



## RCCC leaders predict better financial outlook for 2008-09

### *Challenges persist with multi-campus funding*

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SALISBURY - Increased enrollment and careful budgeting will help restore Rowan-Cabarrus Community College's funding back to 2006-07 levels, but leaders said Monday challenges will persist until the college receives adequate multi-campus funding from the state.

With main campuses in Concord and Salisbury, RCCC incurs duplicated costs, such as providing student services and technology in classrooms. However, state funding for multi-campus and off-campus centers pays for only about half of such costs, said Robert Keeney, RCCC's chief financial officer.

That makes enrollment growth the most effective way to get additional funding, Keeney said. Enrollment decreased during the 2006-07 year, prompting funding to decline and college staff to scrutinize spending.

"State allocations always trail enrollment growth, and there are never enough resources to keep up with the ever-changing demands of technology," President Richard Brownell said. "While the college continues to focus its resources on student learning, RCCC will continue to challenge administrators and staff to do more with less."

Still, Keeney predicts a better outlook for next year, particularly if the state legislature grants the college additional multi-campus funding for the Cabarrus Business & Technology Center in Concord. The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools recently upgraded the location to a full-service campus capable of offering complete degree programs.

Members of Brownell's senior leadership team updated trustees Monday on college-wide initiatives under way.

#### New academic programs

A number of new degree programs are in development, including an associate's degree in air conditioning, heating and refrigeration; associate's degrees in mechanical engineering technology and science.

RCCC's Cabarrus Business and Technology Center in Concord will expand its offerings to include more classes in the following programs: Business administration, computer technologies and office systems technologies.

Its Salisbury campus will provide four classrooms within Building 200 to establish the Rowan County Early College. The non-traditional high school is a partnership with Rowan-Salisbury Schools to allow a student to graduate simultaneously with a diploma and associate's degree. Keeney said while the college has made great strides in providing more technology in classrooms, there is a growing need for more staffing, bandwidth and upgrades to software and equipment.

#### Student services expanded

Online class registration and an electronic records system are the two biggest projects under way in the student services department. Gaye McConnell, vice president of student services, hopes both can be launched during the 2008-09 year.

These are part of a greater effort to provide students access to electronic services, ranging from college admissions to the job application process, McConnell said.

Among those services is College Central Network, a Web-based hub for students to create and post resumes, review job openings and request career counseling.

#### Future construction projects

Since finishing Building 3000 on the Concord campus, RCCC has shifted its focus to renovating Buildings 1000 and 2000 to expand the college library, mailroom, as well as motorsports management and science programs. Completion is scheduled for fall.

Renovations to the radiography lab in Building 600 and a new facility are planned for the Salisbury campus.

In addition to those projects, the N.C. Community College System recently directed colleges to submit construction needs through 2013 to prepare for a potential statewide bond referendum, said Jerry Chandler, senior vice president.

On Monday, trustees approved four priorities to submit to the state:

- Renovation of Salisbury campus buildings following construction of Building 400 (\$5.2 million)
- Construction of public safety facility convenient to emergency service providers in both counties (\$15.3 million)
- A new multi-purpose classroom on the Concord campus (\$7.3 million)
- A new allied health and science building on the Salisbury campus (\$20.8 million)

Chandler stressed to trustees approval of these items was for planning purposes and were not guaranteed.

#### Brownell bids farewell

Monday marked the final board meeting for Brownell, who is retiring after 30 years, the longest tenure of any community college president in state history.

Brownell began Monday's board meeting in good spirits as he introduced the college's annual report.

But his attitude grew noticeably sorrowful toward the end of his talking points.

"I will continue to love this college," he said, fighting back emotion. "I'm sure the college will remain successful."