

SUPPORT THE GOVERNOR'S RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE STANDARD BUDGET

- Governor Mead recommended an adjusted standard budget of \$180M for the block grant to the Community Colleges. In that adjusted budget, he stated that the additional cut of \$4.6M (as required by HB80 from the 2016 session) is not justified.
 - *“Previously implemented reductions combined with enrollment decreases **would create an unreasonable burden on the colleges**, at a time when we are relying on these institutions to continue their work and to redouble efforts to develop workforce curriculum that meets the needs of a diversified economy.” ~ Governor Matt Mead*

Governor's Cuts - In 2016 the Governor recommended cuts of nearly 8% to the Wyoming Community College Commission funding, resulting in reduced state aid to the colleges of \$11.5 million.

Penny Plan - The 2016 Legislature implemented the Penny Plan, which amounted to an additional \$2.7 million in reduced operational funding.

Collectively, the Governor's Budget Cuts and the Penny Plan cuts equate more than three times what the reduction required by HB80 would have been.

Local Mill Levies - Four of the seven colleges experienced double-digit reductions in their districts' county assessed valuations for 2016, amounting to a total of \$4.8 million in reduced revenue for the colleges on top of cuts to state aid. In FY17 four of the seven college experienced further reductions due to decreased assessed valuations. In addition, colleges experience a time lag between when energy prices increase, and mill levy revenue is realized.

Excellence in Higher Education Endowment Fund - (administered by the State Treasurer's Office) is set to run out of reserve funding in the current fiscal year. **WACCT supports the JAC's intent to appropriate \$9M into this account.** (The original source of the Fund is federal mineral royalties. Interest income and reserve funding, when available, are used to pay for faculty recruitment and retention, to establish endowed faculty positions and to support the work of endowed faculty at Wyoming's community colleges and the University of Wyoming).

SUPPORT WYOMING COMMUNITY COLLEGE COMMISSION BUDGET REQUESTS:

- **COMPUTING SYSTEM MAINTENANCE**
 - \$148,964 general fund
 - The WCCC is statutorily required to provide the administrative computing system used by all seven colleges. This exception request reflects only the biennial increase in the vendor maintenance agreement.
 - This is the system that provides Hathaway Scholarship data, for example.
- **DATA SERVICES PROVIDED BY ENTERPRISE TECHNOLOGY SERVICES (ETS)**
 - \$103,684 general fund
 - This request is necessary to fund the needed server upgrades that impact the reporting capacity for the college system, as well as for the University of Wyoming, Department of Education and Department of Workforce Services.
- **HARDWARE, SOFTWARE, IT TRAINING AND CONSULTING**
 - \$31,983 general fund

- The Governor did not recommend fully funding the entire WCCC request (\$88,398 for training and conferences, software upgrades/maintenance, subscription services, and contractual services). The WCCC will reallocate resources accordingly.

CAPITAL CONSTRUCTION REQUESTS:

The seven Community Colleges stand together on the following requests for capital construction as amended by the Joint Appropriations Committee¹.

- The total of these requests equals \$17,251,200, with all state contingency and administrative costs deleted. The JAC agreed with the Governor to appropriate these dollars from the General Fund.
- We also recommend that stipulations be placed on the two projects seeking Level III Planning and Construction funding, in that those projects demonstrate the securing of equivalent matching funds from local (non-State) sources prior to releasing State funds and proceeding with the projects.
- The order is based on (1) the WCCC rankings (knowing that projects span years), (2) the project's longevity (those entered the process first), (3) previous legislative action:

1. Casper College Visual Arts Facility

\$7.75 million - Level III and construction

2. Northern Wyoming Community College District Health Sciences Building

\$392,000 - Level II Planning

3. Laramie County Community College Fine Arts

\$7 million - Level III and construction

4. Northwest College Visual & Performing Arts Center

\$1.0098M - Level II Planning

5. Northwest College Student Center

\$1.122M - Level II Planning

MAJOR MAINTENANCE REQUEST

The seven Community Colleges stand behind the Governor's recommendation to support \$571,200 for Level II design of mechanical infrastructure repairs for Western Wyoming Community College.²

SUPPORT THE ROLE OF THE COMMUNITY COLLEGES IN THE ENDOW PROCESS:

- The Community Colleges are the economic drivers for Wyoming's economy and have a proven track record for delivering workforce training.
- The Governor's budget recommendations support appropriating \$37.5M from the LSRA (rainy day fund) to continue the ENDOW effort.
- We anticipate the ENDOW Committee releasing recommendations which will have several impacts on the colleges.
- The colleges stand ready to deliver and participate in that process.
- One of the recommendations may support the recently approved **statewide education attainment** goal as approved by the Wyoming Community College Commission and the University of Wyoming.
 - The Wyoming higher education attainment goal is to increase the percent of the working population 25-64 years old that possesses a valuable post-secondary credential (degree or certificate) to 60% by 2025, and to 75% by 2040. Further, a significant focus

¹ The official capital construction request in the Governor's budget reflects projects that seek authorization only as well as those requesting State funding. The outline in this document only addresses those that require State appropriations.

² The JAC also recommended allocating \$500,000 to cover either electrical or water system failure and asked the Construction Management Division to study the issue and make recommendations.

of this goal must be reducing disparities and achievement gaps among underserved student populations including first-generation, low-income, minority and adult students.

- At the January ENDOW meeting, the community colleges made several recommendations to the ENDOW Council including the following:
 - Develop an adult financial aid program
 - Create a grant-based program for the Community Colleges to establish innovative programs
 - Create workforce training funds for the Community Colleges
 - Change the culture of higher education in Wyoming – study other states to learn what we can do to bring more options for college-going students and adults in Wyoming

COMMUNITY COLLEGE EFFORTS TO CUT COSTS

- **Casper College** substantially cut operational budgets and travel, held open positions vacant, and reduced equipment costs.
- **Central Wyoming College** cut 34 positions and made across-the-board cuts to operations. They utilized \$122,000 from reserves and did not give salary or cost-of-living increases in the last three years.
- **Eastern Wyoming College** cut 19 positions; reduced outreach, travel, equipment, and supplies, and has had a 4-year freeze in salaries. The current overall budget is about 15% lower than the previous year.
- **Laramie County Community College** cut 15 positions, reduced travel, and has cut the operating budget another 3% just to balance for the current fiscal year. They estimate that the biennial budget will be reduced by more than \$4 million (10% of LCCC's annual operating budget).
- **Northern Wyoming Community College District** cut 12 positions, reduced \$500,000 in operating funds including travel and used \$500,000 from reserves.
- **Northwest College** cut 18 positions, 3 academic programs, and travel, equipment and supplies.
- **Western Wyoming Community College** cut all the above areas significantly. They have 6 unfilled positions and 13 employees are taking early retirement. They used \$500,000 from reserves.