





# The Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges

PRESENTED TO THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS

DATE: March 21-22, 2016

SUBJECT: Approval of Los Rios Community College District's Rancho Cordova Educational Center		Item Number: 2.4	
		Attachment: No	
CATEGORY:	College Finance and Facilities Planning	TYPE OF BOARD CONSIDERATION:	
Recommended By:	 Dan Troy, Vice Chancellor	Consent/Routine	
		First Reading	
Approved for Consideration:	 Erik Skinner, Deputy Chancellor	Action	X
		Information	

**ISSUE:** This item requests state approval of the Rancho Cordova Educational Center in the Los Rios Community College District.

**BACKGROUND:** The Los Rios Community College District was officially formed in 1965 and serves over 80,000 students annually in its 2,400 square mile service area. The district consists of four colleges: American River College, Sacramento City College, Cosumnes River College, and Folsom Lake College. In addition, the district includes five state-approved educational centers: the El Dorado Center, the Natomas Center, the West Sacramento Center, the Elk Grove Center, and the Davis Center. The district also has educational outreach operations in various locations, including Bella Vista High School, the former McClellan Air Force Base, and Rancho Cordova. Together these locations allow the district to meet its goal of being an accessible source of higher education in the Sacramento region.

The district submitted a Letter of Intent to the Chancellor's Office in November 2005 requesting approval to establish a center in Rancho Cordova. An initial Needs Study was submitted to the Chancellor's Office in November 2008, but unfortunately the purchase for the original site was not completed due to unforeseen complications. Based on the selection, purchase and construction of a new site, the district submitted a revised Needs Study in July 2015 and demonstrated that the center generated over the 500 annual full-time equivalent students required for center approval.

**RECOMMENDED ACTION:** It is recommended that the Board of Governors approve the Rancho Cordova Educational Center as a state-approved educational center.

**ANALYSIS:** The California Code of Regulations, title 5, section 55180(b) defines an educational center 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 10 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 Long-Range Master Plan outlines a framework for the evaluation and review of new colleges and educational centers. The framework consists of four categories of planning criteria including: future demand, access, capacity of existing campuses, and local intent. The Rancho Cordova outreach center fully meets three of the planning categories - future demand, capacity of existing campuses, and local intent – and substantially meets the planning criteria in the access category indicating that the proposed educational center falls within the framework established in the Long-Range Master Plan.

## **Overview**

Folsom Lake College oversees the Rancho Cordova outreach center and provides educational services to Rancho Cordova residents. In 2007, the Rancho Cordova outreach center leased facility was expanded from 5,000 square feet to approximately 11,000 square feet. The Rancho Cordova outreach center offers students an introduction to a community college’s wide range of educational opportunities while creating highly accessible learning facilities and localized services to serve as a gateway to Folsom Lake College.

Demographic data support the need for an educational center in the City of Rancho Cordova to meet the current and future higher educational needs of the residents. The Rancho Cordova outreach center currently operates as an outreach center of Folsom Lake College and is located within an area of the city with multiple residential and commercial development proposals under review that would bring an additional 27,000 housing units.

The Rancho Cordova outreach center offers a range of curriculum including English as a second language, general education, computer science, and business courses. The new Rancho Cordova Educational Center will provide an expansion of the credit courses that will be offered from a greater variety of departments. This will provide students with the opportunity to transfer to a 4-year program. In addition, student services that are currently provided are planned to be expanded with a new dedicated facility and as the surrounding population grows.

The Los Rios Community College District passed a local bond in 2002 which provided the resources needed to acquire the 5.66 acres of land and build the first phase of the Rancho Cordova Educational Center. The new facility includes more than 24,000 square feet of instructional space, eight classrooms, a learning resource center with an open-access computer lab, and space for comprehensive student support services.

## Population and Enrollment Projections

The demographic profile of Rancho Cordova supports the need for the establishment of a permanent educational center. According to the Sacramento Area Council of Governments, the total population within the City of Rancho Cordova was approximately 88,867 residents in 2008 and is estimated to reach 110,274 residents by 2020. The city's rate of growth has far surpassed either that of Sacramento County, at 36.3% versus 12.4%.

