

DATE: February 9, 2011  
TO: WACTC Commissions  
FROM: Michele Johnson, WACTC President  
SUBJECT: Efficiency Study analysis

Many of you are aware that efficiency and effectiveness work is being conducted across the state. You may also be aware that our timeline for completing a statewide efficiency plan is condensed due to pressure from the legislature. As chair of WACTC, I am assigning efficiency tasks to commissions for analysis and planning for state level implementation with plans due to WACTC by July 15, 2011.

This memorandum will provide a brief background of efficiency work, current efforts underway, and assignments to each commission.

### **Background**

In September 2008, the State Board commissioned a system Mission Study task force to examine current status of CTCs and make recommendations to meet System Direction goals in areas of economic demand, student success and innovation. Task force members included SBCTC board members, college trustees, presidents, faculty, and SBCTC staff members. The study found an urgent need to educate more people to higher levels of skills and knowledge during a time of decreasing resources.

Following the Mission Study, the legislature passed Engrossed Substitute Senate Bill (ESSB) 6359 which encourages further efficiencies in the community and technical college system through shared services, increased program collaboration, and standardized and centralized administrative functions and systems. The efficiencies are to increase student access and success, strengthen instructional programs, and develop and retain high quality faculty and staff.

The Mission Study and ESSB 6359 were not created to cut CTC budgets. These were efforts to redistribute resources where they count the most: student achievement and success. While we know the budget is looming and our timeline has shortened, we must stay focused on efficiencies that result in better services and outcomes for students.

### **Current work**

Consistent with ESSB 6359, there is a statewide Efficiency Steering Committee with representatives from SBCTC, college trustees, presidents, faculty unions, and students. I serve on this committee as a member of the Pierce County regional work group and as chair of WACTC. The steering committee purposes are to:

- Develop a study design and timeline
- Identify guiding principles and criteria for evaluating cost savings, student access and achievement
- Identify potential statewide efficiencies for further analysis
- Identify criteria for district consolidations and boundary changes

There are currently 4 voluntary regions and 17 colleges that are investigating regional efficiencies: Northwest, Five-Star, Pierce, and Southwest. The regions have identified work

groups that are exploring efficiencies; many of which have statewide potential for full or partial implementation.

On January 18, the Efficiency Steering Committee identified a list of promising efficiency areas to be analyzed and planned for potential statewide implementation. These ideas originated from system group discussions at the regional, WACTC, and TACTC levels and many of you have been involved in those discussions locally. On January 25, WACTC endorsed and prioritized the list for work to begin through commissions and their councils. These priorities were based on work already underway and legislative interests.

Each commission will provide a progress report to WACTC on or before April 15, 2011 regarding their analysis and potential strategies for statewide efficiencies. Each commission will provide a written implementation plan to WACTC and the Efficiency Steering Committee no later than July 15, 2011.

### **General Assignment for all Commissions**

Provide a thorough analysis and recommendations for implementing statewide strategies, processes, and procedures for areas assigned to your commission. Your analysis should include identification of potential obstacles for statewide implementation and solutions for each obstacle. The implementation plan should include clear strategies and key activities needed to move toward statewide implementation.

Statewide implementation will be informed by the analysis and may include complete or partial standardization or centralization of processes, services and functions, regionalization of processes, functions and services, or a combination.

### **Student Services Commission**

WACTC identified the four areas listed below as their **first priority** for statewide efficiency analysis and planning. Pieces of your implementation proposal could be included in the ERP. Specifically we would like the Student Services Commission with its appropriate councils to write an implementation plan for:

1. Standardized and /or centralized financial aid processes, services, and functions that include but are not limited to:
  - a. Application forms
  - b. Eligibility criteria
  - c. Deadlines
  - d. Award verification
2. Standardized and/or centralized admissions process, services, and functions that includes but is not limited to:
  - a. Admission form
  - b. Admission criteria
3. A single statewide student identification number.
4. A single statewide student transcript.

### **Instruction Commission**

WACTC identified the first two items listed below as their **second priority** for statewide efficiency analysis and planning. The third item is of secondary importance for WACTC. Specifically we would like the Instruction Commission with its appropriate councils to write an implementation plan for:

1. Statewide strategies that will significantly reduce the time for students to reach their goal of obtaining a certificate and degree by increasing pathways and partnerships. This must be done by maintaining quality learning and skill development. The commission will determine a specific target or measure that will define successful reduction in time to certificate or degree completion. Considerations may include but are not limited to:
  - a. Increase use of technology/digital libraries
  - b. Increase in granting credit for prior learning
  - c. Modularized curriculum
  - d. Use of Centers of Excellence

Please work with existing statewide work groups involved in these areas: Centers of Excellence, Transforming pre-college education work groups, Gates grant colleges in the areas of developmental I-BEST and pre-college math, and the credit for prior learning work group.

2. Determine a statewide agreed-upon college placement exam and associated cut-off scores for Math, Reading and Writing. It is critical that you work with the Student Services Commission on this task. It is also important for you to involve the Transforming Pre-college Education work group #1 (assessment, diagnostics, and placement).
3. Recommend a performance funding structure/allocation that will create incentives for the new efficiencies identified in (1) above related to the current Student Achievement Initiative.

*\*WACTC would like your best thinking on this item (#3). Please make as much progress as possible in the given time line.*

### **Business Affairs and Information Technology Commissions**

WACTC identified the first item listed below as their **third priority** for statewide efficiency analysis and planning. The second and third items are of secondary importance for WACTC. Specifically we would like the commissions to collaborate on writing an implementation plan for statewide:

1. Consolidation of back-office functions. Please determine the level (type) of necessary campus services in information technology.
2. Consolidation of back-office functions. Please determine the level (type) of necessary campus services in
  - a. Payroll
  - b. Outsourcing such as printing and bookstore
  - c. Purchasing
  - d. Accounting
  - e. Accounts Payable

*\*WACTC would like your best thinking on this item (#2). Please make as much progress as possible in the given time line.*

3. Streamline state regulations.

*\*WACTC would like your best thinking on this item (#3). Please make as much progress as possible in the given time line.*

**Human Resources Management Commission**

WACTC identified human resources efficiencies as a secondary importance statewide efficiency analysis and planning. Specifically we would like the Human Resources Management Commission to write an implementation plan for statewide human resources services and functions. This includes but is not limited to centralized or standardized employee identification and records. *\*WACTC would like your best thinking on this item. Please make as much progress as possible in the given time line.*

**These are areas requiring further discussion, time and resources and may be considered at a later date:**

- Online student services
- System degree audit
- Expanded use of open source text books
- eLearning groups for faculty/technology
- Rethinking the funding formula to promote shared programs and students.

Thank you for all for your commitment to quality education and services to our students.