



**LARAMIE COUNTY
COMMUNITY COLLEGE**
OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
Dr. Joe Schaffer

MEMORANDUM

DATE: June 17, 2020

TO: LCCC Board of Trustees

CC: President's Cabinet

FROM: Dr. Joe Schaffer, President

RE: FY20 Self-Evaluation and Proposed FY21 Goals

I am sure none of us could have ever imagined how the end of this fiscal year would have ended when we first entered it. The COVID-19 pandemic has changed so much, that it makes any authentic assessment of our intentions and efforts at the beginning, well, not seem so authentic. But even in the worst times, we cannot let circumstances justify our loosening of expectations for achieving results and accomplishing goals. It is within that spirit I offer my FY20 self-evaluation, and certainly within this context that I offer my proposed FY21 goals.

Similar to the past, and in alignment with our performance management process, I will provide a succinct, yet comprehensive, self-assessment of how I believe I have performed over the past year. This assessment will focus on three primary performance domains:

1. Function-Based Performance – how I have fulfilled the primary functions of my position and the expectations for a chief executive
2. Behavior-Based Performance – how I have behaved in carrying out my work, especially as it aligns with the College's mission, vision, and values
3. Objective-Based Performance – how I have satisfied my FY20 the goals

I will conclude this memorandum with my proposed goals for FY21.

Each year, I facilitate a 360-degree review of every member of the executive team (President's Cabinet), as well as for my own performance. This feedback helps me understand how our conduct, abilities, and behaviors are perceived, as we carry out our work. This year I asked more than 60 individuals to anonymously participate in my 360-feedback survey, including all of the Trustees. In all instances, these individuals had some significant interaction with me over the past year. About 60% of the participants responded (n=37). I will provide the survey's results, including the open-ended comments, appended to this memorandum for your information.

I am naturally inclined to examine the areas I need improvement most, rather than those areas I do well in. Therefore, from my 360 feedback, I will focus my comments on the areas where I believe I have not met someone's expectations or where I can improve. Before doing so, I am pleased to say that the feedback from most individuals overwhelmingly shows that I am meeting expectations, and in many cases exceeding them. I

did not to lose sight of these responses, as I considered what I can do to improve. Here are the general themes I pulled from the 360 feedback, and my own perception of my performance.

Have I fulfilled the Functional Performance expectations of the position of President?

To me, fulfilling the functional requirements of any position is the lowest level of expected and appropriate performance. You hired me to do some basic things first and foremost. These include assuring the College is running smoothly, maintaining a stable fiscal and academic environment, representing the institution to external constituents, and conducting other basic operational activities as necessary to keep the doors open to the students and the community being served. In these regards, I believe I continue to be a competent chief executive and that the institution continues to operate as you would expect.

Have I fulfilled the Behavioral Performance expectations of the position of President?

Often, the biggest challenges are not a result of WHAT we do, but HOW we behave when we are doing the work. Thus, behavior-based performance pertains to how I have behaved in carrying out my work, especially as it aligns with the College's mission, vision, and values, and how I lead and interact with others. These elements are addressed throughout the questions in my 360-feedback report.

I am humbled by the significant positive feedback in these areas. The clear majority of respondents suggest I meet or exceed expectations in these areas. The positive comments are even more rewarding and so very much appreciated. I am grateful people see value in my work and leadership.

More appreciated, though, is the constructive feedback that is delivered in the comments. These demonstrate mutual respect, and I hope display a sense of safety that people can share very candid feedback with me. These comments, and ratings, help me focus on my weaknesses. Unfortunately, these are not new things at all, but rather reoccurring feedback that suggests the behaviors are difficult for me to change, or perhaps I am not as committed to changing them as I like to believe I am. But recognition is important, and I need to be honest that these shortcomings in my behaviors still exist. In summary, they include the following three things:

- I am convicted of my ideas and goals. That sounds positive, but it also has its limitations. Individuals find that I may not be willing to honestly listen to their perspectives, consider alternative ideas, or recognize when my position is not the right one, or at least the best one.
- Diplomacy and persuasive speaking/interactions are a critical aspect of my work. Most effective executives learn this and build the skills to exhibit these behaviors. Unfortunately, these can also be used to manipulate others thoughts and words to make it appear as though I am twisting them to fit my agenda. In some instances that is likely an accurate summation of my behavior. I like to think I do this though with the best of intentions, but I recognize my ambition and drive to produce results may be perceived as manipulation. At times, that may be an accurate conclusion.
- Although I like having many "irons in the fire" and enjoy the diversity and number of things I find myself involved in with this work, I may not be as effective at managing them as I would like to believe. More so, my ineffectiveness in this domain actually frustrate others and cause them unnecessary challenges. Individuals have expressed frustration in my lack of clearly translating vision into actionable objectives or defining my expectations for specific outcomes. This leads to reiteration of things already said, explained, or discussed, as well as work having to be redone or reset.

