester basis.

The current agreement between LU and SFCC is effective through the summer session of 2004. For the past several months, SFCC has been analyzing its commitments in Jefferson City based on concerns about the financial viability of operating this site and the extensive negotiating time required to administer the programs. On February 25, 2004, President Marsha Drennon shared in formal communication with Commissioner Wilson a vision for Jefferson City involving a postsecondary educational partnership or center with participation by multiple institutions each with specific responsibilities for meeting local needs. Data suggest a significant out migration of prospective students in the Jefferson City area that could be met more directly by expanding offerings, especially in general education. Dr. Drennon also referenced the difficulty of administering a financially viable program in Jefferson City unless SFCC receives permission to

Coordinating Board for Higher Education
April 8, 2004

expand its offerings. One option that was mentioned includes the development of an AA degree in Jefferson City. This type of expansion is particularly attractive to graduates of A+ high schools.

The challenges associated with State Fair expanding its general education offerings in Jefferson City, however, are particularly great based on the open enrollment missions of both LU and SFCC. The ability of SFCC to respond to the demand for expanded services in Jefferson City is further complicated since Jefferson City is outside the SFCC taxing district. The residents of Jefferson City do not pay taxes to assure receipt of full community college services.

The current policy framework developed by presidents and chancellors and adopted by the CBHE sets parameters and expectations for program expansion at outreach sites. As the local provider, LU is the primary provider of lower-division coursework offered by any public institution in Cole County. State policy does provide the potential for other public institutions to offer coursework in Jefferson City when there is an unmet need. In addition, conflict resolution steps are outlined when there are disagreements between two or more institutions in designing delivery systems for particular communities.

Local communities, including Jefferson City, in need of expanded access are encouraged through "Hop-Over" legislation to join a community college taxing district or to establish their own community college when the criteria for doing so is met.

Future Considerations

Several legislators, students, State Fair employees who work at the Jefferson City outreach site, and interested citizens have raised questions and concerns about the potential phase out of State Fair's Jefferson City programs. The attached fact sheet has been sent to all parties that contact the DHE about the status of State Fair's commitments. In addition, DHE staff has held several meetings, including a meeting with Senator Vogel, Representative Deeken, and members of the Jefferson City Chamber of Commerce, to help clarify the current situation and to provide suggestions about future options. At their request, DHE staff will meet in early April with Senator Maida Coleman, Senator Rita Days, and LU President David Henson.

Originally, SFCC anticipated that its board would make a decision about whether to continue its current level of commitment to program offerings in Jefferson City at its regularly scheduled board meeting on March 29, 2004. The agenda item, however, was removed as an action item thereby delaying the decision in order for the SFCC board to have more time to study the situation in greater depth. At the same time, SFCC is cognizant of the fact that it must make a decision soon so that students and faculty alike understand their options.

DHE staff has scheduled a meeting with the presidents of LU, SFCC, and Linn State Technical College to explore collaborative alternatives that will assure protection to current certificate and degree-seeking students as well as consider collaborative opportunities for meeting the needs of prospective students.

Several ideas have been identified for further examination including:

- Greater involvement of local businesses in helping to underwrite the cost of technical programming in Jefferson City
- Expansion of contract training provided to area businesses
- Opportunities for offering a reduced set of credit courses and/or certificate and degree programs without the financial burden of a site

Conclusions

The career pathways associated with SFCC programs in Jefferson City center around computer-related and industrial technology-related work. Most, if not all, of the educational training required for entry into these fields is available through programming offered in Jefferson City by LU, William Woods, and Columbia College and 25 miles away in Linn, MO offered by Linn State Technical College. By utilizing RTEC funding in support of programming in Jefferson City, SFCC has raised expectations for access to lower-division coursework, certificates, and associate degree programs offered in a single location at convenient times and at community college prices.

The decision of whether or not SFCC will continue service in Jefferson City at its outreach site is a management decision of the college. A commitment to study the situation in greater detail provides an opportunity for local providers, citizens, and businesses to seek creative solutions. In addressing the needs of prospective students, the financial challenges faced by SFCC associated with programming in Jefferson City must be addressed. Whatever decision evolves, students currently enrolled in programs should be provided protection so that they will be able to complete those programs as planned. Programming in Jefferson City should involve collaborative efforts by all potential providers as well as responsibility by local area residents and businesses for providing financial support for service.

STATUTORY REFERENCE

Sections 173.005.2(1), 173.005.2(7), and 173.030, RSMo, CBHE new academic program approval

Section 173.020(2), RSMo, Identifying state higher education needs related to students and labor force

Section 173.020(3), RSMo, Developing missions and coordination of resource use

Section 173.030(2), RSMo, Recommending program, facility, and policy changes to institutional boards

Section 173.030(4), RSMo, Funding of off-campus instruction

Section 178.637.2, RSMo, Master plan for advanced technical and vocational training

Section 178.890 RSMo, Funding for external sites

Sections 178.892-178.896, RSMo, and 178.896, RSMo, Establishes Missouri's Community College Job Training Fund

Administrative Rule 6 CSR 10-6.020, adopted in September 1987, Standards for establishing residence centers

Administrative Rule 6 CSR 10-6.030, Funding of off-campus and out-of-district instructional sites

RECOMMENDED ACTION

This is an information item only.

