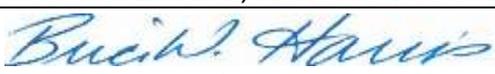




# The Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges

PRESENTED TO THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS

DATE: July 8-9, 2013

SUBJECT: Approval of Yuba Community College District's Sutter County Educational Center		Item Number: 2.2	
		Attachment: No	
CATEGORY:	College Finance and Facilities Planning	TYPE OF BOARD CONSIDERATION:	
Recommended By:	 Frederick E. Harris, Assistant Vice Chancellor	Consent/Routine	
		First Reading	
Approved for Consideration:	 Brice W. Harris, Chancellor	Action	X
		Information	

**ISSUE:** This item presents Yuba Community College District's request for state approval of the Sutter County Educational Center

**BACKGROUND:** Pursuant to California Code of Regulations, title 5, section 55180(b), an Educational Center is defined as a "postsecondary operation established and administered by an existing college or district at a location away from the campus of the parent institution," which:

- Is planned to continue for ten or more years
- Generates at least 500 full-time equivalent students annually
- Has an on-site administrator
- Offers programs leading to certificates and/or degrees conferred by the parent institution
- And has been approved by the Board of Governors

The Yuba Community College District serves an area consisting of nearly 4,200 square miles in rural, northern California that covers eight counties: Yuba, Colusa, Sutter, Yolo, Glenn, Lake, Plumas, and Placer. The district is comprised of Yuba College, Woodland Community College, two educational centers located in Clearlake and Sutter County, and outreach operations at Beale Air Force Base in Marysville and in Williams in Colusa County. These locations allow the district to serve the educational needs of the dispersed communities.

The letter of intent for the Sutter County Educational Center was submitted by the district to the Chancellor's Office in July 2010 and approved in October 2010. The district's enrollment projections were approved by the Department of Finance in December 2011 and the needs assessment was submitted to the Chancellor's Office in May 2012.

**RECOMMENDED ACTION:** It is recommended that the Board of Governors approves the Sutter County Educational Center as a state-approved educational center.

**ANALYSIS:** The Yuba Community College District has a unique, vast service area that extends across the broad valley of California, from the foothills of the Sierra Nevada on the east to the Coast Range on the west. The considerable distances between much of the district's population and its campuses in Marysville and Woodland, combined with the topography of the expansive service area, have made it essential to supplement both Woodland Community College and Yuba College operations by offering courses in local communities to serve the educational needs of the district's dispersed population.

The Sutter County Educational Center fulfills the need for public higher education for the rural and remote communities within Sutter County, one of only eight counties in California that did not have a public higher education college or center prior to the opening of the center. The center opened in fall 2012 and primarily serves the north area of Yuba Community College District, including Live Oak, Meridian, Robbins, Sutter, and Yuba City. The center offers general education and basic skills courses and is vital to providing education and services to the residents of these communities to give students the opportunity to continue their education and increase enrollment opportunities to help enhance the local economy with a college-educated workforce.

The Sutter County Educational Center is located on a twenty-acre site in Yuba City with a two-story building that was constructed with local Measure J bond funds approved in 2006. The building is approximately 53,373 square feet and consists of classrooms, student services operations, and faculty offices.

### **Population and Enrollment Projections**

The Department of Finance estimates that the total population within the Sutter County Educational Center service area experienced an increase of approximately 25.6 percent over 10 years, increasing from 78,930 in year 2000 to 99,154 persons in year 2010. The Department of Finance forecasts an even stronger population growth for the Sutter County service area from 2011 to 2019 of approximately 32.5 percent, an estimated average annual growth of about 3.6 percent.

Residents of the Sutter County Educational Center service area have a lower level of educational achievement than the statewide average. Approximately 30.8 percent of the service area population age 25 and over reported that a high school diploma or equivalent was their highest level of educational achievement compared to the state's 24.6 percent. Moreover, only 22.6 percent of the Sutter County population 25 years or older have a bachelor's degree or higher compared to the state's 40 percent.

Enrollment projections for the Sutter County Educational Center developed by the Yuba Community College District (Table 1) and approved by the Department of Finance show the district will achieve the 500 minimum full-time equivalent students (FTES) required for seeking state approval of a center. In fact, the district has provided certification that the center has served a total of 755 FTES since its opening in fall 2012. The center is now expected to achieve 1,000 FTES by June 2013 rather than the forecasted academic year 2015-16 shown in Table 1, meeting the 1000 FTES threshold required for apportionment funding sooner than projected.

