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**PLANNING
ASSISTANCE**

DRAFT

FOR

**PERALTA
COMMUNITY
COLLEGE
DISTRICT**

**FINDINGS
AND
CONCLUSIONS**

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PLANNING ASSISTANCE FOR PCCD FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

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PLANNING ASSISTANCE FOR PCCD FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

INTRODUCTION

This paper on *Findings and Conclusions* is one of several papers from a project designed to help Peralta Community College District (PCCD) conduct its long-range strategic planning.

Work on this project began in January 2007, and has included, among other activities:

- Project design by the contractor (Chuck McIntyre), as modified by PCCD staff
- Extensive meetings with PCCD staff on project intent, methods, and findings
- Focus groups with individuals from communities in the PCCD service area
- Focus groups with students, faculty and staff from PCCD college campuses
- Information and data gathering and analysis by the contractor from a variety of sources inside and outside PCCD
- Review of findings, implications and proposed strategies with the PCCD Board of Trustees and staff in various meetings of the Strategic Management Team (SMT), District-Wide Educational Master Planning Committee (DWEMPC), and other groups.

From this work, project papers written by the contractor for PCCD include:

- *External Scan*: of external conditions and the educational needs of PCCD's students and communities
- *Internal Scan*: of conditions internal to PCCD; how well it is meeting the educational needs, given its mission and goals
- *Findings and Conclusions* for PCCD colleges resulting from the above work
- *Scenarios and Simulations*: of the enrollment implications of future scenarios

In a closely related project, the Contractor is working from the scenarios and simulations above to develop and write papers to help PCCD staff link facilities planning to educational planning – in collaboration with staff and with outside facilities master planners WLC Architects, Inc. of Emeryville and Maas Companies, Inc.

BACKGROUND

Peralta Community College District (PCCD) is one of 72 public community colleges districts in California and serves the six communities of Albany, Alameda, Berkeley, Emeryville, Oakland and Piedmont in the East Bay Area County of Alameda (Chart A).