ATTACHMENT

Information Concerning State Fair Programming in Jefferson City

Information Concerning State Fair Programming in Jefferson City

Authorized State Fair Programs in Jefferson City

In the mid 1990s Missouri community colleges were encouraged to expand delivery of technical education programs in communities outside community college taxing districts. Through this program, State Fair Community College was authorized by the Coordinating Board for Higher Education to offer a limited set of certificate and technical degree programs in Jefferson City. Specific programs include:

- Computer Information Systems, Accounting, AAS
- Computer Information Systems, Networking, AAS
- Computer Information Systems, Programming, AAS
- Industrial Electronics/Electricity Technology, One-year Certificate and AAS
- Industrial Maintenance Technology, One-year Certificate and AAS

Collaboration

In an effort to increase effectiveness, efficiency, and quality, state policies identify an expectation that public institutions planning to provide local service at a distance will work collaboratively with existing local partners by building on currently available general education and occupation-related coursework and by utilizing the human resources and facilities of local providers, including Area Vocational Technical Schools.

State Fair Community College Taxing District

State Fair Community College, which is located in Sedalia, Missouri, has a taxing district that includes the school districts of Benton and Pettis Counties, and the R-6 School District of Cooper County. The citizens in these communities pay local taxes to receive a full complement of community college services, including credit courses in support of certificate, associate of arts, and associate of applied science degree programs. The taxes paid by the citizens of State Fair's taxing district are used to support cost-effective community college education delivered in the taxing district.

Interest in Expanding Community College Services

In addition to technical programming, local citizens have expressed interest in having expanded general education options at community college prices. Communities with A+ high schools are particularly interested in having a local postsecondary option for A+ high school graduates. The State Fair Community College outreach site in Jefferson City, however, is not a branch campus of the community college. The citizens of Jefferson City are not part of a community college taxing district; State Fair's major responsibility is to meet the needs of the citizens in its taxing district. While State Fair Community College also has a commitment to provide service to the residents of its

voluntary service region, which includes Jefferson City, the cost of these services is a major factor in determining the feasibility of maintaining its current level of programming.

Financial Support for External Sites

External sites are expected to be self-supporting; limited funding from the state is permitted in cases of demonstrated need. RTEC funds were appropriated by the General Assembly in support of an expanded technical degree delivery system. Community Colleges received RTEC funding to support identification of regional needs and regional planning for implementing cooperative delivery systems to meet those needs. Institutions are expected to make administrative decisions on a regular basis concerning the utilization of RTEC funds to support these objectives.

Access to Community College Services

Local communities in need of expanded access to the 13th and 14th years are encouraged, through “Hop-Over” legislation, to join a community college taxing district or to establish their own community college when criteria for doing so can be met.

State Fair/Lincoln Relationship

Programming for Jefferson City is done in collaboration between State Fair Community College and Lincoln University. As the local provider, Lincoln University is given the right of first refusal to teach general education courses as part of State Fair’s offerings.

State Fair’s Continued Presence in Jefferson City

To date, no formal decision has been made concerning future programming commitments of State Fair Community College in Jefferson City. The president of State Fair Community College, Marsha Drennon, has informed the Coordinating Board for Higher Education that the institution is giving serious consideration to phasing out its programming commitments as a result of fiscal constraints associated with operating these programs. The college is looking at several alternatives including its commitment to contract training, the potential of sharing facilities, and the extent to which it can offer specialized credit bearing coursework and degree programs.

Protection to Currently Enrolled Students

Both State Fair Community College and Lincoln University have indicated a commitment to provide reasonable accommodations to currently enrolled students should State Fair Community College decide to phase out its Jefferson City operation.

Alternative Options for Prospective Students

Certificate and associate degree programs offered by State Fair Community College in Jefferson City lead to careers in computer fields or in industrial technologies. Although differences in price structure, times offered, and the amount of breadth and depth covered in the curriculum do exist, prospective students have access to courses and programs offered by Lincoln University and/or Linn State Technical College that provide training for entry-level jobs in similar careers. In most situations, workers in any of these career paths require on-going additional training while on the job. State Fair's training, specifically on the State's mainframe for programmers prepared to enter state-level jobs, is a unique feature of the State Fair programming that is not offered by any other institution. Should a new community college taxing district be formed involving Camdenton R-III and School of the Osage R-II, it is likely that additional options in these career paths would become available for mid Missouri residents.