

**REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF THE  
RANCHO SANTIAGO COMMUNITY  
COLLEGE DISTRICT'S PROPOSED ORANGE  
EDUCATION CENTER**

**3.4**

***ACTION***

***Presentation:*** Erik Skinner, Vice Chancellor, College Finance and Facilities Planning

**Issue**

This item presents Rancho Santiago Community College District's request for approval of the Orange Education Center as a new educational center pursuant to title 5, California Code of Regulations, section 55828.

**Background**

The Rancho Santiago Community College District (district) was established in 1971 and serves a geographic area of about 193 square miles or 20 percent of Orange County. Communities served include Orange, Santa Ana, Villa Park, Anaheim, Garden Grove, Costa Mesa, Irvine, Newport Beach, and a large unincorporated area of the County. The district currently serves more than 70,000 students and area residents can access educational offerings through two colleges—Santa Ana College (SAC) and Santiago Canyon College (SCC)—and two continuing education centers, the Centennial Education Center (CEC) situated in Santa Ana and the proposed Orange Education Center (OEC) in the City of Orange.

The Rancho Santiago Community College District is one of the largest providers of noncredit instruction among all California community college districts. Its Orange Education Center's noncredit programs first began in a leased facility in the City of Orange in 1973. Over the years, additional noncredit courses were held at numerous other locations to meet enrollment demands. Due to the need for an adequately sized facility to address enrollment growth, a permanent 6.4 acres site was acquired in 2003 and a 58,180 assignable square foot facility was built in 2005 with local bond funds. The proposed Orange Education Center is located 1.5 miles northwest of the former leased facility and 7 miles west of the Santiago Canyon College.

The district submitted a preliminary notice to the Chancellor's Office in July 2004, as part of the district's 2006-07 Five Year Construction Plan, for the proposed Orange Education Center in the western portion of the district. The preliminary notice was followed by the Letter of Intent in December 2007. The Chancellor's Office and the California Postsecondary Education Commission (CPEC) both approved the Letter of Intent in April 2008 and the district was authorized to proceed with the development of a Needs Study. The Needs Study was submitted to the Chancellor's Office in July 2009.

## **Analysis**

### **Population and Enrollment Projections**

Orange County has a large and dynamic population--it has been the second largest county in California in terms of population since 1990, behind Los Angeles, and the Department of Finance projects Orange County will remain in second place until 2020. The annual population growth of the County of Orange, the City of Orange, and the district tends to mirror or exceed those of the state. Orange County's population grew by 29 percent, from 2,410,668 in 1990 to 3,121,251 in 2008 based on district compiled data from the Department of Finance and U.S. Census Bureau. In the same period, California's population increased by 28 percent. The district's enrollment had a much more significant upward trend--the number of students increased by 40 percent in the same period, from 50,124 in 1990 to 70,423 in 2008. The district projects its enrollment to surge by another 30 percent by 2015 to 91,651.

The Orange Education Center (OEC) serves some of the largest cities within Orange County—Orange, Santa Ana, Anaheim, and Garden Grove—and has been generating over twice the level of the required 500 full-time equivalent students (FTES) for new centers. Its noncredit instruction programs are growing at a much greater rate than that of the district. Since the inception of the permanent OEC location, actual full-year FTES has increased from 1,071 in 2005 to 1,444 in 2008, representing a 35 percent increase compared to the district's nine percent increase from 30,440 to 33,122 during the same period.

Table 1 shows projected enrollment, WSCH and FTES data compiled by the district based on input and approval from the Department of Finance Demographic Research Unit (DOFDRU) in April 2009. The district anticipates the following population increases for OEC:

- FTES is anticipated to more than double over the next few years, growing rapidly from 1,444 in 2008 to 3,131 in 2015.
- Student Fall enrollments are expected to increase by 36 percent, from 4,007 in 2008 to 5,461 in 2015.
- Growth rates are also forecasted for the WSCH per enrollment ratio. This ratio is estimated to increase from 5.8 in 2008 to 9.1 WSCH/enrollment by 2015.

**Table 1**  
**Enrollment, Total WSCH, WSCH per Enrollment and FTES**  
**Orange Education Center – Rancho Santiago Community College District**  
**2005-2015**

Year	Fall Term				Full Year FTES
	Enrollment	Total WSCH	WSCH Per Enrollment	FTES	
2005 a/	3,633	16,348	4.5	545	1,071
2006 a/	3,619	19,141	5.3	638	1,194
2007 a/	3,786	16,200	4.3	540	1,180
2008	4,007	23,356	5.8	779	1,444
2009	3,976	25,313	6.4	844	1,636
2010	4,231	29,469	7.0	982	1,893
2011	4,478	33,483	7.5	1,116	2,141
2012	4,722	37,474	7.9	1,249	2,387
2013	4,962	41,386	8.3	1,380	2,629
2014	5,209	45,403	8.7	1,513	2,877
2015	5,461	49,512	9.1	1,650	3,131

a/ actual enrollment

### **Alternatives to the Proposed Orange Education Center**

The Rancho Santiago CCD conducted extensive surveys and analysis of alternate sites. The OEC site was selected based on its proximity to its former downtown location, ease of accessibility, physical site and utilities development, building size, environmental factors, and cost. The district also considered the following alternatives:

#### *Expansion of the existing institution*

SCC, parent campus to the proposed OEC, cannot accommodate the district's noncredit programs and enrollment growth. Its site and physical capacity is limited and quickly diminishing along with major access and parking issues due to growth of credit instructions.

