

May 17, 2004

MEMORANDUM

Ref.: 04-35-34

TO: Presidents
FROM: Earl Hale
SUBJECT: SBCTC TUITION WAIVER ACTIONS

With actions taken at its March 11, 2004, and May 6, 2004 meetings, the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges has concluded a community college tuition waiver review that was begun last September. This effort was undertaken as a result of direction in the 2003-05 operating budget directing reductions in waivers, and imposing budget cuts related to waiver reductions. The purpose of this letter is to communicate State Board actions, which include both mandatory and advisory elements.

Attached for your reference is State Board Resolution 04-03-03 and WAC 131-28-026 which implements changes to basic skills and apprenticeship waivers.

The major elements addressed by the State Board are as follows, effective Fall Quarter, 2004:

- The current mandatory one hundred percent tuition waiver for **basic skills courses** is changed to a mandatory \$25 charge per student, per quarter. Colleges are granted flexibility to waive the \$25 charge for students who cannot pay.
- The current mandatory two-thirds tuition waiver for **apprenticeship courses** is changed to a mandatory fifty percent of tuition and services and activities fees waiver. In addition, changes adopted by the State Board to WAC 131-28-026 clarify that ungraded apprenticeship courses can be assigned degree credit.
- The State Board encourages college districts to review their **local optional waivers**, and, in so doing, to give consideration to needy students.

In addition to the above actions that affect colleges directly, the State Board also directed staff to:

- Develop options for using federal and new state funds to address the tuition waiver funding disincentives for students and for colleges to offer basic skills and apprenticeship instruction;
- Convene an implementation system task force to identify methods for collecting tuition for basic skills and providing need-based waivers;

- Report to the State Board in March 2005, on actual tuition waiver levels.

The basic skills implementation task force has been convened and their work is being summarized and will be forwarded to you and college staff shortly. In addition, State Board staff are working with K12 to develop information regarding how colleges might contract with K12 to serve students under 19 years of age with basic skills instruction. We are also working on federal and new state funding – via our system budget request – to address funding disincentives. State Board staff provided training during February and March to colleges on enrollment reporting procedures, and we plan to work with your staffs on this front once spring enrollments are in.

We have committed to the State Board that we will monitor the effects of these actions closely and will provide feedback to them on their decisions to change basic skills and apprenticeship waivers. To do that, we will likely ask for information and involvement from the colleges next winter as we prepare the analysis.

As we wrap up this major policy effort, I want to thank you and your staffs for the hard work on task forces, for being engaged in the process and for providing much information, feedback and policy recommendations.

Attachments