The current FTES level and the forecasted robust growth for the Sutter County area demonstrate the need for the Sutter County Educational Center to provide enrollment opportunities to serve the growing educational needs of the center’s service area.

Table 1 - Enrollment projections

Yuba Community College District Sutter County Educational Center					
Year	Fall Enrollment	WSCH/ Enrollment	WSCH	Fall FTES	Annual FTES
2012	1,400	8.36	11,703	390	780
2013	1,455	8.83	12,844	428	856
2014	1,510	9.30	14,036	468	936
2015	1,564	9.77	15,280	509	1,019
2016	1,619	10.25	16,591	553	1,106
2017	1,674	10.25	17,152	572	1,143
2018	1,728	10.25	17,712	590	1,181
2019	1,783	10.25	18,272	609	1,218

### Alternatives

The Sutter County Educational Center location and the development of the campus have been locally funded and approved by voters to provide educational access to the growing population in the underserved Sutter County service area. Yuba Community College District conducted a survey of Sutter County residents in 2007 to identify and integrate local needs into the planning process before pursuing the development of the Sutter County Educational Center. The state-approved center approach provides various advantages over the alternatives identified below:

#### Remain an Outreach Center

The alternative of offering programs at the Sutter County Educational Center as a Yuba College outreach center would not address the problem of access to public higher education in Sutter County. Without access to the operational funding available to an official state-approved educational center, program offerings at the Sutter County Educational Center would be limited, in terms of number and type of course offerings, to a level similar to the River Valley High School outreach location which would not be sufficient to fulfill the state’s goal to encourage student enrollment. State-approved center status would allow the Sutter County Educational Center to offer robust programs and enhanced student services to meet the needs of a growing community and remove the travel barrier to higher education.

#### Expand Yuba College

Geographical barriers discourage full participation throughout the Yuba Community College District’s service area. A key issue that has led to the development of the Sutter County Educational Center is the challenge of the commute to Yuba College from west of the Feather River and Highway 70. Presently, the roadway system leading to Yuba College from Sutter County is not

developed to the point that it can handle existing traffic. The waterway has just two crossing points from Sutter County to the college and there are no plans to build new bridges over the waterway in the near future, making this area difficult to navigate for the foreseeable future. In addition, the economic environment is such that the time and cost to commute back and forth from outlying parts of Sutter County make it difficult for students to enroll and take classes. Expansion at Yuba College would not eliminate the access obstacles needed to draw enrollment growth from the surrounding Sutter County area. The Sutter County Educational Center location, across the river and highway from Yuba College will reduce travel time, and most importantly, provide the growing Sutter County population with increased access opportunities.

#### Increase the Utilization of Existing Institutions

Increasing the offering of programs at Woodland Community College and Yuba College does not address the accessibility issue. Woodland Community College is 35 miles away and would be too far of a commute for residents near the Sutter County Educational Center. Although Yuba College in Marysville is closer in proximity than Woodland Community College—only 10 miles from the Sutter Center—Yuba College also has accessibility issues when traveling from Yuba City. It can take residents almost 45 minutes to reach the Yuba College campus due to the fact that there are only two roadways that cross both the Yuba River and Feather River. Due to the lack of accessibility, utilizing the existing facilities within the district would not achieve the outcome of drawing enrollment participation from the underserved Sutter County area.

#### Shared Use with Other Postsecondary Institutions

The district's service area does not have many postsecondary institutions, and the ones that are in the service area are private four-year institutions, such as Chapman University and University of Phoenix. Although there are other neighboring districts, such as Los Rios Community College District, Sierra Joint Community College District, and Butte-Glenn Community College District, Yuba City residents would need to travel approximately one hour to attend classes offered at these facilities. The joint-use of these other district facilities situated outside of the Yuba City service area would not provide the access needed to provide the residents with the opportunity to gain education, job training, and personal development.