#### *Increased use of existing space*

The district has increased its utilization of existing space by offering educational services during late afternoons, evenings, weekends, and during the summer months.

#### *Utilize shared facilities*

The OEC has established extensive partnerships with Orange Unified School District and local community sites for shared-use arrangements.

*Use nontraditional modes of instructional delivery*

The district offers online classes in both general education and vocational subjects. In addition, Interactive Videoconferencing courses are also available. In general, the use of distance learning has not been emphasized for courses offered at the OEC, primarily due to the need for structured learning environments and direct assistance noncredit and first-time learner need for success.

**Academic Planning and Program Justification**

The district's Educational and Facilities Master Plans are used as a foundation for meeting the educational needs of its community and students. The recognition of the importance of continuing education and noncredit instructional programs has been reflected in SCC's plans and programs since the inception of the college. The Continuing Education Division, one of four primary academic divisions within the organizational structure of the college, has the crucial role of providing adult basic education and continuing education to the local communities served by SCC. OEC course offerings include Adult Basic Education, English as a Second Language, High School Subjects, Business Skills, Health and Safety Education, and Parenting Education. OEC also offers noncredit certificate programs: Customer Service Representative; General Office Clerk; Executive Secretary/Administrative Assistant; First-Line Supervisor/Manager; Office & Administrative Support Workers; Web Associate; and, Medical Billing.

The increasing need for noncredit education program is well supported by enrollment demand in the SCC service area. Both the number of course sections and enrollments for the noncredit programs have increased significantly since the 2005 opening of the permanent OEC facility operation. The noncredit courses offered at the proposed OEC respond to service area need and most have been approved by the Chancellor's Office.

**Student Services, Outreach, and Serving the Disadvantaged**

The 2006 Census Bureau data compiled by the district indicates that OEC's service area consists of a diverse population, comprised of more than 30 percent Hispanic, 56 percent White, and 11 percent Asian. Actual Fall 2006 OEC student data shows that Hispanic represented the largest ethnic group—52 percent Hispanic, 28 percent White, and 12 percent Asian. The OEC is strategically situated in the locality of some of the lowest income residents within Orange County to serve the educational needs of these lower and moderate income residents

The district recognizes the higher education needs of its diverse community and has a comprehensive offering of student services and outreach efforts to meet the needs of the community, including the under-represented groups, immigrants and the economically-disadvantaged. Services offered include Testing, Counseling, the Disabled Students Programs and Services, Outreach, Student Life, Adult Re-Entry Services, CalWORKs, Career Resources and Job Placement. The OEC is administered by one of the Deans of Instruction and Student Services, adequately staffed and prepared to provide student services with a one-stop approach.

## **Support and Capital Outlay Budget Projections**

The Rancho Santiago CCD's fiscal performance and condition seem adequate to meet the future fiscal demands of its proposed Orange Education Center. The district has effectively managed its monetary resources to achieve an annual fund balance greater than the minimum 5 percent reserve and plans to continue to adjust the program offerings at the OEC based on enrollment base and apportionment, future enrollment growth, and noncredit FTES funding. The site and all capital outlay costs associated with the OEC building have been funded by the district through the local bond measure. Currently, district anticipates no major program and facility changes for the OEC in the foreseeable future (5 to 10 years) except for the potential need for additional parking area to be funded at district expense.

## **Geographic and Physical Accessibility**

The proposed OEC is located in West Orange, 7 miles west of the Santiago Canyon College in a light industrial area surrounded by a relatively high density urban residential area with good access to major roadways, freeways, and interstate highways. It is situated near two major interstate highways: the Santa Ana Freeway (I-5) and the San Diego Freeway (I-405 and I-5 south of Irvine). Students within the OEC service area can reach OEC with approximately a seven to 15-minute drive during non-commute hours.

Excellent public transportation provides convenient access to the OEC. Transit in Orange County is offered mainly by the Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA), which manages the County's bus network and taxicab services as well as coordinates with Southern California's Metrolink to provide commuter rail services. OCTA was cited as the best large property transportation system in the United States for 2005 by the American Public Transportation Association. Students taking public transportation have a short walking distance of about one to two blocks from the bus stops.

## **Effects on Other Institutions**

The proposed OEC is supported by many local civic officials and neighboring postsecondary institutions as evidenced by letters of support, including North Orange County CCD, Coast CCD, South Orange CCD, Mt. San Antonio CCD, Orange Unified School District, UC Irvine, Argosy University, City of Orange, Community Foundation of Orange, Orange County Business Council, Orange Chamber of Commerce, and Orange County Workforce Investment Board. It is anticipated that the proposed center will not impact the neighboring community colleges' existing and projected enrollments or lead to unnecessary duplication of programs.

**Recommended Action**

The recommendation is for the Board of Governors to approve the Orange Education Center of the Rancho Santiago Community College District as a state approved center.

*Staff:    Lan Yuan, Specialist  
             Facilities Planning*

