ACCREDITATION PROGRESS REPORT

March 15, 2006

West Hills College Coalinga
300 Cherry Lane
Coalinga, CA 93210

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STATEMENT ON REPORT PREPARATION

Date: March 15, 2006

TO: Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior College,
            Western Association of Schools and Colleges

FROM: West Hills College Coalinga
            300 Cherry Lane
            Coalinga, CA 93210

This document functions as the required Progress Report due on March 15, 2006 and demonstrates that the college meets **Eligibility Requirement 17 and 20**. It also responds to **Recommendations 2, 3, 5, and 6** as stated in the June 26, 2005 letter. The college has chosen to address **Eligibility Requirement 20** in our response to **Recommendation 3** and **Eligibility Requirement 17** in our response to **Recommendation 5**.

Signed:

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Dr. Frank Gornick   Chancellor, West Hills Community College District

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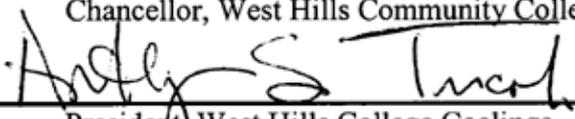
Dr. Anthony S. Tricoli   President, West Hills College Coalinga

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Mark McKean   President, WHCCD Board of Trustees

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Anita Bart   President, WHCC Academic Senate

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Faye Mendenhall   President, WHC Faculty Association

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Laura Ames   President, CSEA, Chapter 429

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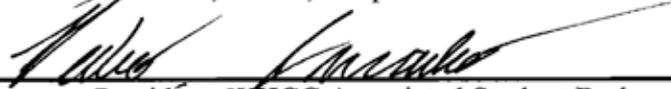
Pedro Jurado   President, WHCC Associated Student Body

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Carlos Diniz   WHCC Accreditation Liaison Officer

RESPONSE TO THE REQUEST OF THE COMMISSION IN THE ACTION LETTER

In 2007 the College will be celebrating its 75th year of service to students. During these past 75 years, the communities on the west side of California's Central Valley have worked hand in hand with West Hills College Coalinga to build educational opportunities for a citizenry who reside in a geographical location that has been described in many articles as "California's Appalachia." While the institution and the service population may be small and economically depressed when compared to other multi-college districts in the California Community College system, the college has made immense positive economic development impacts for the people of the region.

When the accreditation team visited the college on March 17, 2005, they shared a number of accolades and highlighted several strengths of the college. These included:

- its professionalism and resilience during a time of significant structural changes (note: this comment was made in reference to the transition the colleges and the district are currently undergoing in its move from a single to a multi-college operation).
- its leadership in conducting broad-based community dialogues on the mission and the vision of the college. (note: the new mission statement addresses the broad scope of services provided to students by the college and clearly articulates the purpose of the institution).
- its obviously strong linkages with community groups in its service area. Community leaders expressed strong confidence in, and support of, the college, and indicated that they view the institution as an indispensable asset to the economic development and cultural life of the community.
- its outreach, instruction, and services to outlying communities, especially the North District Center it has established in Firebaugh.
- its support services staff including maintenance, custodial, grounds, and the technology services staff for the professional pride and excellence they exhibit, as evidenced by the attractive physical condition of the college.
- its efforts to establish and implement an effective program review process that is highly collaborative and collegial.
- its successful efforts to obtain grants to meet the needs of students and the community, most recently the Carnegie Grant to continue its innovative learning communities program.

In addition to the preceding accolades, the Accrediting Commission identified a total of six recommendations; four of which are to be addressed in this March 15, 2006 **Progress Report**:

THE RECOMMENDATIONS:
In response to the following Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges recommendations, West Hills College Coalinga has taken the following actions:

Recommendation 2 -
The team recommends that the college identify those academic programs that it is no
longer offering due to a lack of resources, and either develop the resources needed to
provide the programs or remove them from the college catalog and other college sources
of information provided to potential students (Standard II.A.1).

