



**LARAMIE COUNTY
COMMUNITY COLLEGE**
Cheyenne ♦ Laramie ♦ Pine Bluffs

MEMORANDUM

TO: Members of the Board of Trustees

FROM: Dr. Joe Schaffer, President

DATE: June 2, 2017

SUBJECT: Recommendation for Authorization to Expend Unanticipated Perkins Funds

Each year LCCC receives Federal Perkins funds through the State of Wyoming. The amount allocated is based upon a formula that includes enrollment in CTE (Career and Technical Education) programs by students who are Pell recipients. In July 2016, LCCC received \$211,341 for the 2016-2017 academic year. By regulation, LCCC must expend these funds for modernization and improvement of eligible CTE programming, and every five years LCCC creates a plan that rotates through all eligible CTE programs. Although a variety of expenses are allowable, traditionally LCCC has spent the majority of Perkins funds on equipment (which can be very expensive in these programs).

In the fall of 2016, Wyoming Department of Education (WyED) underwent a federal audit and as a result revised the allocation formula. Some community colleges lost allocation, LCCC gained allocation. Thus, in April LCCC received an additional \$145,039, which needed to be expended before June 30th. Since that time we have continued expending the original allocation and have been identifying additional needs, verifying eligibility and allow-ability, and purchasing necessary equipment and supplies. To date we have expended or issued purchase orders (POs) for all but approximately \$120,000 of the Perkins funds (from both the initial and additional allocations totaling approximately \$356,000).

So far no purchase has reached the Board-approval threshold. However, we have three items remaining on the needs list that may require Board approval.

- 1) Steam Sterilization Unit. The base price for a foundational unit for this type of equipment is approximately \$37,000. However, we are looking at the more robust mid-range models (with greater longevity) and additional options that may take the total purchase to the threshold.

This purchase would be to modernize the existing sterilization unit to maximize effective use of a student's classroom time and expose students to industry standard equipment.

- 2) Confocal/Fluorescence Microscope. The Fluorescence only microscope is approximately \$64,000. Again, we are considering a more mid-to-upper range model as this would greatly enhance the student learning environment and allow our student researchers to build a résumé that demonstrates higher-level experience and skills. Currently, the company has a promotional price on a much higher end model Confocal microscope with fluorescence capability for almost \$120,000; we are close to having this much funding still available within the remaining Perkins funds this year. If not, we may be able to secure the pricing for next year's funds.

Fluorescence microscopy allows for tagging of specific parts of a cell with a unique chemical, allowing them to fluoresce when exposed to light, allowing visualization of DNA, cytoskeleton, and other structures that are difficult if not impossible to observe otherwise.

Training on this instrument is not a typical experience for an undergraduate student, let alone at a community college student. This will be something that students will be able to put on their résumé as a unique sellable skill going forward in their career and will make LCCC one of the only community colleges in the country to train students on this instrumentation. Further, in combination with our electron microscope, we are likely the only community college in the country to have both, which would be a “game-changer” for our students.

- 3) Reverse Transcriptase Quantitative Polymerase Chain Reaction (RT-qPCR). The basic model is approximately \$39,000. Again, with additional options and a high-end computer to support the system, this may reach the approval threshold.

This is a cutting edge technique that is used to examine which genes are being expressed in an organism at a given time or under specific circumstances. The same instrumentation can also give a “real time” look at which DNA is present in a sample. This is used today in medical applications such as examination of cancer cells or detection of specific viruses or bacteria during an infection.

Training and use of this technique will be implemented into the Medical Microbiology class starting in fall 2017 to give the students in that class, most of which are going into healthcare, exposure and practice on this highly technical, yet essential molecular component of modern medicine. (Just as a current events’ reference, this technique was used to diagnose those infected with Ebola during the 2014-16 outbreak.)

We are currently seeking final quotes to determine best options within available funds. We plan on spending the full amount available (otherwise the funds revert to the State) and have some eligible CTE program supplies that can be purchased from any small remaining balance. As noted, we may move the microscope purchase into next year (if the special pricing would still be available), and the other two items may not reach threshold. However, we are making a request that this topic be put on the agenda should approval be required.

Staff Recommendation: That the Board of Trustees approves the expenditure of up to \$120,000 in remaining FY17 Perkins Grant Funds for items as proposed in the memorandum that may exceed the spending authority threshold of \$60,000.

Respectfully,

Terry Harper, Interim Vice-President for Academic Affairs
 Ami Wangeline, Interim Dean, School of Math and Sciences
 Victoria Steel, Director, Sponsored Awards and Compliance