West Valley - Mission
Community College District

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Important Information about Our Local Higher Education Needs

Q: Why is this issue important?

A: West Valley and Mission Colleges have a critical role in providing local, high quality, affordable higher education in our community. With the cost of the University of California and California State College systems becoming increasingly expensive, more students are relying on our local community colleges as the entry point for higher education. Every semester over 20,000 students enroll in courses at West Valley College in Saratoga and Mission College in Santa Clara. For many students, our local community colleges are the main entry point for to higher educations. We must invest in our colleges to ensure they can continue to provide local students with a high-quality, affordable education and the job training programs they need.

Q: What are our major educational needs?

A: Our Colleges face significant challenges with aging and deteriorating academic facilities. Classrooms and educational buildings at West Valley and Mission colleges are in need of basic maintenance, repairs, and technology upgrades. Key priorities include:

- Updating academic facilities and technology to help students prepare to transfer to 4-year universities
- Accommodating more students in high-demand classes that currently have long waiting lists
- Repairing or replacing leaky roofs, heating, cooling, plumbing and electricity to ensure effective learning environments and increase energy efficiency
- Updating educational facilities and technology to ensure students are prepared for the high demand jobs of the 21st century, especially careers in emerging technologies
- Making all buildings, classrooms, and facilities accessible to people with disabilities

Q: How do you plan to address these needs?

A: The District is considering placing a local higher education funding measure on the ballot to provide the funds needed to update academic facilities and technology. The District is actively working with the community and key stakeholders to develop a fiscally prudent funding plan and finalize educational project priorities.

Q: When will the local education funding measure be on the ballot?

A: The West Valley-Mission Community College District Board of Trustees is considering placing the funding measure on the June 2012 ballot. A recently commissioned independent survey of voters in the district shows strong voter support for a local higher education funding measure. The survey shows as much as 66% of overall respondents would support a local education funding measure, well above the 55% threshold needed for passage.

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Q: How can we be sure that funds will be spent as promised?

A: Any local higher education funding measure will include strict accountability requirements including a public expenditure plan, a Citizens' Oversight Committee, and independent annual audits. The independent citizens' oversight committee will monitor spending and guarantee that all funds are being spent as promised with no money going to administrator salaries.

In 2004, West Valley-Mission Community College District voters approved Measure H to implement initial upgrades to West Valley and Mission Colleges. Measure H included a Citizens' Oversight Committee to ensure funds were spent in a fiscally accountable manner, consistent with promises made to voters. The committee found that:

- Every penny of Measure H funding has been subject to review by the Independent Citizen's Oversight Committee.
- 100% of all Measure H funds have been spent properly and as promised to taxpayers.
- All Measure H projects were completed on time and within budget.
- Independent financial and performance audits of Measure H funds are completed annually showing a perfect record of accomplishments and are available for public review.

Q: How can I get more information?

A: If you would like to find out more information, please visit the district's website at www.wvm.edu. If you have any specific questions feel free to contact Bradley Davis, Associate Vice Chancellor, by phone at 408-741-2060 or by email at bradley.davis@wvm.edu.