Subcommittee members: Carlos Diniz, Sandy McGlothlin, Scott Sutherland, Brandy Wilds
Assisted by district staff: Pedro Avila, Maria Lourenco, Frances Squire

The Chief Instructional Officer and Academic Senate President communicated with the faculty to solicit their assistance in the review of course offerings. A team was formed (Standard II.A.1 self study team members) to review each course offered by the college. The findings of the team resulted in a list of courses and programs which were recommended for inactivation or deletion.

The administration and faculty (Academic Senate) were in agreement with the course inactivations presented by the subcommittee. The Chief Instructional Officer emphasized that moving a course to inactive status affords the opportunity to easily reactivate the course in the event resources become available at a later date as opposed to deleting the course altogether. The Chief Instructional Officer also discussed for consideration two possible course deletions and two possible program deletions with faculty members in those instructional areas based upon low or non-existent enrollment, and the faculty was in agreement with moving forward with those particular deletions. These course inactivations and deletions were approved at the May 13, 2005, Curriculum Committee meeting (Exhibit 2.1).

On June 28, 2005, the West Hills Community College District (WHCCD) Board of Trustees approved 52 course inactivations, two course deletions, and two program deletions (Exhibit 2.2).

On August 19, 2005, at the college-wide accreditation review meeting, a subcommittee was formed to address the remaining issues in Recommendation 2; in particular to complete the process of inactivating courses not offered in recent history. This subcommittee was composed of two faculty members, one counselor, and one administrator.

On September 7, 2005, the interim Chief Instructional Officer for Coalinga sent via email, a copy of the first inactivation list to all faculty, counselors and administrators providing a reminder of the list presented at the May 13, 2005, Curriculum Committee meeting and approved at the June 28, 2005, Board meeting (Exhibit 2.3). That email also requested faculty's participation in the process of identifying any additional courses from the catalog which might be considered for inactivation.

On October 5, 2005, the subcommittee met to review the first inactivation list, consider input from the participatory groups, and identify any additional courses in the catalog that would meet the criteria for inactivation.

Upon consideration of input from the faculty, catalog review, and discussion regarding resources and staffing, the committee recommended a second list of 27 additional courses be submitted to the Curriculum Committee for inactivation. This process began with the interim Chief Instructional Officer sending the second list of courses to all faculty, counselors, and administrators for review. The

faculty requested that two courses be removed from this list due to coming changes in the college's vocational certificate/AA degree programs. The President and interim Chief Instructional Officer committed to support the offering of these courses as additional resources and staffing becomes available (Exhibit 2.4).

The second inactivation list was then submitted to the Instructional Services Council for review and then forwarded to the Curriculum Committee for approval at the December 2, 2005, meeting (Exhibit 2.5).

On January 24, 2006, the WHCCD Board of Trustees approved the second list of courses submitted for inactivation. These courses have been removed from the online and printed catalog (Exhibit 2.6).

Recommendation 3 and Eligibility Requirement 20 -
The team recommends that the college complete an assessment of the accessibility of its online services – especially initial application to the college and availability of the college catalog and schedule of classes – in view of the varying levels of computer literacy and availability of computer resources within the service communities of the college (Standard II.B.3.e).

Subcommittee Members: Marlese Roton, Jill Stearns, Brandy Wilds, Kevin Wilds
Assisted by district staff: Pedro Avila, Darlene Georgatos, Frances Squire

On September 1, 2005, in response to this recommendation a subcommittee was formed (Exhibit 3.1). The President of the college charged that subcommittee with developing a survey instrument which would measure accessibility of our online services (Exhibit 3.2). The Director of Institutional Effectiveness, Planning and Web Services, aided the process by recommending a timeline with benchmarks for development and delivery of a survey instrument. This action ensured completion within the prescribed timeframe. The Director of Institutional Effectiveness, Planning and Web Services also researched several marketing and research firms which have experience in conducting surveys for institutions of higher education and shared this information with the subcommittee (Exhibit 3.3).

