Dear Colleagues:

**Board Retreat:**
Our Governing Board was re-energized by an outstanding orientation given by Dr. Pam Fisher, former Chancellor of Yosemite Community College District, to the Board members last Wednesday. In her orientation, she reminded us to continually recommit to serving our students and our community and that being good stewards of our College is noble and worth working hard for, as our Board members already understand. I want to personally thank our SCC Governing Board members for their dedication to Solano County and Winters residents.

The morning of the Board orientation, Dr. Fisher spent several hours working with our administrators. She went over the content of the book *Emotional Intelligence: Why it can Matter More Than IQ* (by Daniel Goleman) and explained that the book assists us to be mindful of our emotions when we make decisions. A general description borrowed from an online explanation is provided below:

1. **Perceiving Emotions:** The first step in understanding emotions is to accurately perceive them. In many cases, this might involve understanding nonverbal signals such as body language and facial expressions.
2. **Reasoning With Emotions:** The next step involves using emotions to promote thinking and cognitive activity. Emotions help prioritize what we pay attention and react to; we respond emotionally to things that garner our attention.
3. **Understanding Emotions:** The emotions that we perceive can carry a wide variety of meanings. If someone is expressing angry emotions, the observer must interpret the cause of their anger and what it might mean. For example, if your boss is acting angry, it might mean that he is dissatisfied with your work; or it could be because he got a speeding ticket on his way to work that morning or that he's been fighting with his wife.
4. **Managing Emotions:** The ability to manage emotions effectively is a key part of emotional intelligence. Regulating emotions, responding appropriately and responding to the emotions of others are all important aspect of emotional management.

According to Salovey and Mayer, the four branches of their model are "arranged from more basic psychological processes to higher, more psychologically integrated processes. For example, the lowest level branch concerns the (relatively) simple abilities of perceiving and expressing emotion. In contrast, the highest level branch concerns the conscious, reflective regulation of emotion" (1997).
Additionally, Dr. Fisher covered the current thinking on the requisites of the community college administrator and included insight from a 2002 document commissioned by the Association of American Community Colleges. Combined with the work that management is doing with Linda Laskoski, leadership coach, last week’s administrative retreat contributed to our efforts to continue to develop the leadership team for Solano Community College. Investing in the leadership development of our administrators will help the College become stronger.

**Loss and Consolation:**
Many of us were saddened by the death of Vice President Ligioso’s mother this past week. I attended the funeral and conveyed my condolences to the family. Keep Yulian in your thoughts, as regardless of the age one loses a parent, the loss is difficult.

**Open Forum:**
I am anticipating that the ACCJC Commission will soon issue its findings in response to the College’s recent Follow-up Report and team visit. I will schedule at that time a forum to share the ACCJC report with you. In anticipation of the results, I had scheduled an open forum for faculty and staff on Tuesday, February 5th at 3:30 in the Board Room. Since we had not received a letter from ACCJC prior to the forum (and we still have not), I used the time to share information and ideas and gather input on a variety of issues: Student Success Taskforce implementation and its consequences for students, faculty and staff; leadership for Academic Affairs and Student Services; and the latest Reorganization. Interim VP White shared information on open forums she wants to hold for the Educational and the Facilities’ Master Plans.

**Measure Q Updates:**
With the help of Gary Moriarty from Kitchell CEM, we held three open forums last week (Vacaville, Vallejo and Fairfield) to share with the faculty and staff the next steps we are planning for the implementation of Measure Q. Several individuals asked pertinent questions, sought new information and most importantly, provided input and feedback. Perhaps the most pointed suggestions came from the Mathematics and Science faculty who argued that we must be sure to build enough physical capacity to accommodate current demands and future growth in both areas. They expressed their skepticism that the footprint of the current building is large enough for them. There is also a sentiment that it would be best to have a building to accommodate mathematics alone and not combine it with science.

**Special CBOC Meeting:**
The Citizen Bond Oversight Committee (CBOC) for Measure G met last week to determine whether to take over the oversight of Measure Q as well. I presented the various issues regarding oversight of the two bonds. The Committee voted to place the matter on its February 11th regular meeting for a decision. If approved, the College will initiate bylaw changes to make the transition immediately. The College is required to have the Committee in place sixty days after the Board has accepted the results of the election.
**Conversations about Geology and Geography:**
Professor Danielle Widemann, VP White, Dean Moore and I met last week to discuss the Geology and Geography program at the College. Widemann shared her commitment to have students who are well prepared for transfer and we expressed our support for the continuation of the Geology and Geography program. Furthermore, we discussed the importance of her interest in continuing to innovate and plan for the upcoming Science Building with the possibility of enlarging the scope of the existing Geology and Geography program and increasing its resources, if needed.

