

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES
FREDERICK COMMUNITY COLLEGE**

**September 16, 2020
Regular Meeting**

The Board of Trustees of Frederick Community College met in regular session on Wednesday, September 16, 2020 virtually due to the COVID-19 public health emergency. Participating were: Trustees Dr. John Molesworth, Chair; Tom Lynch, Vice Chair; Ellis Barber; Nick Diaz; Gary Fearnow; Carolyn Kimberlin; and Dr. April Miller. Also participating were President Elizabeth Burmaster, Secretary/Treasurer of the Board; Janice Spiegel, Director of Education and Special Initiatives; Kari Melvin, Recording Secretary; Dr. Perry Wood, Chair, Faculty Association (FA); Lauren Dods, Support Staff Association (SSA) Executive; Shelby Carmon, SSA Executive; Kelly Stewart, Administrative Staff Association (ASA) Executive; Mary Rolle, Chair, College Senate; Emma Wachter, President, Student Government Association (SGA); Melissa Bard, Vice President (VP) for Human Resources; Jerry Boyd, Special Assistant (SA) to the President for Institutional Effectiveness; Dr. Nora Clark, VP for Learning Support; Lewis Godwin, Chief of Operations (COO); Dr. Tony Hawkins, Provost/Executive Vice President (EVP) for Academic Affairs, Continuing Education, and Workforce Development (AACEWD); Cathy Jones, VP for Finance; Joseph McCormick, Chief Information Officer (CIO); and, Dr. Gohar Farahani, Executive Director for Planning and Institutional Effectiveness.

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Board Chair Molesworth at 5:13 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Chair called for approval of the minutes of the August 19, 2020 regular meeting of the board.

On a motion made by Vice Chair Lynch and seconded by Trustee Kimberlin, the Board unanimously approved the minutes, as presented.

PRESIDENT'S MONTHLY REPORT

Board members received the President's written report in their meeting packet. Also included in the President's written report was the CIP Construction Projects Update.

President Burmaster thanked all members of the College community for their commitment to safety during stage 1 of our 3R Plan. We will move to stage 2 on September 21, 2020. She also thanked the College community and the FCC Foundation for seeking out additional funding through grants.

The Ausherman Family Foundation will award the FCC Foundation \$30,000 in grant funding that will provide scholarships to students in trade programs and offer emergency financial assistance to students who need it through the Student Success Fund. Students registering in courses in trades programs will receive a \$500 scholarship per course. They are eligible to apply for both fall and spring semester scholarships. Additionally, if the FCC Foundation raises \$10,000 for the Student Success Fund from other donors, the Ausherman Family Foundation will match that \$10,000, dollar for dollar, bringing the full grant funding to \$40,000.

FCC is one of six colleges nationwide chosen as the first recipients of the Morgan Stanley Scholarship Fund, aimed at increasing and improving mental health initiatives and support for students. FCC recognizes the importance of mental health and is committed to supporting the mental health of our students. The Morgan Stanley Scholarship Fund was

announced by the Jed Foundation (JED). The fund is intended to enable higher education institutions serving students from low-income and diverse backgrounds to participate in JED Campus. This program helps colleges and universities develop and strengthen their approaches to supporting student mental health and preventing suicide, which is the second leading cause of death for teens and young adults across the nation. This important initiative will have a positive impact on the student experience at FCC by providing the guidance and resources needed to engage in assessment and planning. This support will ultimately result in increased awareness and expansion of targeted support related to suicide prevention, substance use, and the overall wellbeing of FCC students. In addition to FCC, the other colleges selected for the first cohort of this fund include Holyoke Community College (Massachusetts), Spartanburg Community College (South Carolina), St. Thomas University (Florida), Towson University, and the University of Missouri. JED Campus advisors will work closely with these schools through a collaborative process of comprehensive systems, programs, and policy assessment with customized support to build upon each institution's existing structures.

President Burmaster reported that the Strategic Advisory Team (SAT) had its first meeting this month. There are 95 employees from across the College who have volunteered to serve on SAT workgroups.

President Burmaster then recognized employees who spent the last few months diligently taking care of our facilities. While most of us sheltered in place, the outstanding professionals on our Operations and IT teams faithfully cared for our main campus and the Monroe Center. She asked everyone to join her in applauding and thanking each of them for their hard work and shared the video titled *Indispensable*.