The subcommittee developed a draft of nine survey questions (Exhibit 3.4). The subcommittee used email to develop, amass and distribute the question drafts (Exhibit 3.5). Recommendations were approved by the subcommittee, and then submitted to Media Specialists, the professional consulting corporation which was selected to complete the survey.

Media Specialists conducted the survey from October 7-18, 2005. The final survey results and executive analysis provided a snapshot of the district constituents through the lens of technology (Exhibit 3.6). In an effort to increase the applicability of the survey results, the Director of Institutional Effectiveness, Planning and Web Services organized the survey results by communities served by the West Hills Community College District (Exhibit 3.7). Review of the results by city provided useful nuggets of information. The question, "Do you have a computer at home with access to the Internet?" brought very similar results in Coalinga 71% yes and Lemoore 75% yes; however, the smaller cities had a far lower percentage ranging from 23% in Huron to 49% in Avenal (Exhibit 3.8). When asked if they prefer completing an application online or using a paper form, only the respondents from Lemoore had a preference for online that exceeded 50% (Exhibit 3.9).

The survey results support the use of an online system and a paper application for admission, course schedule, and catalog to best meet the needs and desires of the entire community. It was determined that our service to students can be greatly enhanced by implementing both online and hard copy versions of our class schedule, catalog, and application for admission.

Parallel to the development of the survey to assess the accessibility of our online services, the college initiated the process to provide the class schedule (Exhibit 3.10), catalog (Exhibit 3.11), and application for admission in print form (Exhibit 3.12). This process included research of the practices of the central fourteen community colleges in order to determine the availability of their class schedule, catalog, and application for admission. The subcommittee visited each college's website for the information and made phone contact with those schools that did not make the information available on their college websites. It was found that each college makes their class schedule and catalog available in print format for purchase in their college bookstore. Each of the colleges surveyed have the publications available online at no charge.

The West Hills College Coalinga President established consensus with faculty, administration, and staff that an appropriate first step in correcting any perceived accessibility issues is to make alternate formats of the schedule, catalog, and application for admission available immediately (Exhibit 3.13). The President of West Hills College Coalinga brought to the Chancellor's Executive Cabinet the request to create and distribute print versions of the catalog, class schedule, and application for admission. The interim Chief Instructional Officer for Coalinga collaborated with his peer in Lemoore and the District Director of Marketing in determining the desired format for the publications and the methods of distribution to be implemented (Exhibit 3.14).

The spring schedule of classes was delivered in Coalinga, Avenal, San Joaquin, Tranquillity, Mendota, Firebaugh, and Huron (Exhibit 3.15). The catalog was delivered to the printer and was available for distribution during the first week of February 2006. The process of developing a print format catalog has afforded the opportunity for detailed scrutiny of the catalog layout, content, and usability. The resultant product is much more user friendly and more closely aligned with our college mission and goals. Included in the documentation are samples of the catalog (Exhibit 3.16), class schedule (Exhibit 3.17), and application for admission (Exhibit 3.18).

Recommendation 5 and Eligibility Requirement 17 -
The team recommends that the Board of Trustees and the chancellor, in consultation with the leadership of the college campuses, develop a transparent process for resolving some of the remaining significant issues raised by the decision to become a multi-college district; namely:

Subcommittee members: Linda Amaya-Guenon, Faye Mendenhall, Larry Rathbun, Sarah Shepard
Assisted by district staff: Donna Isaac, Susan Kincade, Ken Stoppenbrink

5.1 -
The clarification and delineation, in both policy and practice, of the roles and responsibilities of the chancellor and the college president in decision-making which directly affects college operations (Standard IV.B.3 and IV.B.3.g).

West Hills Community College District has developed key policy statements and revised existing job descriptions in response to the Evaluation Report of the Accreditation Team.

On October 25, 2005, the WHCCD Board of Trustees completed a first reading of proposed Board Policy 2431 - Delineation of Authority to College Presidents and District Chancellor (Exhibit 5.1.1). While in draft form, this policy was circulated through each college's Academic Senate and internal governance councils, ensuring input from all constituents. The Chancellor's Executive Cabinet was responsible for integrating the various contributions and presenting one proposal to the WHCCD Board of Trustees and on November 15, 2005, the new policy was approved unanimously (Exhibit 5.1.2).

