

This email is sent on behalf of President Frank Chong

(Bcc'ed: Board of Trustees, Student Trustee & dl.staff.all)

Dear College Community,

As SRJC moves forward in addressing its budget challenges, I'd like to take a moment to provide you with an update on where we are currently, as well as where I believe we are headed.

Where we are now

In the spring, in response to the new funding formula from the state and multiple years of declining enrollment, the component areas were allocated a \$3.3 million target of reductions to be realized in non-instructional areas. These reductions were achieved and put forward as part of the 2018-19 adopted budget, which was approved at the September 11 meeting of the Board of Trustees.

As we continue to align our college with the number of students we currently serve, we are creating a multiyear approach to addressing these issues so that we can take the time to make changes in a thoughtful manner. There will be an additional \$2 million in non-instructional reductions over the remainder of this fiscal year. As a result, we will need to work together to focus on reduction strategies and areas of potential increased funding, while remaining productive and dynamic.

And so, SRJC may begin to look somewhat different than years past. I believe that we collectively possess the wisdom and expertise required to make such adjustments in a way that continues to provide our students the best possible education from our top-notch faculty and staff. We, as an institution, have not shied away from challenges in the past and I believe that we can face them head on today, perhaps even surpassing our own expectations.

Where we are going

Last semester and throughout the summer, the management team collaborated with the President's Consultation Council, which is comprised of leaders of each constituent group, and identified the following two strategies to address our budget deficit:

1. Contracting our scheduled course offerings through a combination of strategies, including cancelation of low-enrolled sections in summer and fall 2018, and the reduction of our overall class schedule by 9% beginning in spring 2019 and continuing through summer and fall 2019.

We are committed to making these changes in a mindful way, in collaboration with our faculty, department chairs, deans and staff, to continue to facilitate student progress towards degrees and certificates. I believe it's important to take a hard look at canceled low-enrolled sections and seriously consider whether or not they should be offered again in the future. We need to schedule courses in such a way that allows students to plan their schedules ahead of time, confident that their classes will run as planned.

2. Strategic consolidation of vacant management and classified professional positions, taking the time to allow input from the individuals affected, to ensure each of these moves is positive for

SRJC and for its employees. As a part of these consolidations, we must take a hard look at the college's core mission. We can no longer be everything to everyone and need to make some difficult decisions about what we can no longer afford to do.

I am committed to protecting permanent SRJC employees and will focus on reducing positions through retirements and attrition.

We are also focused on protecting our current enrollments and pursuing strategic initiatives that will help the college grow, while maintaining our commitment to becoming a fiscally sound institution.

We will continue marketing, outreach and communication efforts, in order to reach potential students in our community who may not yet be familiar with SRJC's many offerings, locations and financial aid options. We will soon begin the "SRJC for Free" campaign, aimed at informing our community to the fact that many of our first-time, full-time students are eligible to receive free tuition, due to the Doyle Scholarship, the California College Promise, and the new AB19 grant.

There is something for everyone at SRJC and our academic programs and student support services are unparalleled. Through marketing and outreach efforts, we will remind our community that they can achieve their goals at SRJC. Whether someone wants to transfer to a four-year university, start a new career or even just learn a new skill, SRJC is Sonoma County's partner in education.

And so now, I ask that you be my partner in these efforts. Do not let a great idea or poignant question go unheard. SRJC is a community of more than 3,000 great minds and I welcome input from every one of you.

In order to maintain our fiscal solvency on an ongoing basis, while remaining the pillar of excellence that is SRJC, I have chosen to seek the advice from our college community. We will be holding a listening session on the budget and the new funding formula on November 13, 1:00pm-2:30pm in the Bertolini Student Activities Center, just prior to the November meeting of the Board of Trustees. This will give the college community an opportunity to hear the most recent information and ask questions.

Helen Keller once said, "Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much."

To me, that rings more true today than ever before. A leader is not defined by what they do when things go smoothly, but by what they do when tough decisions have to be made. As SRJC faces these tough decisions, I hope to face them with you by my side.

With gratitude,

Frank Chong

President/Superintendent



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