



RIO GRANDE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

The following resolution was approved at the regular board meeting of Rio Grande Community College on June 20, 2016:

Resolution 6.20.16(3)

WHEREAS the Ohio Taskforce on Affordability and Efficiency in Higher Education has issued their recommendations to Governor John Kasich on October 1, 2015, and

WHEREAS the Rio Grande Community College Board of Trustees has reviewed these recommendations, and

WHEREAS the Board of Trustees has considered its response to the Taskforce's recommendation in its June 20, 2016 meeting,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Rio Grande Community College Board of Trustees approves the said response to be sent to the Ohio Department of Higher Education Chancellor.

Vote recorded as follows:

Mr. Adelman	Yes
Mr. Davenport	Yes
Ms. Jones	Yes
Mr. Kidd	Yes
Ms. Montgomery	Yes
Mr. Reed	Yes
Ms. Saunders	Yes
Ms. Weber	Yes

Resolution Approved

I, Kent Haley, Fiscal Officer of the Governing Board of Rio Grande Community College, do hereby certify that the preceding resolution is taken and copied from the original resolution passed by the Governing Board in regular session at the board meeting held on June 20, 2016.

Kent Haley
Fiscal Officer
Rio Grande Community College



June 20, 2016

Chancellor John Carey
Ohio Department of Higher Education
25 South Front Street
Columbus, OH 43215

Dear Chancellor Carey:

On behalf of the Board of Trustees of Rio Grande Community College, please accept this report as Rio Grande Community College's response to recommendations of Governor Kasich's Task Force on Affordability and Efficiency as required by House Bill 64 of the 131st General Assembly. The Rio Grande Community College Board of Trustees is pleased to work with all stakeholders as we work to provide high quality low cost educational options to the residents of Ohio. Improving affordability and efficiency in higher education is a goal which we share with Governor.

As you know, Rio Grande Community College (RGCC) has a unique relationship with the University of Rio Grande (URG), a private liberal arts institution. This relationship is authorized by Ohio Revised Code Section 3354.26, which provides that RGCC "may enter into one or more contracts for the board of trustees of the University of Rio Grande to provide any services for the operation of the community college, except the services of a treasurer or other fiscal officer." RGCC has entered into a contract with URG for instructional and operating services since the community college's inception in 1974.

The current arrangement provides that RGCC pays URG an amount equal to 96% of revenue derived from community college main campus operations. This revenue includes tuition and fees, room and board charges, bookstore charges, State Share of Instruction (SSI) receipts, and property tax receipts. In exchange for this payment, URG provides nearly all of the instructional, administrative, and operational services for RGCC.

As part of this arrangement, URG does not distinguish public community college operations from private university operations. Community College students are often enrolled in the same class sections as university students, sharing the same instructors, curriculum, and facilities. Further, almost all student services such as those provided by the housing, dining, business, financial aid, and records offices are operated by the university. Thus, the moneys paid to the university by the community college are joined with university resources to fund the academic and operational activities of Rio Grande.

Because of this unique marriage of public and private institutions, Rio Grande's operations work somewhat differently than all other public institutions of higher education in Ohio. As a private liberal arts institution, awarding baccalaureate and master degrees as well as associate degrees, the University of Rio Grande's academic and operation needs and cost structure varies significantly from most public institutions in the state.

Due to its unique mission, RGCC's review of the Task Force's recommendations has been undertaken in light of Rio Grande's joint public-private relationship. We are pleased to present our response to the recommendations below. We look forward to continuing the conversation about affordability and efficient as we work together to provide educational opportunities for the residents of Ohio.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kent Haley", enclosed in a thin black rectangular border.

Kent Haley
Chief Financial Officer
Rio Grande Community College

Rio Grande Community College

Board of Trustees

Responses to the Recommendations of The Task Force on Affordability and Efficiency

June 20, 2016

Master Recommendation 1 - Students Must benefit: Savings and/or new dollars generated from these recommendations must be employed to reduce the cost of college for students. Any other uses must have tangible benefits for the quality of students' education.