College and district staff reviewed and discussed the job descriptions for the Chancellor and the college Presidents (Exhibit 5.1.3, 5.1.4). Based upon the reviews and discussion the descriptions were further revised by the Director of Human Resources to reflect the multi-college dynamics of the district and now include "Duties and Responsibilities" and "Examples of Essential Duties" (Exhibit 5.1.5, 5.1.6). The revisions were adopted by the WHCCD Board of Trustees on December 6, 2005 (Exhibit 5.1.7).

5.2 -
The development and implementation of an appropriate and clearly communicated process for allocating faculty and staff positions between the college campuses (Standard III.A.2, Standard IV.B.3.c).

As recommended in the Evaluation Report and Planning Agendas, West Hills Community College District has carried out the planning and implementation process with respect to faculty and staff allocations. Each college is responsible for determining their individual staffing needs. West Hills College Coalinga has developed a process that incorporates recommendations from the Academic Senate, the Dean of Student Learning, and the Instructional Services Council. Recommendations are derived primarily from program reviews, which incorporate several key measures including FTE, FTES, productivity, and research data. Based on these inputs, the President prioritizes a final list in concert with the Deans (Exhibit 5.2.1).

Funds are allocated according to the Resource Allocation Model (Exhibit 5.2.2). The college Presidents then work together to identify which, if any, positions can be shared between the two colleges. One final, collaborative, prioritized list is then presented to the Chancellor at the Chancellor's Executive Cabinet for consideration (Exhibit 5.2.3).

5.3 -
The development and implementation of a clearly communicated process for regularly reviewing the appropriateness of the assignment of various functions and staff to the district office or to the college campuses (Standard IV.B.3.a and IV.B.3.g).

West Hills Community College District has implemented a program review process for district functions in order to clarify and delineate the appropriateness and assignment of such functions. The process provides a method for evaluating service to the colleges (with a focus on continuous

improvement), as well as assignment of function at the district or college level. The addition of this process was met with approval and support from college and district leadership.

Through the college consultation process, the WHCCD Board of Trustees adopted a program review process and template for district operations and services. College and district staff, faculty, and administration agreed to a schedule for district office department program review (Exhibit 5.3.1). The Library/Learning Resources, Information Technology Services, Grants, and Child Development departments are scheduled for review this year. The Office of Institutional Effectiveness, Planning and Web Services has been instrumental in assisting the district departments with the new procedures including the development of a comprehensive and thorough non-academic district department program review template (Exhibit 5.3.2). The review provides evaluation of the department's purpose and services through supporting data, assesses institutional support, and specifies the communication process for the review results. All West Hills College District organizational charts were updated to show dotted-line reporting of the district leadership staff to the college President (Exhibit 5.3.3).

As a result of the Strategic Planning retreat the Presidents and Chancellor asked the Director of Institutional Effectiveness, Planning and Web Services to assist the colleges in updating the district Mapping document. This review also aided in clarifying the functions which are centralized at the district office in contrast to those which are decentralized at the college.

During January 2006, the college Presidents and district Chancellor shared the Function Mapping document with faculty, students, staff, and the WHCCD Board of Trustees (Exhibit 5.3.4).

Also, at the request of the Chancellor and Presidents, the Accrediting Commission has agreed to visit the West Hills Community College District Office to focus part of their review on district functions. The review will include visits by professional staff that have responsibility in the district office for functions across the multi-college setting.

5.4 -
The development and implementation of an appropriate and clearly communicated process for distributing fiscal resources among the college campuses and the district office (Standard IV.B.3.c).