Trustee Kimberlin commented that the video was superb in recognizing the people who do so much for the entire College community and she found it heart-warming. Chair Molesworth echoed her comments.

ACTION ITEMS

Approval of the 2020 Performance Accountability Report to MHEC – SA Boyd introduced Executive Director Farahani to present this item. The 2020 Performance Accountability Report (PAR) was distributed to the Trustees in their meeting packet. State law mandates that governing boards of each postsecondary institution submit to the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) a performance accountability plan and an annual report on the progress toward the goals of that plan. Each college in the state develops their own five-year benchmarks that are used for the PAR reports. On September 21, 2016, the Board of Trustees reviewed and approved the benchmarks FCC has been using for the last four years. Next year is the last year for the current benchmarks and the College will set new five-year benchmarks next spring when updated indicators are provided by MHEC.

MHEC guidelines instructed that the PAR contain a narrative discussing progress made toward its benchmarks and goals as they align with the 2017-2021 Maryland State Plan for Postsecondary Education (MSP). The MSP provides a focus on increasing student success with less debt executed through three goals of access, success, and innovation. The 2020 PAR for Frederick Community College is organized around these goals and the important outcome of affordability. The report presents data and describes efforts that support the commitment of the College to the goals and objectives

of the MSP, as well as the College strategic plan “FCC 2020.” For this year, MHEC has made some modifications to the PAR process and the deadline due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The deadline was extended from October to November, the Community Outreach and Impact section was removed, no specific questions were asked to be responded to as in the past, and the report must be between five and six pages. In addition, colleges were encouraged to discuss the initial effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Executive Director Farahani overviewed the report with the Board and provided the following highlights: 40% enrollment increase of our high school dual enrollment in the past four years; 27% increase of our online credit enrollment; 6% increase of online continuing education enrollment; tuition and fees remained at 47% of the Maryland state public universities rates which makes FCC affordable compared to attending public universities in the state; the unduplicated headcount in continuing education, community service, and lifelong learning courses increased 10% in the past four years; the percent of non-white students enrolled in credit and continuing education courses was higher than the percent of the non-white population in Frederick County; an increase in the fall-to-fall retention rate for developmental, college ready, and Pell recipient students compared to the last year; the graduation-transfer rate after four years for all students in the 2015 cohort was higher than the 2014 cohort and higher than the benchmark (66%); the graduation-transfer rate of Hispanic students Black/African-American students and Asian students all met or surpassed their benchmarks; a 6% increase in credit enrollments in STEM programs and a 36% increase in STEM graduates this year compared to the last; the first-time pass rate for

registered nursing students increased and is higher than the benchmark (86%) as well as the first-time pass rate for students taking the respiratory care licensure and certification exam increased 9% this year; and, a 67% increase of course enrollments in continuing professional education leading to government or industry-required certification or licensure for the past four years from 814 to 1,362.

Trustee Fearnow asked how many of the 34 benchmarks did the College meet or come close to meeting. Executive Director Farahani answered that 20 were met and some came very close to being met.

Chair Molesworth asked what defines the market share of first-time, full-time freshmen. Executive Director Farahani answered that the data is received from MHEC. They look at all undergraduate students in the state of Maryland and calculate the percentage of undergraduate students who attended FCC.

Chair Molesworth asked about the grade point averages for students who transfer to four-year institutions. Executive Director Farahani said this is based on the data received from MHEC and they receive the information from the Maryland public four-year institutions.

Vice Chair Lynch asked how benchmarks that are not being met are prioritized, specifically graduate satisfaction with transfer preparation. Executive Director Farahani answered that this benchmark is based on a survey of our graduates one year after graduation. Unfortunately, the return rate is very low because the graduate is contacted a year after graduation and sometimes they cannot be reached. This is one of the issues all of the community colleges are struggling with and this indicator may be removed by MHEC from the next cycle of accountability reports due to the difficulty in collecting data and

reporting. The community college research group made a recommendation to remove this survey and also the employer survey. FCC is continuing to connect with graduates through our alumni effort and hopefully in the future our alumni can help us to reach our graduates and collect better data. Vice Chair Lynch noted that he hears only positive things about FCC throughout the community.