These areas are indeed things I know exist as faults in my behaviors. They represent areas that are very difficult for me to change, both because they are ingrained into my very nature, but also because there are aspects of the behaviors that have made me successful. I need to continue to find ways to leverage these behaviors positively when necessary, but also to purposefully recognize them when they become deterrents.

Have I fulfilled the Objective (Goals) Performance expectations of the position of President?

The last area of my self-evaluation pertains to my objective-based performance. In the following, I will provide you with the outcomes of the goals we collectively established for this year. Admittedly, many of these goals, accomplished fully or not, have taken a back seat to my attention and actions as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. That said, I am proud of our accomplishments, and I say “our” purposefully because I know it is the contributions of others that mark these successes. To that end I will try to identify those individuals who have contributed significantly to these efforts. I look forward to discussing the progress on these goals in more detail should you have questions or would like additional information.

FY20 Goals: Finish What We Started

- 1. Guided Pathways** – FY20 will represent the final year of our three-year initiative to bring Guided Pathways to scale here at LCCC. Our goal is to transform our institution into a cohesive experience for students under the Guided Pathways model. This means that all students entering LCCC will experience a guided pathways structure beginning Fall 2020.

Outcome: Even amidst the coronavirus pandemic, our focus on rolling out Guided Pathways at scale for the coming Fall has not waivered. As I have mentioned previously, LCCC has been recognized as a national leader for its efforts in developing Guided Pathways. With the hiring and onboarding of our seven Pathway coordinator faculty scheduled for July, I believe we are ready to launch Guided Pathways at scale for fall semester. The most significant question is what impact, if any, the pandemic will have on our successful rollout. However, we are not deviating from our commitment.

Key Contributors: Melissa Stutz, Kari Brown-Herbst, Jonathan Carrier, Caitlin Cox, Stephen Crynes, Julie Gerstner, Sarah Hannes, Kelly Humphrey, Adam Keizer, Meghan Kelly, Jill Koslosky, Stacy Maestas, Chad Marley, Starla Mason, James Miller, Arshi Nisley, Mark Perkins, Zac Roehrs, Ann Shelby, Zeke Sorenson, Josh Thein, Janet Webb, Bryan Wilson, and Melanie Young

- 2. Capital Construction** – While underway, the construction of the new residence hall and the renovation and expansion of the Fine Arts Building will substantially occur during FY20. The completion of these major construction projects will require consistent focus and hard work to assure they are completed on time and on budget. In addition, we will move forward with navigating the legislative and funding processes to bring our final, major capital construction project to fruition---the renovation of the Recreation and Athletics Complex (RAC).

Outcome: Less than six months ago, in my mid-year progress report to the Board, I provided a report of substantial progress made on our three primary projects: the Fine Arts building, the new Residence Hall, and our efforts to secure funding for the RAC. Just one remains on schedule and on target, and that is the Fine Arts Building remodel and new Surbrugg-Prentice Auditorium (SPA). The renovation is slated to complete on time this summer, and the SPA on-time later this coming fall. As you know, the Residence Hall has been substantially delayed as a result of the pandemic, but I am happy to share we still plan to complete in late fall and will look for a soft opening for the Spring 2021 semester. The RAC was a casualty of some dysfunction in the Legislature, and as I have shared, the House and Senate have been unable to find a compromise position on a Capital Construction bill for Wyoming this biennium. I have no doubt that we will eventually see funding for the RAC. However, when is up in the air. The pandemic as well as current economic challenges facing the state may continue to delay this project.