#### Utilization of Non-Traditional Delivery Methods

The Yuba Community College District offers various non-traditional delivery methods known as distributive education. The distributive education program provides students the option of accessing courses from a distance using a variety of technologies, including fully online courses and televised courses. Most, if not all, of these distance learning courses use Blackboard—an online eLearning course- management software to accompany and enhance the content of the course. These distributive education courses will also be offered through the Sutter County Center to provide residents with the opportunity of these non-traditional delivery methods to help meet the needs of local residents who may work full-time or have other priorities that may hinder their taking a traditional course in a classroom setting.

### **Academic Planning and Program Justification**

The staff from the Chancellor's Office Academic Affairs Division has reviewed the needs assessment and determined that there are no significant inter-district concerns and the proposed delivery system at the Sutter County Educational Center is reasonable.

The Sutter County Educational Center was established to: (1) offer general education and basic skills coursework; (2) allow students to complete nearly all associate degree and transfer requirements; and 3) offer courses leading to associate degrees and certificates.

Program offerings have been thoroughly considered to mitigate enrollment impacts at Yuba College. Programs offered only at the Sutter County Educational Center prepare students for the increasing employment opportunities as paraprofessional counselors, workers and aides in the areas of welfare, vocational rehabilitation, mental health and chemical dependency and educational courses for elementary school teachers. The center also offers English as a Second Language and business/technology degrees and certificates in accounting, general business, business computer applications, and office administration. Although these courses are also offered at Yuba College in a student format (i.e., regular 17.5 term-length), only the compressed cohort courses (longer blocks of time and therefore shorter term length than regular term) will be offered at the center. These compressed cohort courses are intended to provide more flexibility for working students, increase class scheduling options, promote student collaboration and interaction, and expedite completion of program curriculum so that students can obtain degrees faster.

### **Student Services and Outreach**

The staff from the Chancellor's Office Student Services and Special Programs Division has determined that the level of staffing and student support services at the Sutter County Educational Center is adequate for the projected student population. The center provides most of the student services available at the main Yuba College campus, including Admissions/Records and Registration, Assessment/Placement Testing, Counseling, Disabled Student Programs and Services, Financial Aid Assistance, Tutoring, Bookstore, and Library/Learning Resource Center.

It's the district's goal to implement a "one-stop shop" to provide all the student services on site at the Center to assist with the educational needs of the students. Currently, the Extended Opportunity Programs and Services, Cooperative Agencies Resources for Education, and CalWORKs operate solely at the main campus but informational brochures about these programs are provided at the center.