RGCC Response to Master Recommendation 1:

The board enthusiastically supports the notion that our students should be the beneficiaries of any cost reductions and revenue increases. Rio Grande Community College (RGCC) will continue to explore ways to reduce the cost of attendance. Some of the methods are outlined in the responses below.

Master Recommendation 2 - Five-year goals: Each institution must set a goal for efficiency savings and new resources to be generated through fiscal 2021, along with a framework for investing those dollars in student affordability while maintaining or improving academic quality.

RGCC Response to Master Recommendation 2:

Efforts will be made as a part of the annual budget cycle to realize savings and to initiate new resource streams for the purposes of investing in quality and affordability measures. As a community college partially funded by property tax receipts, the Board of Trustees is exploring the possibility of placing a property tax replacement levy on the ballot in an upcoming election. If passed, the replacement levy would generate an additional one million dollars in tax receipts that could be used to improve education quality at Rio Grande.

3A. Campus contracts: Each institution must require that its employees use existing contracts for purchasing goods and services.

RGCC Response to 3A: When possible, Rio Grande employees purchase goods and services through existing arrangements with the institution's vendors. Rio Grande has streamlined its purchasing so that various departments purchase supplies through the same vendor.

3B. Collaborative contracts: Ohio's colleges and universities must pursue new and/or strengthened joint purchasing agreements in copiers and printers, computers, travel services, outbound shipping, scientific lab equipment and office supplies.

RGCC Response to 3B: As indicated above RGCC has partnered with the University of Rio Grande (URG) for most of its academic and operational services. This includes the purchase of goods and

services. Rio Grande already participates in several joint purchasing agreements including the E&I Cooperative Services, the Ohio Inter University Council Purchasing Group, National Joint Powers Alliance, and the Midwestern Higher Education Compact.

Rio Grande will continue to explore opportunities for collaboration in the purchase of goods and services. The RGCC CFO is active with the Ohio Association of Community College fiscal officer group. This group has undertaken preliminary discussions surrounding this recommendation and plans to further explore areas of potential cost savings through purchasing arrangements in the year to come.

4A. Asset Review: *Each institution must conduct an assessment of its non-core assets to determine their market value if sold, leased or otherwise repurposed.*

RGCC Response to 4A: As indicated above RGCC shares its facilities, including land and buildings, with the University of Rio Grande. Rio Grande is a very small institution and does not have a significant amount of assets that are not used in its educational mission. The University of Rio Grande does lease one building to the local Area Agency on Aging. In addition, it currently leases unused portions of other buildings to a local educational agency and to a private business. At this time, the RGCC Board of Trustees does not believe that any of its assets could be sold, leased, or repurposed.

4B. Operations review: *Each institution must conduct an assessment of non-academic operations that might be run more efficiently by a regional cooperative, private operator or other entity. This review should include dining, housing, student health insurance, child care, IT help desk, janitorial, landscaping, facility maintenance, real-estate management and parking.*

RGCC Response to 4B: As indicated above, almost all of RGCC's operations are performed through the contract with the private university. The private university itself outsources both dining and janitorial services. Rio Grande does not have significant real-estate management or parking operations. Neither does it provide child care services; however, the University is entering into an agreement for FY17 with the Athens-Meigs Educational Services Center (ESC) for the delivery of child care services for the local area

Over the past year and a half, Rio Grande has undertaken a significant review of its operations, in performing an "operations audit" of each unit on campus. The goal of this audit was to identify areas of opportunity for efficiency, cost savings, and improved operations. At this current time, we do not believe it would be beneficial to further outsource any operations.

4C. Affinity partnerships and sponsorships: *Institutions must, on determining assets and operations that are to be retained, evaluate opportunities for affinity relationships and sponsorships that can support students, faculty and staff.*

As indicated above, almost all of RGCC's operations are performed through the contract with the private university. The private university itself outsources both dining and janitorial services. In addition, the financial aid department outsources its FAFSA verification process to Kentucky Higher Education Assistance Authority (KHEEA). This partnership has created a savings for Rio Grande as it has reduced the number of needed financial aid advisors.