Trustee Fearnow asked about the benchmark of 70 contractual training agreements when FCC is currently at 21 and how that relates to the 100% satisfaction rate of employers who entered into contractual training agreements. Executive Director Farahani shared that she had conversations with staff in this area. Contract training is based on how many employers are interested in having their employees trained. One of the reasons for the lower number is that some employers have had difficulty in providing professional development for their employees the past few years due to budget constraints.

Trustee Miller commented that one of the things she found very interesting was the student characteristics section of the report, particularly the rate of credit students with developmental education needs going from 50% to 24%. Executive Director Farahani noted two reasons for the decrease in students needing developmental courses. First, FCC reformed developmental English and math so that students who place marginally are put into a five-credit course that teaches both developmental and credit. Second, a Memorandum of Understanding Between Maryland Association of Community Colleges and Public-School Superintendents Association of Maryland was established last year that exempts high school students who have a 3.0 GPA from taking placement tests. Out of 918 2019 FCPS graduates who attended FCC, 406 had a GPA of 3.0. Provost/EVP Hawkins added that FCC is examining the data to see if this is a good indicator of their performance.

President Burmaster thanked everyone and noted the developmental education reform was an annual strategic priority established by the Board of Trustees in FY 2016.

Executive Director Farahani recommended approval of the 2020 PAR. The report is due to MHEC by November 6, 2020.

On a motion made by Trustee Fearnow and seconded by Trustee Miller, the Board unanimously approved the 2020 Performance Accountability Report, as presented.

Approval of Discount Incentive Initiative for Student Account Receivables – VP Jones presented this item. Currently, students who owe the College are turned over to collection after attempts to collect the debt fail. The collection agency adds an additional 17% to the student’s debt as a collection fee, making it even more difficult for the student to pay. These students are unable to continue their education due to a hold placed on their account for lack of payment.

In March 2020, the College made the decision to stop all collection efforts due to COVID-19. Since then, the only outreach to students with accounts receivable was in July/August. Approximately 333 students were contacted and offered flexible repayment options. Six months later we have begun to see an increase in our student account receivables. In seeking a way to balance students’ financial situations with the need to collect outstanding debt, the concept of a discount incentive initiative was created.

At this time, a total of 255 students owe the College \$185,690. The proposed discount incentive initiative will offer these students an opportunity to pay their debt in full or sign a repayment agreement. In return, the College will offer each student a 10% reduction in their balance if paid or refinanced by October 31, 2020. This payment will

lift the hold on these student accounts allowing them to register for spring semester. At 10%, the maximum cost to the College would be \$18,569.

Outreach will include some or all of the following: letters outlining the discount incentive and repayment options; emails sent to myFCC email accounts with the same information as the letter; and robocalls and text messaging notifying students to read their myFCC email for an opportunity related to their outstanding account with the College.

Trustee Fearnow asked at what point debt is written off. VP Jones answered there is no timeline. For accounting purposes, a debt is written off when it is considered uncollectable. It is usually within a year, but can be longer if a student is working with the College. Trustee Fearnow asked what the collection rate of the collection company is once students are turned over to collection. VP Jones said she would have to contact the collection company for that information.

Vice Chair Lynch asked what the process would be to offer a student more than a 10% discount and if it would have to come back to the Board for approval; or, if staff would have the discretion to deal with on a case-by-case basis. President Burmaster advised that the Board act on the recommendation presented by VP Jones.

VP Jones recommended approval of a 10% discount on student account receivables for all student accounts of record beginning spring 2019 through summer 2020.

On a motion made by Trustee Kimberlin and seconded by Trustee Barber, the Board unanimously approved the discount on student account receivables, as presented.

TRUSTEE COMMENTS

Trustee Miller expressed appreciation for all faculty and staff and commented that the video *Indispensable* was amazing.

ADJOURNMENT

The regular meeting adjourned at 5:57 p.m.

NEXT MEETING

The next regular meeting of the Board will be held on Wednesday, October 21, 2020.

Elizabeth Burmaster
Secretary/Treasurer

Prepared by Kari Melvin
Office of the President
Frederick Community College