



Office of the Chancellor
Frank Gornick
frankgornick@whccd.edu

[West Hills College Coalinga](#) [West Hills College Lemoore](#) [North District Center, Firebaugh](#) [Naval Air Station, Lemoore](#)

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

September 30, 2009

President
Mark McKean

Re: Budget Update, September 2009

Vice President
Bill Henry

Hello everyone,

Clerk
Nina Oxborrow

I have waited until the end of the month to send out this message in hopes that there would be good news to report. It appears that for the first three months of this fiscal year (July, August and September), the sales tax revenues are off about 14% from last year. This is not the news we wanted to hear.

Steve Cantu

Edna L. Ivans

Jeff Levinson

Jack Minnite

Our Current Response

To date, the response to our financial crisis has been terrific. Everyone has felt the effect of furloughs, yet everyone has gone beyond that with great spirit. The faculty have been fantastic in their response by accepting more students into classes where there literally are no more seats. The Maintenance and Operations Departments have done more with less, yet our colleges continue to look great. Our administrators have accepted new responsibilities without compensation and they continue to do more with less. Thank you to everyone for your cooperation and understanding. We could not have made it this far through the year without your efforts.

ADMINISTRATION

Chancellor
Frank Gornick

President
West Hills College Coalinga
Willard Lewallen

President
West Hills College Lemoore
Don Warkentin

Vice Chancellor
of Business Services
Ken Stoppenbrink

What Can We Expect?

The short answer is: More of the same. We anticipate that we will have a mid-year reduction in our apportionment as we did last year; and that in January the state will fund us less than they did this year and there will be a May revise downward. We anticipate that the state will reduce our FTE target from the current 4,985 to approximately 4,750.

How Do We Respond?

The current freeze on travel and hiring will continue along with consolidation and reorganization of positions and the significant reductions to our schedule and services. This past year we responded by absorbing the reductions through cuts and furloughs.

9900 Cody Street Coalinga, CA 93210 559.934.2100 FAX 559.934.2810
www.westhillscollge.com

"Once you go here, you can go anywhere"™

September 30, 2009

Page 2

Classified employees accepted 12 furlough days; faculty, 12 days; and administrative, management and confidential employees, 24 days. In early discussions with all groups, they are reluctant to accept any more furlough days. I certainly understand and agree with that position.

This leaves reductions in force and continued reduction to the schedule and services as the two main strategies to respond to the pending reductions to our current and future budgets. You will continue to hear more during the coming months about greater contributions from each of us to our pension systems, as well as our health care programs.

Normally – and by the way, there is a new normal now – we would propose these reductions to all staff prior to the March board meeting. Because of the complexity involved with the size and scope of our district, the earlier we notice individuals the more time we can spend on “negotiating the effects” of the reductions.

Sea Change in Higher Education

We are in the middle of a “sea change” in higher education in California. The Master Plan for Higher Education that was developed in the 50’s for California is no longer relevant. The University of California system is on the verge of becoming a “private” system. The CSU system has restricted enrollment for entering freshman and transfers, and our system has become the political football for the politicians. In short, we once had a master plan for higher education where the state was a reliable partner. We can no longer rely on the state to be a reliable partner. They have allowed the priorities of the state to shift to other services and when budget shortfalls occur, they leave us with no tools to protect ourselves and the students and communities we serve. Following is a link to an interesting article you may want to read: <http://www.modbee.com/opinion/community/story/874393.html>.

I was concerned that this fiscal year would be worse than last year and based upon the early indications of our state’s economy, we must be prepared for more of the same.

Thanks again for your outstanding efforts and sacrifices on behalf of our students.

Sincerely,



Frank Gornick
Chancellor