On August 23, 2005, in a collaborative effort across the district the West Hills Community College District developed a process for distributing fiscal resources among the college campuses and the district office. The proposal was distributed through each college's governance process where constituents were asked to provide their input (Exhibit 5.4.1, 5.4.2, 5.4.3). The process resulted in recommendations from Coalinga's Academic Senate, Coalinga's College Consultation Council, and Lemoore's Planning and Governance Council, which were presented to the Board of Trustees on October 25, 2005, for a first reading (Exhibit 5.4.4). The Chancellor's Executive Cabinet then incorporated the various contributions and presented one final proposal to the Board of Trustees on November 15, 2005 (Exhibit 5.4.5). The WHCCD Board of Trustees approved the Administrative Procedure 6225 – Resource Allocation as presented.

5.5 -
The development and implementation of a formal and regularly evaluated district strategic planning process that both acknowledges input from the college campuses and serves as a guide for the strategic planning at the college level (Standard 1.B.3 and Standard IV.B.3.g).

One of the first steps in addressing Recommendation Five of the Accreditation Review Team for the West Hills Community College District was to convene a two day Strategic Planning Retreat on September 8 and 9, 2005. Participants included administrators, faculty, staff, and WHCCD Board of Trustee members (39 total participants). At this planning retreat the team drafted a revised mission and vision statement, and drafted three flow charts to visually illustrate the district decision-making planning process (Exhibit 5.5.1).

On October 21, 2005, the Strategic Planning Group met again for review of the Strategic Plan. The draft document was sent to community members, the WHCCD Board of Trustees, and both colleges for review and additional input (Exhibit 5.5.2).

On October 25, 2005, the WHCCD Board of Trustees reviewed and discussed the draft strategic planning document. The next steps were determined to be:

- A standing District Strategic Planning Committee will be established. The standing committee shall meet a minimum of three times each year (Exhibit 5.5.3). The standing committee is scheduled to meet in February, March, and April of 2006;
- The district goals and college goals will be reviewed to ensure that the district goals serve as a guide for strategic planning at each college.

As recommended by the Accrediting Commission, the development of a formal district strategic planning process that both acknowledges input from the college campuses, and serves as a guide for the strategic planning at the college level is in place.

Recommendation 6 -
The team recommends that the Board of Trustees, the chancellor, and the college president work together to address the concern, identified in the self study and validated through the numerous team interviews, that a significant portion of the campus community is unclear regarding the reasoning behind decisions made by the Board and the Chancellor's Cabinet that affect programming, staffing, and resources at the college level. Participation by each of the three parties in an appropriate training program may prove beneficial (Standard IV.B.3.f).

Subcommittee Members: Anita Bart, Anthony Tricoli
Assisted by district staff: Donna Isaac, Ken Stoppenbrink

The decision-making process from the college through the college President to the district Chancellor and the WHCCD Board of Trustees are as follows:

The decision-making process at the college level begins with faculty generated recommendations through the standing college councils to the college President (Exhibit 6.1, 6.2).

The standing college councils include: Student Services Council, Instructional Services Council, Facilities Development Council, Learning Resource Council, Curriculum, Academic Senate, College Consultation Council, and President's Council (Exhibit 6.3). The recommendations from the faculty go to the learning area representative on these councils. The recommendations are discussed and voted on in the councils. The decisions from the individual councils are then taken to the College Consultation Council (Exhibit 6.4). In the case of the Academic Senate, decisions which require district level approval go directly to the WHCCD Board of Trustees (Exhibit 6.5), District Council on Student Learning, and the District Leadership Council.

From the standing general college councils, recommendations go to the President's Council (Exhibit 6.6). The final decisions from the college level are taken by the President to the District Council on Student Learning (Exhibit 6.7), the District Leadership Council (Exhibit 6.8), and the Chancellor's Executive Cabinet (Exhibit 6.9). If the decision being made is stipulated in board policy (such as the funding allocations or faculty and staff allocations) then the members of the Chancellor's Executive Cabinet consult and follow the guidelines of the policy (Exhibit 6.10).

District level recommendations are presented to college faculty and staff by the President to the President's Council to the standing college council. The inclusive decision-making processes at the college, and district level welcome and encourage input from all constituents.

Decisions and recommendations from the Chancellor's Executive Cabinet are taken to the WHCCD Board of Trustees by the Chancellor.

