

2016 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

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The WACCT advocates for Wyoming community colleges at the federal and state level, working with legislators, other elected officials, and regulators to protect and enhance the flexible, accessible environment that has been the hallmark of Wyoming's community colleges.

A central goal of the WACCT's advocacy efforts is to create a unified vision and voice on behalf of all seven colleges, their trustees, and their presidents.

2016 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES



STABLE FUNDING

- The Community Colleges need a stable source of funding based on realistic enrollment levels.
- The legislature has approved reduced amounts in the past, and in one legislative session, no enrollment funding was appropriated at all. Therefore, it is difficult for the colleges to plan and budget effectively.
- As a result, the colleges have proposed an approach that provides predictability. Our request is to base the standard budget on 2014-2015 enrollment levels, and then recalibrate the budget based on enrollment increases, or decreases, every four years.
- Allowing for four years of stable funding provides the necessary time needed for developing and refining programs and educational offerings.

CAPITAL CONSTRUCTION ~ \$46.7M TOTAL

The seven community colleges speak with one voice when it comes to capital construction. The Wyoming Community College Commission (WCCC) weights the projects and ranks them according to priority. The construction projects proposed this year continue the planning process started last year.

Construction Projects:

NWCCD Technical Education Center	\$6.5M
Casper College Visual Arts Facility	\$5.5M
CWC Jackson Outreach Center	\$6.0M
CWC Ag & Animal Science Building	\$5.25M

Planning & Construction Projects:

LCCC Fine & Performing Arts Building	\$12.35M
WWCC Western Education Center	\$11.1M

ENDOWMENT MATCH FLEXIBILITY

- In 2004, the 57th Legislature of the State of Wyoming appropriated \$31.5 million from the general fund to the Wyoming Community College Endowment Challenge program. Since then, additional funds were allocated in 2007, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2014 and 2015 for a total appropriation of almost \$65 million, all of which the colleges matched.
- State matching funds have attracted many private gifts that would not have been received otherwise, as donors are willing to grow endowments if additional matching funds are available.
- The Community Colleges have established endowment funds with donor gifts and state matching funds for scholarships, faculty positions, equipment, program enhancements, and facility maintenance. However, the Community Colleges would like to have more flexibility for use of endowment matches or gift matches when it pertains to facilities.

WHO WE ARE

The Wyoming Association of Community College Trustees is a non-profit organization of community college governing boards, representing the 49 elected trustees who govern Wyoming's 7 community colleges.

OUR MISSION

The mission of the Wyoming Association of Community College Trustees, a collaborative organization of Wyoming community college trustees with college presidents, is to promote the continued quality, strength, vitality and effectiveness of its members.

OUR VISION

The Wyoming Association of Community College Trustees will be the leading information source and advocate for Wyoming's community colleges, shaping public policy that strengthens community college education, and providing trustee development to ensure effective governing boards.



ABOUT WYOMING'S COMMUNITY COLLEGES

- The success of Wyoming's Community Colleges directly correlates to employers' ability to generate revenues for the State.
- In ten years, Wyoming will be producing forty percent more high school graduates, and the Community Colleges need to start planning now.
- Wyoming's Community Colleges are the State's number one economic development tool.
- Wyoming's employers need students graduating from the Community Colleges' technical, healthcare and other occupationally directed programs. Nearly one hundred percent of these graduates stay in Wyoming.
- On average, the student demographic consists of sixty percent traditional students and forty percent nontraditional.
- Altogether, Wyoming Community Colleges award more high school completion credentials each year than the three largest high schools combined.
- A higher percentage of students are taking college classes at Wyoming's community colleges than in any other state in the nation.
- The seven institutions serve students in all twenty-three Wyoming counties.
- Although enrollment has been down slightly in recent years, it is still seventeen percent higher than in the base year of 2004/2005 and certificate, and degree awards have increased.



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

HOW ARE THE COMMUNITY COLLEGES CURRENTLY FUNDED?

- Enrollment growth funding is the mechanism set up in the statutes to provide operational funding to cover the costs of enrollment growth over that initial 2004-2005 period. It is a means of funding the colleges for achieving one of their primary purposes – increasing the number of Wyoming citizens who have a degree or certificate of value and ensuring that Wyoming employers have the skilled employees they need.
- W.S. 21-18-205 allows the Wyoming Community College Commission to request this funding annually.
- Enrollment funding provides funding retroactively. That is, it helps support the costs of students who are already on college campuses, taking courses, and utilizing such services as registration, advising, career counseling, financial aid, and many others. The colleges have already incurred these costs. It is not based on speculation or a forecast, but on actual enrollment figures.

WHAT IS CONCURRENT ENROLLMENT?

- College-approved high school faculty teach concurrent enrollment courses at the high school; students receive both high school and college credit for successfully completing these classes.

WHAT IS DUAL ENROLLMENT?

- College faculty teach dual enrollment courses at the college or outreach center. Some dual enrollment courses are available through distance learning delivery methods such as online or video classes.

WHAT IS THE COST TO CONCURRENT ENROLLMENT STUDENTS?

- These college classes for eligible students are free of charge thanks to Wyoming lawmakers who enacted legislation creating the program in 1995.

WHAT IS BOCES/BOCHES AND HOW DOES IT WORK?

- BOCES stands for the Board of Cooperative Educational Services that is a joint venture between a Community College and a school district, or districts. Services may include (but not limited to) postsecondary education, vocational-technical education, adult education, student and community enrichment programs, and services for children with disabilities.
- The goals, services, and programs are determined by each local BOCES Board and vary widely throughout the state.
- BOCES receives money from property taxes. The school district may levy up to a ½ mil on the district's assessed value. Per statute, the assessment shall raise only the necessary funds to meet the financial requirements of programs and services offered. An additional two mils may be levied with voter approval.
- BOCHES stands for the Board of Cooperative Higher Educational Services. The focus is to assist local high school students in transitioning to work or post-high school educational opportunities. This is also a focus on some of the state's BOCES through support of programs such as dual and concurrent enrollment.

HOW ARE NEW PROGRAMS APPROVED?

- The seven Commissioners of the WCCC approve all new programs for the seven colleges.

WYOMING ASSOCIATION OF COMMUNITY COLLEGE TRUSTEES

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