Key Contributors: Rick Johnson, Bill Zink, Jonathan Carrier, James Miller, Dianna Wilson, Frank Cook, Beth Kean, Jason Pasqua, Melissa Stutz, Kari Brown-Herbst, Lisa Trimble, and Cindy Henning

- 3. Applied Baccalaureates at LCCC** – With the approval by the Legislature and direction of the Forward Greater Cheyenne initiative, we will move forward with the design and approval of the first Bachelor of Applied Science degrees to be offered by LCCC. I will play an active role in helping support, and where necessary, lead our efforts to establish at least one, if not two, Bachelors of Applied Science degrees at the College with an anticipated date for the first enrolled class to occur in Fall 2020.

Outcome: From a concept, to legislation, to proposed programs, and now approved programs, our efforts to launch applied bachelor's degrees at Wyoming's community colleges have become a reality. With the final approval of the Higher Learning Commission, LCCC is slated to start its first-ever bachelor's of applied science (BAS) degrees this fall – one in Applied Management and the other in Healthcare Administration. We are still waiting on final approval for Title IV financial aid eligibility for these programs, but anticipate that coming yet this summer. I believe we are on target and should have little problem filling our first two cohorts of 15 students for each of these programs this fall.

Key Contributors: Jeff Shmidl, Danielle Opp, Jill Koslosky, Starla Mason, Kari Brown-Herbst, Stacy Maestas, and Brandi Payne-Cervera

- 4. Finalize the Strategic Program Plan** – This goal is directed at bringing the substantial work done in FY19 to conclusion. I will work closely with Academic Affairs to finalize our short-term and long-term plans for changes to our academic program offerings at LCCC. My goal is to have this presented and approved by the Board of Trustees in Fall 2019.

Progress Update: This project continues to be one we are forced to move to the back-burner, most recently because of the pandemic. My goal was to have this vetted by relevant stakeholders on campus, by the Academic Leadership Team (ALT), President's Cabinet, and ultimately you, the Board of Trustees, all before the end of the fiscal year. I do not know if we will make that deadline now. With the good work of Dr. Clark Harris and Dr. Kari-Brown-Herbst, we continue to make progress on the plan, and I have no doubt we will finalize it soon. The plan is important for our efforts to shape academic programming in the near, and longer-term future. However, the future has been something we have had to turn away from slightly as we navigate the present and its challenges with COVID-19. I still hope to have this project completed before the end of the summer.

Key Contributors: Clark Harris, Kari Brown-Herbst, Starla Mason, Maryellen Tast, Bryan Wilson, Jonathan Carrier, and Kelly Humphrey

- 5. Golden Eagle Athletics** – With a transition in both the Vice President of Student Services and the Director of Athletics and Campus Recreation positions, I have the opportunity to help stabilize and position LCCC athletics to rise from being good to great. In collaboration with the Interim Director of Athletics, Recreation, and Exercise Dr. Cindy Henning, the coaching and athletics staff, the LCCC Foundation, the Golden Eagle Booster Club, and you, I will aspire to help establish a strategic vision and focus for LCCC athletics and assure this is translated into a comprehensive analysis to include short- and long-range plans for competitive sports at LCCC. This work should result in a formal plan to be approved/adopted by the Board of Trustees in the late Fall 2019 or early Spring 2020.

Outcome: The realignment of Athletics under my supervision has been both educational and rewarding. I have been very pleased by the leadership of Dr. Cindy Henning in her interim role over Golden Eagle Athletics, as well as the involvement and contributions of the Athletics Department staff. I am also thankful for the leadership and support of the Board with your approval of our "Soaring into the Future" Golden Eagles Athletics plan this past spring. Even with an uncertain fall ahead of us for athletics at LCCC, I believe we are on the right path with this plan, and the future for the Golden Eagles looks bright.

Key Contributors: Cindy Henning, Vince Gibson, Kerri Coats, Seth Glause, Bob Salazar, Don Erickson, Wendy Soto, Billie Addleman, Walley Erickson, Dershie Barber, Bob Womack, and Lisa Trimble

- 6. Reaffirmation of Accreditation** – FY20 includes substantial work on preparing for our reaffirmation of accreditation. Much of this effort involved the successful completion and submission of our 2018 Systems Portfolio. However, this fall (2019) we will have one of the most significant steps leading up to our reaffirmation of accreditation, and that is a Quality Checkup site visit from the Higher Learning Commission (HLC). Thus, this goal is focused on assuring a successful visit, and from there, successful reaffirmation of our accreditation from HLC.