**EDC Thirtieth Anniversary:**
Trustees Young and Thurston, as well as several College individuals, attended the celebration last Thursday at the Hilton Garden Inn of the thirtieth anniversary of the Solano Economic Development Corporation (EDC). This organization serves as a conduit between government and businesses and serves to create opportunities to retain current companies in the county and to bring others to us. The College works closely with the organization to serve as an educational partner to provide the workforce necessary for various companies’ growth.

**Update your Strategic Plan Posters:**
Shemila Johnson reminds all of you that updated Strategic Plan posters are available. The new posters include our revised new mission statement. If you still have the April 2010 version, please email her with the number of updated posters you need to replace and she will get them to you.

**EMP/FMP and Grant Opportunity Forums:**
- **Educational Master Plan (EMP) and the Facilities Master Plan (FMP) Forums**
Interim Vice President White reports that additional EMP/FMP forums will be held so all of you will have plenty of time to continue to provide input prior to any Board action. In the meantime, you may see items related to the Facilities Master Plan on the Governing Board agenda (tonight, for example), however, the Board will not take final action on the FMP for approximately eight weeks. We will be publicizing these EMP/FMP forums with as much advance notice as possible.

- **Department of Education Title III Strengthening Institutions grant opportunity**
Solano Community College’s upcoming application for *Department of Education Title III Strengthening Institutions* funds needs your ideas! The Strengthening Institutions program helps colleges expand their capacity to serve low-income students by providing funds to improve and strengthen academic quality, institutional management and fiscal stability. Funds can be used for a variety of purposes to include planning, faculty development, establishing endowments, administrative management, developing and improving academic programs, joint facility uses, construction and maintenance, and student services.

Please attend one of the upcoming forums to learn more about this grant opportunity and to contribute your ideas:
Visit to Hartnell College:
Ferdinanda Florence and I visited Hartnell College last week as a pre-visit for an upcoming Accreditation visit. I was selected by ACCJC to chair the team to visit the College and I asked Florence to accompany me because of her interest in SLOs. We received training on Monday, February 4, as a team and will visit Hartnell College on March 18-21. We are looking forward to learning more about the Accreditation process and bringing back to SCC what we have learned.

Joint Deans’ and Managers’ Meeting:
The Deans and Student Services managers met last week and discussed the following:

- **Predictable holiday and summer closures**: The decision when to close for the holidays is often made late in the year. The deans and the managers agreed to a more predictable schedule for the next three years. The next step is to discuss the schedule plan with different campus organizations during this spring semester.
- **Committee on Committees**: There is an interest to reduce the number of unnecessary committees and allow for fewer, but more effective meetings at SCC. Several individuals have approached me on this topic and have suggested various approaches as to what could be done at Solano College to reduce the number of committees we have and to work toward making our committee meetings more effective. A draft model was discussed in Shared Governance Council recently. The draft will be brought back to FaBFAC today for continued discussion. One of the ideas I shared with you earlier is that of combining Shared Governance Council and FaBPAC into a “Participatory Governance” body. We can all see that when a college has too many unnecessary and/or redundant committees, too much time is spent in meetings, rather than getting the work of the college done. My aim is to free up more time for better decision making.
- **Leadership in Academic and Student Affairs**: This item addresses the need to undertake a re-evaluation of the current dual Academic and Student Affairs Vice Presidency position. If the decision is to now have a Chief Student Services Officer and a Chief Academic Affairs Officer (two separate positions), will having two distinct positions better serve our College? If not, what are other models for SCC? Conversations have started with the Academic Senate and Student Services Council on the issue.
- **Accreditation as an ongoing activity**: We often wait for the necessity of producing an ACCJC Report to re-engage in accreditation activities. This attitude has allowed us sometimes to be surprised and to be unprepared for certain recommendations. I am now proposing that resources be allocated so that accreditation activities become a regular and ongoing activity at the College. It is a reality that our next comprehensive accreditation visit is in 2016 and two years from now we will need to be engaged in a self-study. If we wait too long, we will struggle to get ready and we want to avoid that. I believe we must establish an Accreditation Coordinator responsible for overseeing the entire Accreditation process and that this job needs to be a continuous position.
• **Principals’ Breakfast**: I invited principals from high schools and middle schools to come to hear a review of Solano Community College’s ongoing activities and plans. The Deans and the Vice Presidents will join me in sharing information about the College and most importantly, we will hear from the principals what they conceive as SCC’s role in the community.

• **Reorganization update**: Interim Vice President White gave an update on the reorganization of our Schools. There are some minor changes from the original draft that include: leaving journalism in the School of Liberal Arts; removing the library from Liberal Arts and consolidating the tutoring services in the division of Social Sciences and Interdisciplinary Studies.

Jowel C. Laguerre, Ph.D.
Superintendent-President

In Honor of Black History Month
“Success is to be measured not so much by the position that one has reached in life as by the obstacles which he has overcome while trying to succeed.”

-- Booker T. Washington