Dear Colleagues:

Our second open forum to go over the budget took place on Wednesday. There were again great suggestions on how to improve things and on what to do next. Let me start with a suggestion that was made at the last meeting and I will end with a suggestion from one of the speakers at the April 1 Board meeting.

“Subject: Budget Forum

Hello

I just wanted to elaborate on some of the comments made at this meeting in regard to the schedules, being mailed out and or distributed items being sent to the home. Since I have delivered these, and have been involved with the mailings, I learned that there is a huge waste in relation to distribution. Many people do not understand how to use the schedule they are sent and therefore many are wasted. Many that are mailed out, are returned to the post office because of address changes, there was a huge waste, not only in the homes but also in the schools and even here at the college, departments were not distributing them to students, nor were they being utilized, but merely collecting dust, so therefore I feel we must have a much more personal approach to getting the word out to the masses. I believe if we have a salesman approach, in that we go door to door or something to that effect in getting the word out so that if there are any questions, a person is right there available to answer. Maybe a public forum to where people can have questions answered about the college and then, materials distributed, not at the college but at schools, churches, events, maybe even hitting some businesses. I don’t have the solution but maybe these ideas might trigger something bigger and better.

Also, the comment about pulling back, bringing focus back on the main campus, I feel is crucial. There is a lot that needs to be done here and I feel the more attractive a place looks, the more curious people are going to be and want to come in. Our cafeteria for instance is so very outdated, with the same old menu that has not changed since I have been here. Students want variety, color, choice and a vibrant mood to enjoy their meal, and socialize or study. We are dealing with students who are looking for something new, exciting and fun. If we truly want to increase our numbers we need to look at our main campus and bring Solano into the 21st century in every aspect possible.

I thank you for the opportunity to express some of my ideas.”
Second Open Forum: The second open forum was well attended. We thank those who were able to attend. If there is interest and a specific day and time a group wants to meet, please let Dr. Crawford know. There were some great suggestions, and we are reproducing some here for you.

- **Use of CDCP:** One area that has opened up for improving enrollment is non-credit courses that lead to a program or an organized curriculum. These courses used to be valued at a fraction of a regular credit course, but now they are equivalent to a credit course. Dr. Minor is posting a presentation to the Finance and Administration web page to give more information about this topic. The courses need to be reviewed by the Curriculum Committee. If we feel it is urgent, perhaps Curriculum could work a little bit over the summer to be able to put some of these courses in place if enough faculty are interested in developing and teaching them. Of course, Dr. Minor can hold a session for faculty interested in this activity.

- **Enrollment Assistance to Students:** There was a recommendation made by someone in attendance that it would be good to have ongoing registration assistance for students who run into difficulties. As I am writing this, I recall a student last year who tried to enroll or apply and the computer kept giving him problems. I intervened and the computer acted even worse! So I gently took him to a registration aide to help him. The point is that there could be assistance available for any, especially new, students who run into difficulty with registration. We had some discussions about that and the registration and admissions folks are looking at a way to have help available for these students. The commentator invites faculty, staff, deans and everybody else to come see what the students are struggling with. I would also invite the IT folks.

- **Apprenticeship:** We spent a little bit of time talking about the apprenticeship idea as well. Most of our curriculum or programs could develop apprenticeship programs where none exists today. The Governor has proposed funding for this activity. The programs could be run out of the Workforce Development and Continuing Education unit just as CDCP courses could.

- **Water Savings:** There was a comment regarding our use of water on campus and if we were seeking to reduce our water usage due to the shortage. Dwight Calloway and Leigh Sata were on hand to describe the work that has happened and will continue to happen to decrease campus water usage. This includes waterless tanks in bathrooms and water-wise plants for our landscaping. Be on the lookout for more communication about these efforts.

**Update from Last Forum - 3SP Support:** We are exploring having someone work with the different schools to see what projects you may have that qualify for 3SP and then use some process for review and approval. Please have documents ready as you await more information. We will likely discuss the idea with the deans next Wednesday.
April 1 Board Meeting: The following items deal with comments from the meeting.

- **Promotion of Vigorous Enrollment**: As alluded to before, our focus for the coming year is to reach 8,500 FTES. When we are certain we have, our budget will be back in line and then we can start working on the structural deficit. The idea is to have sufficient enrollment to beat the target to position the College for growth for years to come. There are some ideas coming from faculty, and we need to continue to put forth ideas that are workable and where people are willing to step up and not just suggest, but also act.

  o So, the Director of Enrollment Services and Admissions is organizing callbacks to students who were recently enrolled, but have stopped attending.
  o With 3SP funds, she is hiring three individuals who will be calling students who expressed interest in the College, but have not followed up. This will show the students we are interested in them.
  o There will be different messages that will be sent out. If you are interested in following up with students in your particular category via emails, texts, tweets or whatever, please contact Shemila Johnson.
  o Discussions will take place about class scheduling for student success and to minimize class cancelation and over-scheduling.
  o Student Services and Academic Affairs will develop a tighter relationship along the line of student enrollment and success.
  o We have opportunities to enroll many students at the State Prison.
  o We have opportunities to train in Criminal Justice individuals working in the County jail.
  o We have opportunities to train high school students in Automotive.
  o Though our retention is good in comparison to our peers, we want to emphasize retention and also look at modalities where our students are failing and encourage revamping (3SP money possible/equity money).

So! We have set our target enrollment. We have strategies. If we work hard, we will thrive and have money to support your efforts.

- **Use of 1800B**: It was brought up at the April 1 meeting that the 1800 Mechatronics lab is going to be affected and courses displaced while the space is shared with Theater during the theater renovation. The concern was also brought up at the open forum last week. Executive Bonds Manager Leigh Sata is working with the concerned parties to consult and come to an understanding of how a renovation will affect courses that are taught in that room. No decision will be made without proper consultation.

- **Hiring of Full-Time Faculty**: One of the speakers emphasized the importance of hiring new full-time faculty. He said that he was interested in advocating for more full-time faculty. His belief, as I understand it, is that he is not concerned with students choosing to go somewhere else, as long as they are successful. But he believes that more full-time faculty to carry the load and help the students succeed is the most important issue to address. We have certainly increased the full-time faculty and though we have not replaced faculty one for one at retirement, we tend to maintain the ratio required by the
state. We ought to be sensitive to areas where faculty are hard to recruit, disciplines where we have only adjuncts and those areas that provide the bulk of the FTES for the College. The issue is always on my mind when we replace administrators or staff. We will continue to work hard to maintain a good ratio of part-time to full-time, but be cognizant of the need for more full-time faculty.

I want to conclude by sharing with you a special treat that I received. At the beginning of this month, I was invited by Christie Speck, Director of our Children’s Program, to visit one of our preschool classes and provide them with a mini French lesson. I had such a great time with the students, and the teachers were wonderful. This week, the students and teachers made a surprise visit to my office to say hello and did a great job of sharing all of the French words that they had retained. I was so impressed by them, and seeing all of their sweet faces made my day. It was truly adorable and greatly appreciated!

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