



CAMILLE PREUS, PRESIDENT  
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March 13, 2018

Dear Colleagues,

I wanted to take a moment as we wrap up the Winter Term to give you an update of where we are in our 2018-19 budgeting process.

The 2018 Legislative “short” session wrapped up on March 5, and you may recall from previous messages that BMCC joined the other 16 Oregon community colleges and the Oregon Community College Association (OCCA) to request an additional \$32 million for the remainder of this biennium (through June 30, 2019) to help mitigate tuition increases and restore student success program funding. I’m disheartened to report that the Legislature did not fund our request at any level, much less the \$32 million.

As we move forward in preparation for the 2019 full Legislative session, we will call upon our legislators and the Governor to provide their unwavering support of a funding increase to the Community College Support Fund (CCSF). Our students cannot and should not continue to carry the burden of funding our operations through tuition increases. We may look to some of you and some of our students to help us deliver this message to Salem so that we can make sure BMCC is heard loud and clear.

So what does this lack of a funding increase mean for BMCC as we move into the next academic year? Our finance office has based its projections for 2018-19 as though the funding increase were never an option, and that conservative strategy allowed us to continue in our budgeting process to put us in a position where we didn’t overestimate our available funds.

Though BMCC has done a great job of maintaining a fiscally-conservative budget, there are some costly expenses outside of our control that are taking a large bite out of the College’s budget as we move forward. PERS rate increases have been significant, as well as the escalation in healthcare costs. In addition, BMCC and other higher education institutions must continue to implement and maintain state and federal mandates – such as Clery Act and Title IX – that are important, and yet come with zero funding to support them. That means the Colleges must budget to pay for these compliance issues themselves.

For the past several weeks, the Integrated Resource Committee (IRC), which includes representation from faculty, staff, students and administration, has reviewed budget requests from throughout the College, and will continue to do so this week as well. The College received 75 budget requests for 2018-19, and the Vice Presidents and I worked to prioritize them into “critical,” “need to have” and “want to have” categories. Unfortunately, our limited resources mean BMCC will not even be able to address all of those requests identified as “critical.”

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All of this means that the College must consider all of its options for generating revenue to cover expenses. In order to maintain current positions and programs, BMCC will continue to review all facets of the College for efficiencies and cost savings. This also means the BMCC Board of Education may decide to implement another tuition increase.

The Associated Student Government (ASG) submitted a letter to the Board of Education and IRC indicating student support for up to a 5% (\$5) per credit tuition increase. However, ASG also noted in its letter that students cannot continue to take on significant increases in tuition each year, and they call upon BMCC to find alternative ways to acquire funding in future years. With the support from students, IRC voted to recommend to the Board of Education a 5% increase in tuition for the 2018-19 academic year. The Board will vote on a tuition/fee recommendation at its April 4 meeting at the Baker County Center.

I know that tight budgets can weigh heavy on our employees. That's why it's more important than ever to celebrate the wonderful things going on at BMCC. We have an exciting couple of months ahead of us with spring in full swing at BMCC – the rescheduled Powwow on April 12, the Arts & Culture Festival in Pendleton and Hermiston the week of April 16, numerous athletic events, the Foundation Scholarship Reception on April 26, and so much more in between. Our students continue to inspire and amaze us, and BMCC employees' dedication to the success of students is magnificent.

I will continue to keep you apprised of any updates to our budgeting process and what happens at the state level. I encourage you to be a part of the process by checking in with your supervisors on the budget process, and attending IRC or Board of Education meetings.

Thank you for all you do for students and our community.

Sincerely,

Cam Preus, President

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