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**NEWS**

**Board Considers Cost Saving Measures**

The Coast Community College District Board of Trustees held a special meeting on Wednesday, June 3 to study budget options for the 2009-10 fiscal year. The Board considered several cost saving measures recommended by the District Budget Advisory Committee, which is headed by Acting Chancellor Dr. Ding-Jo H. Currie.

The Board studied the options and hoped to reduce the 2009-10 operating budget by at least \$5 million. The suggestions included freezing all hiring, moving to a 4/8 summer workweek and retirement incentives.

In addition to the recommendations presented by the District Budget Advisory Committee, the Board also heard from constituent representative groups on behalf of the District's faculty, staff and managers. The presentations included arguments for or against the proposed cost savings presented and new items that constituents suggested.

"Faculty at our three colleges are working hard on contingency plans to minimize the impact on our students if the governor's proposed cuts come to fruition," said Dean Mancina, President, Coast Federation of Educators, AFT Local 1911. "Currently the budget cuts are up in the air, making it especially challenging to plan for the next academic year which begins in less than three months."

"The priority of the Board is, and will always be, the students," said Board Clerk Jerry Patterson. "We will continue to keep our commitment to students in mind as we work toward implementing these drastic budget cuts."

Trustee Mary Hornbuckle echoed Trustee Patterson's comments "If we all focus on putting students first, it becomes clear how important it is that everyone makes sacrifices in the name of mitigating the damage done to students. It is a difficult yet necessary evil in this type of economy."

Because the meeting was the first time the Board heard the proposed cost saving measures, it did not take any action. The Board is expected to have an additional study session on June 10 at 5:00 p.m. at the District Offices - 1370 Adams Avenue, Costa Mesa, 92626. The Board is expected to take action on budget items at their regular meeting on June 17.

Board President Jim Moreno let the audience know that this was not the end of the budget woes. "While this will be the first round of cost saving measures, it will surely not be the last. We all know that the state's financial condition will inflict much pain -- we cannot be in denial. Our struggles are far from over and we will need to continually examine our business practices to find additional savings. Cuts cannot be avoided, however our students come first. The Board anticipates that we will need to make similar, if not more drastic, cuts for the 2010-11 fiscal year."

The Governor has proposed \$825 million in cuts to the state's community colleges for the coming year. The Coast Community College District will account for over \$20 million of those cuts. The state has also proposed specific cuts, including the elimination of the CalGrant program and a per unit fee increase for students, from \$20 to \$60. Enrollment is expected to skyrocket as students are turned away from California State Universities and University of California institutions and displaced workers and returning Veterans enroll in classes to obtain new skills.

The Coast Community College District is headquartered in Costa Mesa and is the ninth largest district in the country. The District's three colleges - Coastline Community College in Fountain Valley, Golden West College in Huntington Beach and Orange Coast College in Costa Mesa -serve over 60,000 students each year providing traditional degree and transfer opportunities, career and technical training and community programs.

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