5A. Cost diagnostic: *Each institution must produce a diagnostic to identify its cost drivers, along with priority areas that offer the best opportunities for efficiencies.*

RGCC Response to 5A: RGCC's primary cost driver is its contract with the University of Rio Grande. For main campus operations, 96% of revenues are paid to the university. Tuition, fees, State Share of Instruction (SSI), and local property tax levies are all subject to this payment. Thus, RGCC costs are mostly a function of its revenue. Since funds paid to the university by the community college are included with other university funds, it is difficult to determine the exact cost drivers for community college operations.

5B. Productivity measure: *The Department of Higher Education should develop a common measurement of administrative productivity that can be adopted across Ohio's public colleges and universities.*

RGCC Response 5B: While this was requirement specific to the Department of Higher Education, it should be noted that Rio Grande Community College was excluded from this report as a result of the situation described in the response to Recommendation 5A and the introduction to this document.

5C. Organizational structure: *Each institution should review its organizational structure to identify opportunities to streamline and reduce costs.*

RGCC Response 5C: Over the past year, Rio Grande has examined its executive level organization structure and has already implemented a more streamlined approach by reducing the number of Vice President level positions from six to five. The RGCC Vice President of Administration position has been reclassified as the Vice President for Student and Administrative Affairs, taking on additional responsibilities in light of the URG's COO retirement. Several middle management positions within RGCC were also realigned to support priorities and strategic emphases and to achieve efficiencies.

5D. Health-care costs: *To drive down costs and take advantage of economies of scale, a statewide working group should identify opportunities to collaborate on health-care costs.*

RGCC Response 5D: RGCC is open to discussing opportunities for collaboration on health care cost.

5E. Data Centers: *Institutions must develop a plan to move their primary or disaster recovery data centers to the State of Ohio Computer Center.*

RGCC Response to 5E: RGCC contracts with URG for all of its information system needs. URG utilizes a remote server system for hosting its MIS system and storing data. In addition, Rio Grande's Campus Computing and Networking department has established a system where all servers are backed up in two different locations on campus.

5F. Space utilization: *Each Ohio institution must study the utilization of its campus and employ a system that encourages optimization of physical spaces.*

RGCC Response to 5F: A campus utilization study was performed in 2013, indicating that

Rio Grande has adequate space for its academic and administrative functions. In Fall 2015, Rio Grande temporarily shuttered an administrative office building, moving those operations to another occupied building on campus to conserve on utility, maintenance, and housekeeping expenses.

6A. Negotiate cost: *Professional negotiators must be assigned to help faculty obtain the best deals for textbooks and instructional materials, starting with high-volume, high-cost courses. Faculty must consider both cost and quality in selecting course materials.*

RGCC Response to 6A: RGCC does not directly purchase textbooks. The campus bookstore is operated by URG. The bookstore manager seeks to purchase books at the most affordable rate possible.

6B. Standardize materials for gateway courses: *Institutions must encourage departments to choose common materials, including digital elements, for gateway courses that serve large volumes of students.*

RGCC Response to 6B: RGCC contracts with the University of Rio Grande for instructional services. All instructional services are provided by the university. The university has many factors to consider when developing curriculum, including both its community college mission and its private liberal arts missions. English and math gateway courses both use common materials and adhere to the transfer eligibility guidelines.

6C. Develop digital capabilities: *Institutions must be part of a consortium to develop digital tools and materials, including open educational resources, that provide students with high-quality, low-cost materials.*

RGCC Response to 6C: RGCC contracts with the University of Rio Grande for instructional services. All instructional services are provided by the university. The university has many factors to consider when developing curriculum, including both its community college mission and its private liberal arts missions. Rio Grande is a member of OhioLINK which provides access to a wealth of digital and print resources at no cost to students. OhioLINK is currently collaborating with member institutions in exploring opportunities for expanding its offerings of Open Educational Resources (OER).