At the monthly meeting of the WHCCD Board of Trustees, the college Academic Senate Presidents, the CTA President, the CSEA President, the ASB President and the college Presidents bring forth decisions and recommendations from the colleges (Exhibit 6.11). The agendized recommendations are discussed and voted on by the members of the WHCCD Board of Trustees. The results of the WHCCD Board of Trustee meetings are then communicated back to the college through the college President, the Academic Senate President, the CTA and CSEA Presidents to the councils and then from the representatives to the faculty, students and staff (Exhibit 6.12).

On July 10-14, 2005, as part of meeting this particular recommendation the Presidents of West Hills College Coalinga and West Hills College Lemoore attended the AACC Presidents Academy Summer Institute training. The training included workshops focused on communication, staff relations, leadership, resource development, and management (Exhibit 6.13).

On December 6, 2005, the WHCCD Board of Trustees, Chancellor, college Presidents, and many faculty and staff attended a Communications Training Workshop at the West Hills Community College District Office led by Dr. Bob Jensen (Exhibit 6.14). The topics covered during the workshop included communications between the WHCCD Board of Trustees and Chancellor with the colleges, the colleges with the district office, and the dissemination of information between the colleges and the district office (Exhibit 6.15). Prior to the leadership training, Dr. Jensen requested information from all college and district office employees on the topic of communication between the colleges and the district. This was accomplished through a survey instrument, interviews with WHCCD Board of Trustee members, and at open forums on both colleges and at the district office. Dr. Jensen used the information gleaned in this process to develop communication training appropriate for the needs of our

college and district. The training was focused on the responsibilities of the college and district leadership in decision-making, communications, and dissemination of information between the WHCCD Board of Trustees, Chancellor, Presidents, colleges, and the district office (Exhibit 6.16).

In an effort to further strengthen communications between the district and colleges, a District Strategic Planning workshop was conducted. On September 8-9, 2005, representatives from each college, the district office, Chancellor and WHCCD Board of Trustees attended a retreat with the goal of creating a district strategic plan (Exhibit 6.17). The WHCCD Board of Trustees also approved Board Policy and Administrative Procedure 3250 – District Strategic Planning on December 6, 2005, which allows for the creation of a standing District Strategic Planning Committee. The standing District Strategic Planning Committee will meet regularly and as needed to maintain a current strategic plan for the West Hills Community College District. The standing District Strategic Planning Committee will continue a collaborative process of decision-making for the West Hills Community College District (Exhibit 6.18).

As part of the follow-up procedure, and to support our continuation of communications between the colleges and the district, Dr. Jensen returned on January 13, 2006, to address all college employees in a district-wide meeting.

Additionally, the Accreditation Commission agreed to visit the West Hills Community College District Office to review the district functions. This visit is scheduled to occur the day prior to the on-site visit of the West Hills College Lemoore, and will include a team of professional staff who carry multi-college district level responsibility at colleges throughout the State.

CONCLUSION: The process of completing the activities described in this report strengthened collaboration between college and district staff in the attainment of common goals. The many meetings, workshops, and study sessions brought about the successful development and implementation of new policies and procedures which formally institutionalize the practices of our multi-college district. Communication across the colleges and district was strengthened through the collaborative process of the development of Accreditation Progress Report.

We are pleased to acknowledge that the college has met and exceeded each recommendation. The following formalized items are now in place:

- An updated and accessible hard copy class schedule
- An updated and accessible hard copy catalog
- An updated and accessible hard copy application for admission
- Policy and Procedures that define decision-making and the roles of key leadership
- A clearly communicated process for allocating faculty and staff positions
- A Program Review Process at the District Office level which includes college input
- A Resource Allocation Model
- A District Strategic Plan and standing committee responsible for regular review

As we look forward, our plan is to continue the open dialog with our sister college and the district office and to follow-up annually as we continue refining our processes. Our service to students is

enhanced by the opportunity to sharpen our focus and efforts with an eye on improving student success.