### **Support and Capital Outlay Budget Projections**

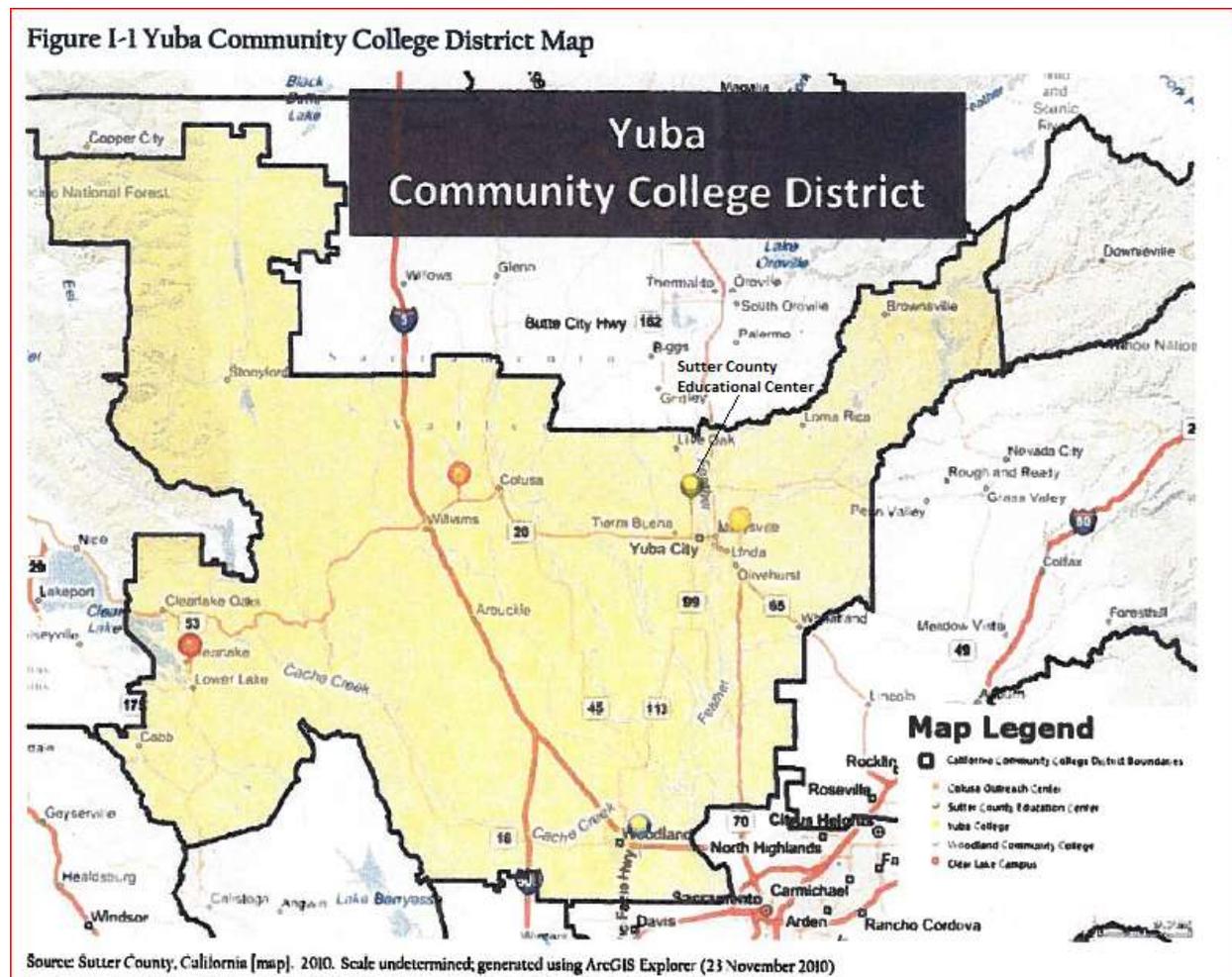
The Chancellor's Office College Finance and Facilities Planning Division has conducted their review and concluded that the district has demonstrated that the forecasted FTES at the center would generate adequate income to meet the anticipated fiscal demands of the growing center. The district has succeeded in improving its annual fund balance well above the recommended minimum reserve of five percent.

The district funded the construction of the Sutter County Educational Center facility with local bond funding. Local funds were used for site acquisition and construction of the new education building of approximately 53,373 gross square feet /44,135 assignable square feet and site improvements

that include parking, road access, landscaping and security. The Center construction was completed in August 2012. The District does not expect any additional capital outlay construction at the Center for the next five years.

### Geographic and Physical Accessibility

The Sutter County Educational Center is located in northern Sutter County between Pease and Eager Roads and can be easily accessed via major roadways and Highway State Route 99 which is about a mile to the west of the center. The strong network of freeways and surface roads will allow students to travel quickly and easily reach the center. It is estimated that the commute times from most of the communities within the service area are less than 30 minutes. The center provides plenty of parking accessibility to accommodate students driving to campus. The district is in communication with the local public transportation agency to enhance accessibility to public transportation. Also, Yuba-Sutter Transit offers shuttle service between Yuba College and the center for summer session, June 10-July 18, 2013.



**Effects on Other Institutions**

The district has identified ten higher educational institutions neighboring the proposed Sutter County Educational Center. Two of these institutions—Chapman University and University of Phoenix—are located approximately 7 miles and 10 miles, respectively, from the center location. The remaining institutions are remotely situated with distances that range from 37 miles to 71 miles away from the proposed center. The district anticipates minimal impact to these surrounding institutions primarily due to the considerable distance between the institutions and/or differing levels or types of programs and services offered. Support for the center has been received from the City of Live Oak, the Sutter County Superintendent of Schools, the Sutter Union High School District, Los Rios Community College District, Butte-Glenn Community College District, and Solano Community College.

**Environmental Impact**

The Yuba Community College District is in full compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act. The district conducted an initial study and determined that a Mitigated Negative Declaration was the appropriate level of analysis required by the California Environmental Quality Act for the Sutter County Educational Center. Findings from the Mitigated Negative Declaration showed, with the mitigation measures taken, there would be no significant environmental impacts. A Mitigated Negative Declaration for the center was filed with the State Clearing House (State Clearing House #2009032081) in May 2009, followed by a Notice of Determination in June 2009.