Outcome: This year, under the leadership and guidance of Dr. Kim Bender, we prepared for and held a successful site visit from HLC for our reaffirmation of accreditation. This type of visit is considered the Comprehensive Quality Review as part of our AQIP accreditation pathway. We received our final affirmation of accreditation from HLC this past March, securing LCCC's institutional accreditation through 2029-2030. HLC's findings require us to provide a monitoring report to demonstrate improvements in how we ensure consistency and quality across all of our online learning offerings. As I mentioned in my mid-year progress report, we fully anticipated and welcomed this feedback. I know our people in Academic Affairs, especially the Center for Excellence in Teaching, are ready to tackle this.

Key Contributors: Kim Bender, Dallas Bacon, Kari Brown-Herbst, and many, many other individuals intimately involved in this process, site-visit, and ultimately the positive outcome

- 7. Strengthening LCCC's Leadership** – I will continue to work on strengthening the executive leadership of the College. This will start with me by focusing on campus involvement and engagement and becoming better at building, developing, and strengthening the President's Cabinet. It will also include securing the best candidate for the Vice President of Administration and Finance position.

Outcome: I will be brief here. I believe LCCC has the strongest executive leadership teams of all the institutions of higher learning in Wyoming. This year we welcomed our new Vice President of Student Services Dr. Melissa Stutz and welcomed back to the College Vice President of Administration Rick Johnson. We do have some interim positions that will need to be finalized in the coming year, but even with interim appointments of Dr. Kari Brown-Herbst and Dr. Clark Harris, LCCC continues to be led with humility, grace, and a fierce dedication to continuous improvement and student success.

Key Contributors: Kim Bender, Kari Brown-Herbst, Melissa Stutz, Tammy Maas, Rick Johnson, Lisa Trimble, Kelly Humphrey, and Clark Harris

Finally, the following are my suggestions for the goals I might pursue in the coming year. My suggestions are just that, suggestions. I hope the Board will join me in a conversation to refine, add, or redirect my proposed goals, so that we are of the same mind for the priorities set for FY21.

Proposed FY21 Goals

- 1. A Safe and Successful Return to "Normal"** – Nothing will be more pressing as we start this coming fiscal year than to chart a path forward for LCCC to return to some semblance of normalcy in the Fall of 2020 and through the end of the academic year. The context around COVID-19 remains uncertain and ever-changing, but I am confident that we can find a path forward to have students and employees back on campus in the fall semester, even if it looks different than what it has in the past.

- 2. Navigating State Budget Challenges** – It is no secret that Wyoming is facing significant revenue challenges. These are a result of the current COVID-19 pandemic and also continued pressure on the cornerstones of the state’s economy: Coal, Natural Gas, and Oil. We have already been directed to plan for reductions in State funding, ranging from 10 to 30 percent. Even at the lowest ends, this level of budget cut will severely impact LCCC, our people, and our offerings. Proactively tackling this challenge will ensure we command the trajectory of our future, but it will be difficult.
- 3. Finalize Capital Construction** – As we push near a decade of physical transformation at LCCC, I hope to bring the majority of our capital construction projects to a close. This would include the successful completion and opening of the new Residence Hall, as well as moving our Recreation and Athletics Complex (RAC) from dream, to funding, final design, and construction. Smaller efforts, such as our continued rehabilitation of existing building facades will also be a focus, pending release of State major maintenance funding.
- 4. Strategic and Campus Master Planning** – This fall, even amidst the challenges we face with a global pandemic, we will celebrate the completion of our current LCCC strategic plan, as well as plan to launch our next one. In addition, per statute and rule, we are required to conduct and produce an updated campus master plan. Having both of these, as well as our strategic academic programming plan, launch of Guided Pathways, and conducting strategic enrollment management planning, all occur in concert would be complex, but also advantageous. This goal will be to have a completed strategic and campus master plan by the end of the academic year.
- 5. Implementation of New Program Planning** – My hope is to complete the strategic programming plan by late summer of 2020. This plan should guide some purposeful efforts to launch new programs that will be essential to the College’s, as well as our communities’, economic futures. Part of this will be a year-long effort with our Albany County Campus, as we help focus its purpose and future, and part will be to help drive Laramie County’s economic development, diversification, and recovery.

I sincerely thank you again for the opportunity to lead Laramie County Community College and to work with such a fine group of trustees, executive leaders, faculty, staff, and students. I will continue to provide my utmost effort towards the progress and ultimate achievement of our mission, our strategic plan, and the goals set for me in the coming year. I look forward to yet another successful year at LCCC in FY21.