

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 16, 2004

Board of Trustees Meeting

The Board of Trustees, at the regular monthly meeting, approved Illinois Eastern Community Colleges' Strategic Plan for fiscal years 2005 and 2006, Tuesday, March 16, at Lincoln Trail College, Robinson.

The 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 institution continues through the 21st century.

The Strategic Plan is a product of district-wide research that includes a scan of the district's environment, input from the four colleges and District Office, its workforce education division, and the communities served.

The plan is a comprehensive planning document that will help guide district and college decision-making. Historical data indicates that while the district's population is steadily declining, equalized assessed valuation is not keeping pace with inflation, jobs are being lost and state reimbursement is decreasing, IECC continues to increase its generation of reimbursable credit hours.

The number of area residents per thousand of population enrolled at IECC remains the highest in the state. Unit cost of instruction and other statistics continue to reflect efficiency in the district's operations. However, impending changes in the economy and state funding mandate that the district must continue to seek new and better ways to meet the educational and cultural needs of the IECC district.

A new Board Policy was approved relating to the federal Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act. The policy outlines the rights of members of the IECC insurance plan and designates Tara Buerster, Director of Personnel, as Privacy Officer who is responsible for implementing and maintaining all HIPAA privacy policies and procedures.

The district's tuition rate will be increased effective with the summer term of 2004. In-district tuition will increase from \$45 per semester hour to \$48 per semester hour. Special Indiana counties' tuition will increase from \$90 to \$96 per semester hour.

The trustees noted that the increase is necessary because of the uncertainty of the state budget situation. Even with the increase, IECC's tuition rate remains one of the lowest in the state.

A contract was renewed that provides for the IECC Coal Mining Technology staff to provide training for the Illinois Department of Natural Resources. This training has been in effect for many years under a similar contract. The renewal is for the period March 1, 2004 through February 28, 2007.

The Lincoln Trail College Foundation has constructed a baseball and softball facility in cooperation with the City of Robinson and the Foundation and City has added a fitness center to the facility. By agreement between the Foundation and City, the Foundation will donate the building to the city and the city will be responsible for operation and management of the facility.

The trustees also approved donation of fitness center equipment to the new city facility. In exchange for the donation of equipment, the City of Robinson will manage the facility and the college will teach a series of fitness courses there. An inter-governmental agreement between IECC and the City of Robinson was adopted for operation of the health and fitness center.

The trustees accepted the following bids from Gilles Cycling & Fitness, Evansville, Indiana, for instructional cardio equipment for Lincoln Trail College: Two treadmills, \$7,945; two cross trainers, \$7,862; a stair climber, \$2,285; two recumbent bikes, \$4,504.

The resignation of Julie Tennis was accepted as Custodian at Wabash Valley College, effective February 23.

Student enrollment in the IECC district is up 12 percent over one year ago.

Next regular meeting of the Board of Trustees will be Tuesday, April 20, at 7 p.m. at Olney Central College.