7A. Education campaign: *Each institution must develop a campaign to educate its full-time undergraduates about the course loads needed to graduate on time.*

RGCC Response to 7A: Rio Grande has been involved in the process of evaluating its advising process. As part of the SSLI initiative, Rio Grande has developed a Campus Completion Plan and is creating a degree mapping system. Also, Rio Grande is in the processing of deploying a software system that will better enable more effective advising

for students, including the most efficient route possible to degree completion.

7B. Graduation incentive: *Institutions should consider establishing financial incentives that encourage full-time students to take at least 15 credit hours per semester.*

RGCC Response to 7B: Per the response to Recommendation 7A above, Rio Grande is evaluating its advising process. Through the advising process, Rio Grande encourages students to take as many credit hours as possible. RGCC's low tuition rates encourage students to take as many credit hours as possible. Rio Grande has adopted BecomeAlum, a self-tracking audit tool that students and advisors may use to track and monitor student progress to degree completion. With this tool, students may more carefully plan and execute their course of study, so that every course taken contributes to degree completion.

7C. Standardize credits for degree: *Institutions should streamline graduation requirements so that most bachelor's degree programs can be completed within four years or less and most associate degree programs can be completed in two years or less. Exceptions should be allowed because of accreditation or quality requirements.*

RGCC Response to 7C: RGCC has successfully reduced the number of credit hours required for certain associate degree programs. Currently, all associate degrees now require 65 or less credit hours.

7D. Data-driven advising: *Institutions should enhance academic advising services so that students benefit from both high-impact, personalized consultations and data systems that proactively identify risk factors that hinder student success.*

RGCC Response to 7D: Rio Grande is considering ways to enhance its academic advising services for students. Rio Grande is eager to working collaboratively with other institutions to obtain access to systems that will enable the college to more effectively providing data-driven advising to its students.

7E. Summer programs: *Each campus must develop plans to evaluate utilization rates for summer session and consider opportunities to increase productive activity.*

RGCC Response to 7E: Rio Grande will continue to evaluate its summer programming schedule on an ongoing basis. The URG/RGCC President has requested a strategic plan for summer programming the development of which will be led by the Provost and the Vice President for Enrollment Management and Marketing. This plan will include strategies for expanding summer offerings that are relevant and desirable.

7F. Pathway agreements: *Ohio institutions should continue to develop agreements that create seamless pathways for students who begin their educations at community or technical colleges and complete them at universities.*

RGCC Response to 7F: Through its partnership with the University of Rio Grande, RGCC has already developed a seamless transition from the community college to the university.

7G. Competency-based education: *Institutions should consider developing or expanding programs that measure student success based on demonstrated competencies instead of through the amount of time students spend studying a subject.*

RGCC Response to 7G: Rio Grande has a Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) program. In this program, adult students are eligible for to earn credit for their life experience in certain subject areas. Students work with instructors as well as a PLA coordinator to develop a portfolio to demonstrate their subject area competency. Rio Grande will continue to make this program available and evaluate competency-based education methods that are compatible with the mission of the institution.

8. Program review: *Institutions should consider consolidating programs that are duplicated at other colleges and universities in their geographic area.*

RGCC Response to 8: Rio Grande will continue to review its offerings to avoid program duplications at other colleges and universities in its geographic area. RGCC is located in one of the most rural regions of the state, and there is no other public college or university within one hour of main campus.

9. Joint oversight boards: *The state should establish joint oversight boards between co-located community colleges and regional campuses of universities with a mandate to improve efficiencies and coordination while maintaining the differentiated mission of each.*

RGCC Response to 9: Not Applicable to RGCC.

10A. Financial advising: *Ohio's colleges and universities should make financial literacy a standard part of students' education.*

RGCC Response to 10A: RGCC recognizes the need for improved financial literacy for students. In orientations and financial aid advising, Rio Grande's staff explain the impacts of loans to students. We will continue to explore ways to ensure students understand the financial implications of student loans. Financial literacy is included as a topic covered in the freshmen orientation course. The topic is divided into two

lesson – one which covers financial aid literacy and the other that covers personal finance. RGCC will also collaborate with other institutions to explore methods of communicating this information to students.