

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
January 16, 2007
Board of Trustees Meeting

The Board of Trustees approved Illinois Eastern Community Colleges' Strategic Plan for fiscal years 2008 and 2009, at the regular monthly meeting, Tuesday, January 16, at Olney Central College.

Purpose of the strategic plan is improvement of instruction, the betterment of student support services, revitalized facilities, and state-of-the-art equipment and teaching tools to maintain the college district in a position of leadership as the district continues through the 21st century.

The number of area residents per thousand of population enrolled in credit and non-credit courses remains the highest in the state. The unit cost of instruction and other state community college statistics continue to reflect the efficiency of the district's operations. However, impending changes to the state's economy and also the state's community college equalization formula mandate that the district continues to seek new and better ways to meet the educational and cultural needs of the communities served by IECC.

The plan notes that change and flexibility are essential if the district is to continue to be effective in achieving its mission. To help ensure the continued viability of the district, it is essential that the four colleges, Workforce Education, and the District Office continue making improvements. Specific objectives have been established to meet the broad-based goals outlined in the plan.

The focus of the strategic plan is to increase student enrollment, persistence, retention, and contribute significantly to the economic growth of the region. In addition, because of the scarcity of state capital improvement funds, it is critically important that the district pursue local funding sources, such as protection, health, and safety bonds and college foundation support, to maintain the upkeep of the district's educational facilities. Ultimately, successful attainment of these goals will create increases in the district's revenue from tuition and state credit hour grant reimbursements.

The trustees approved an agreement with the Consortium of Academic and Research Libraries in Illinois (CARLI), which will substantially expand the educational

opportunities available to students attending each of the four IECC colleges. Currently IECC libraries are associated with the Shawnee Library System, allowing students access to approximately two million items in the Shawnee System which is comprised primarily of public libraries and some academic libraries. CARLI is a consortium of academic libraries and has 32.4 million items available for use by students. The cost to join CARLI is \$975, plus conversion of software.

CEO Terry Bruce informed the trustees that IECC has received notice that to be eligible for equalization funding the District will have to increase its tuition to 85% of the state-wide average tuition and universal fees. The current tuition is \$53 per semester hour and was increased effective the Fall Semester of 2005. Bruce proposed that the Board increase the tuition from its current \$53 per semester hour to \$57 per semester hour effective with the Summer Session 2007. This would mean that a current student carrying a load of 30 hours would see an annual tuition increase of \$120, from \$1,590 to \$1,710. This represents a 5% increase over a two year period. Equalization funding is critical to the financial security of the District and tuition must be increased as required by law to have access to this funding.

The trustees approved an increase in the lease for Workforce Education facilities in Girard, Illinois from \$645 to \$700 per month, along with an extension of the lease for an additional two years. The district has occupied this space since 1997. It is leased from Wrightsman-Musso, Ltd. for a professional office suite and classroom for the Coal Mining Technology Program.

Standard Affiliation Agreements were approved with the Hamilton Memorial Hospital, McLeansboro, and Wabash Christian Retirement Home, Carmi.

CEO Terry Bruce was appointed Interim President of Wabash Valley College beginning February 1, to serve until a permanent President is employed for WVC. Harry Benson, current WVC President, will retire on January 31.

Pamela Murphy was employed as Horticulture Instructor and Mina Coleman was employed as Youthful Offender Program Counselor, both for the LTC educational program at the Robinson Correctional Center.

All eligible LTC employees at the two correctional centers were approved for a 4% salary increase, effective July 1, 2006.

The foregoing actions relative to correctional center employees are subject to funding and approval by the Illinois Department of Corrections.

Samantha Farmer was employed as clerk/receptionist at Frontier Community College.

The employment status of Sibyl Janello was changed from Program Advisor to Coordinator, Registration and Records, Workforce Education.

All members of the Board of Trustees were present at the January meeting.

Next regular meeting of the Board of Trustees will be Tuesday, February 20, at 7 p.m. at Wabash Valley College, Mt. Carmel.