

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
January 17, 2006
Board of Trustees Meeting

Illinois Eastern Community Colleges District No. 529 has been notified by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association that their accreditation has been continued for another ten years.

The IECC Board of Trustees accepted the HLC Final Report at the regular meeting, Tuesday, January 17, at Lincoln Trail College, Robinson.

The IECC District is comprised of Frontier Community College (Fairfield), Lincoln Trail College (Robinson), Olney Central College (Olney), and Wabash Valley College (Mt. Carmel). The Higher Learning Commission's Evaluation Team visited the colleges and the District Office (Olney) on April 18-20, 2005. Accreditation by the Higher Learning Commission enables the District to apply for federal grant applications, enables IECC students to receive federal financial aid, and enables colleges and universities to recognize and accept credits earned at IECC.

In preparation for the Evaluation Team's visit the District conducted a self-study that addressed five areas of criteria as set forth by the Higher Learning Commission. The self-study, involving more than 150 IECC faculty and staff, was completed over a two year period. The Self-Study Report was sent to the Evaluation Team, which consisted of eight evaluator-consultants selected from various colleges throughout the HLC nineteen state region, prior to the onsite visit.

Following the onsite visit the Evaluation Team completed two reports, the Assurance Section and the Advancement Section. The Assurance Section is a record of the team's visit; the evidence presented; and includes the outcome of the visit. The Advancement Section contains recommendations for the organization's future improvements on issues raised in the Assurance Section, and noted areas of accomplishment.

The District will prepare a monitoring report on the assessment of student learning due October 2008. The next scheduled comprehensive visit will be in 2014-2015.

At Tuesday's meeting, the trustees approved an amendment to the existing contracts with the Illinois Department of Corrections for the Lincoln Trail College educational programs at the Lawrence and Robinson Correctional Centers.

The changes increase vocational income by \$778 at Lawrence and by \$2,801 at Robinson, because of a vocational reimbursement rate increase from the Illinois Community College Board. Personnel services at Lawrence were decreased by \$2,613, resulting in a decrease of \$261 in indirect costs at Lawrence. Personnel services at Robinson were increased by \$2,613 and indirect costs were increased by \$261.

An affiliation agreement was approved with the Gingerbread House Daycare Center at Robinson.

Observation agreements were approved with the Gingerbread House Daycare Center at Robinson, and with the Lawrence County Health Department at Lawrenceville.

The trustees approved an agreement with Bridger Management Company, Darien, Illinois, a consulting firm which has developed a specialty in working with small colleges to reduce costs and develop revenues on the non-academic side of the budget. Bridger identifies and implements practical and effective solutions for community colleges to control non-academic expenses by improving services and capturing savings in the areas of property asset management and service contracts. The firm also suggests cost savings by a review of operating budgets, district labor productivity and labor planning, energy management, contracts dealing with physical plant maintenance, telecommunications contracts, and technology costs.

The bid of Merz Sheet Metal, Inc., Effingham, Illinois, was approved for Protection, Health and Safety compliance work at Olney Central College and Wabash Valley College. The bid of \$470,783 is for heating, ventilation and air conditioning upgrade work at the two colleges.

Holly Farley was employed as a Nursing Instructor. Shirley Redding was employed as a Nursing Instructor for the Spring Semester only, effective January 30.

The resignation of Brandi Jittjumnongk was accepted as Career Advisor at Lincoln Trail College, effective February 1.

The retirement of Audrey Tice was announced as Administrative Assistant to the President of Wabash Valley College, effective May 31. She has been employed at WVC for the past 29 years.

A service contract was accepted from Crossroads Workforce Investment Board, for use of a resource room in the Illinois Employment and Training Center on Main Street in Olney.

District enrollment is up 4 percent from this same time one year ago.

All members of the Board of Trustees were present at the January meeting and all motions were approved by a unanimous vote.

Next regular meeting of the Board of Trustees will be Tuesday, February 21, at 7 p.m. at Olney Central College.