The California Code of Regulations, title 5, section 55180(b) requires that state-approved educational centers exceed 500 full-time equivalent students annually. In 2014-15, the Rancho Cordova outreach center generated 502.81 full-time equivalent students.

Enrollment at the outreach center is forecasted to continue exceeding the 500 full-time equivalent student threshold requirement. Table 1 shows recent enrollment projections for the center developed by the Los Rios Community College District and approved by the Department of Finance Demographic Research Unit. The number of existing full-time equivalent students and the projected growth in the service area show the center will continue to be a viable institution.

Table 1: Department of Finance Enrollment, WSCH, and FTES Growth Driven Projections

Year	Fall Enrollment	WSCH/Enrollment	WSCH	Fall FTES	Annual FTES
2013-14	942	5.7	5,401	175	350
2014-15	1,204	6.0	7,254	235	502.81*
2015-16	2,311	6.1	14,010	454	908
2016-17	2,381	6.1	14,430	467	934
2017-18	2,452	6.1	14,863	481	962
2018-19	2,526	6.1	15,309	496	992
2019-20	2,601	6.1	15,768	511	1,022
2020-21	2,679	6.1	16,241	526	1,052

\*2014-15 Actual FTES shown

## Alternatives

The Los Rios Community College District considered a number of alternatives to pursuing and establishing a state-approved educational center, and the district's Board of Trustees has determined that a center is the most educational and financially feasible alternative. The alternatives evaluated as part of the Needs Study include the following:

### Expansion of Existing Institutions within the Region

The Los Rios Community College District Board of Trustees determined in 2000 that educational services would be delivered to the region through four comprehensive colleges and the development of educational centers affiliated with those colleges. The establishment of the Rancho Cordova Educational Center is consistent with this long-range planning policy. There is not enough space or capacity on the present Folsom Lake College campus to accommodate the growth demands of students in the Rancho Cordova area and the Folsom area. The establishment of the

Rancho Cordova Educational Center will provide students with a localized higher education option and increased accessibility to higher education in the area.

### **Increase the Utilization of Existing Institutions**

The Los Rios Community College District has increased the utilization of existing space by offering educational services throughout the instructional day, evenings and on weekends. In response to district-wide enrollment data that suggests existing facilities are quickly reaching capacity, the outreach center has increased its space from 5,000 square feet to 24,000 square feet, and anticipates offering more diversified courses and programs to greater numbers of students.

### **Shared Use with Other Postsecondary Institutions**

The Los Rios Community College District enrollment numbers previously discussed show that most neighboring institutions in the region are either operating at or near capacity. Such conditions preclude, at least in the short term, possible joint agreements with neighboring institutions. Prospects for such collaboration are further diminished when the region's traffic congestion is taken into consideration. Folsom Lake College, however, is committed to innovative approaches in improving and expanding access to higher education by such regional collaborative initiatives as joint partnerships with other segments of the educational community.

### **Utilization of Non-traditional Delivery Methods**

Folsom Lake College's educational master plan recognizes that an effective educational services delivery system includes a number of delivery methods, including high technology-based distance education. Currently, the district offers a comprehensive academic offering through its on-line distance education program. Technology and distance education have in recent years expanded the district's capacity to serve additional enrollments. However, the amount of additional capacity generated with distance education represents only a small fraction of the total capacity required to accommodate future enrollment growth. In addition, the majority of students now attending the Rancho Cordova outreach operation are low-income, first generation college students and adult learners in need of basic educational skills, so are not likely to benefit from on-line educational services. For these students, a traditional classroom setting is a more suitable method for learning.

### **Private Fund Raising or Donations**

Development within the City of Rancho Cordova has substantially reduced the availability of space suitable for an educational center. It should be noted that the Los Rios Community College District has spent local bond funds for the acquisition and first phase construction of the center.

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

Chancellor's Office staff in the Academic Affairs Division reviewed the Needs Study for the proposed Rancho Cordova Educational Center and found: 1) no significant inter-district concerns, 2) that the proposed delivery system is reasonable, and 3) that the Los Rios Community College District provided adequate information to support the academic course offerings.

The Rancho Cordova Educational Center is affiliated with Folsom Lake College and offers courses required for the general education component of the college's associate degrees and courses for transfer. In addition, the center offers a comprehensive set of courses in basic skills, English as a second Language (ESL), vocational certificate programs, mathematics, geography, nutrition, English, and sociology. The district also reviewed the employer needs in the area and has also focused curriculum in the disciplines of business, purchasing, and accounting. Currently, the center offers math and writing courses to assist students with college preparation and will continue basic skills and/or ESL courses to accommodate the needs of the community.

### **Student Services and Outreach**

Chancellor's Office staff from the Student Services and Special Programs Division reviewed the student support services described in the Needs Study of the proposed Rancho Cordova Educational Center and concluded that the proposal adequately provides student services and outreach efforts at the site. Based on the information provided, there appears to be sufficient justification for approving an educational center in the geographic area identified.

In general, the narrative in the Student Services and Outreach section in the Needs Study is thorough and complete. The narrative lists services to be provided including Orientation, Assessment, Counseling and Advising, Admissions and Records, Financial Aid, California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs), Cooperative Agency Resources for Education (CARE), Disabled Students Programs and Services (DSPS), Extended Opportunity Programs and Services (EOPS), Foster Youth, Transfer and Articulation, Health Services, Veterans Services, Library Services, Tutoring Services, Business Services, Bookstore Services, and Technology Support. The narrative provides detailed information on staffing levels, schedules, and sufficiently details methods of service delivery and evaluation, as well as confidentiality of student records and ADA accessibility. For example, veteran services are available through counselors and the admission and records staff with the ability to arrange appointments at the center.

From the information provided in the study, the Rancho Cordova Educational Center appears prepared to provide and sustain support services to students.

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

The Chancellor's Office College Finance and Facilities Planning Division has reviewed the Needs Study for the Rancho Cordova Educational Center and determined that the Los Rios Community College District's fiscal performance and condition are adequate to meet the future fiscal demands of the proposed center. The district has effectively managed its monetary resources to achieve a fiscal year 2014-15 unrestricted annual fund balance of 12.7%, which is above the recommended minimum 5% reserve. The full-time equivalent student potential of the Rancho Cordova Educational Center should enable the district to take full advantage of any additional system funding available in 2016-17 and ongoing budget years. The district certified that the center achieved 502 full-time equivalent students in fiscal year 2014-15.

In March 2002 and November 2008, the district passed General Obligation bonds of \$265 and \$475 million, respectively. The ballot measure language named the school facilities to be funded, which

included the Rancho Cordova Educational Center. Bond funds and local district funds were utilized for the first phase of the Rancho Cordova Center at a total cost of approximately \$20.5 million, which included land acquisition, site development, and construction of the Phase 1 building. The construction of the center is planned to be built in three phases over a period of approximately 12 years; the first phase is complete. The district will strive to become eligible and apply for state capital outlay funds to complete Phases 2 and 3, which is estimated to cost an additional \$26 million.

### **Geographic and Physical Accessibility**

The Rancho Cordova Educational Center is readily accessible from major freeways and public transportation. The center is located in the City of Rancho Cordova, less than one mile from Highway 50. The Rancho Cordova Educational Center will be located on approximately 5.66 acres, 14.2 miles east of Folsom Lake College. The site is at the intersection of Folsom Blvd. and Mather Field Road. As discussed previously, severe traffic congestion is a major obstacle in the Highway 50 and Rancho Cordova area. The master plan for the Rancho Cordova Educational Center will have approximately 374 parking stalls and is adjacent to a Sacramento Regional Transit light rail station.



businesses. These organizations include: San Joaquin Delta CCD, Solano CCD, Yuba CCD, Sierra College, Contra Costa CCD, the Folsom Cordova Unified School District, the City of Rancho Cordova, and the Rancho Cordova Chamber of Commerce.

### **Environmental Impact**

The Los Rios Community College District expanded its services in Rancho Cordova with a new permanent facility that opened in October of 2015. The new building is approximately 24,000 gross square feet and is the first of three planned construction phases. The environmental impacts were studied appropriately, and as a result, a Notice of Determination was filed with the State Clearing House (State Clearing House # 2013082059) in 2013. The filed Notice of Determination is compliant with the California Environmental Quality Act guidelines.

*Staff: Carlos Montoya, Specialist  
Facilities Planning and Utilization*