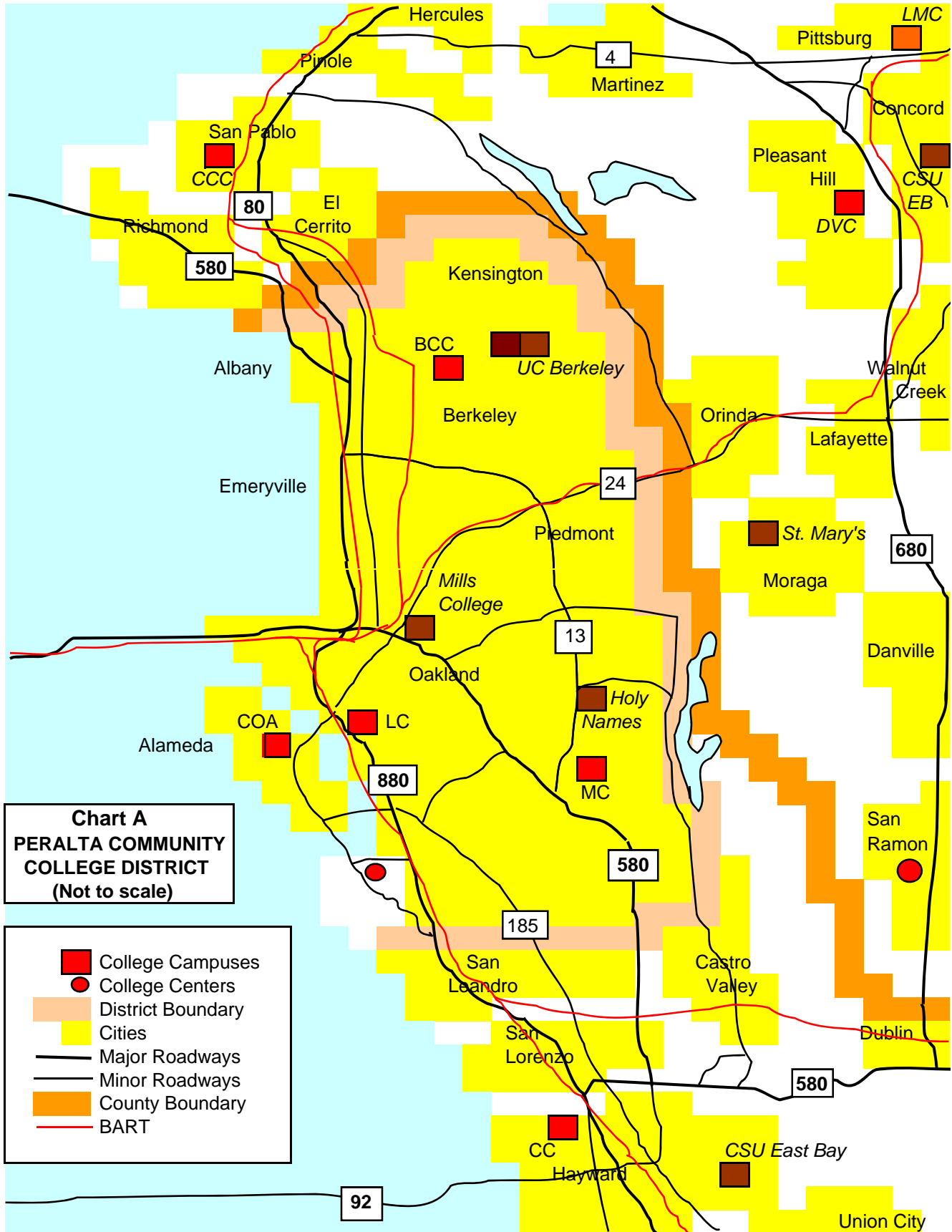


Chart A
PERALTA COMMUNITY
COLLEGE DISTRICT
 (Not to scale)

- College Campuses
- College Centers
- District Boundary
- Cities
- Major Roadways
- Minor Roadways
- County Boundary
- BART

The district supports four colleges: Laney, Merritt, Alameda and Berkeley, and a variety of centers and sites throughout its service area.

This comprehensive PCCD system, delivering less-than-baccalaureate transfer, occupational and community education, currently enrolls over 30,000 students at any given time that are highly diverse and need education that ranges all the way from pre-collegiate basic skills classes to English as a second language (ESL) to lower division general education to highly-skilled job retraining. PCCD's mission statement also includes a role for it in the economic development of the East Bay Area.

After extensive strategic planning, PCCD's Board of Trustees adopted in 2007 a District-Wide Strategic Plan with goals to: (1) advance student access and success, (2) engage area communities and partners, (3) build programs of distinction, (4) create a culture of innovation and collaboration, and (5) ensure financial health. Work here and elsewhere in this project uses these goals as a benchmark for analysis.

While growing modestly – at just over half the rate for the state as a whole – PCCD's service area communities are quite diverse, culturally and economically, and like many other mature urban areas, will experience the beginning of substantial retirements of "baby boomers" and the likely leveling or downturn in the number of local high school graduates by the end of this decade. These trends and PCCD's recent history confront the district with complex challenges and questions:

- How will the East Bay Area evolve and, as a consequence, how should PCCD evolve?
- How should the curriculum evolve, where should it be located and how delivered: on-campus, face-to-face; partnerships; distance learning; and in what kinds of class and out-of-class facilities?
- How can PCCD maintain robust basic skills instruction and an effective lower division, general education, transfer core, while augmenting its workforce preparation and contract training? In what specific skill areas ought the latter functions be expanded so as to meet the labor market needs of the East Bay.
- How should PCCD be organized: as a four-college district (as at present), four-campus college, or in some other way? What delivery modes and organization and staffing changes will maximize the district's access and program quality?
- What kinds of enrollment management strategies will enable PCCD to fulfill its mission, and meet its goals and objectives? What strategies best support the priorities of fiscal stability and sustainability?
- To what degree should the colleges make their market penetration (access) "more consistent" across their different service area communities and specific clientele "niches," and increase overall area access?

The *External and Internal Scans* have developed and analyzed evidence that addresses the above questions, but more than that, assists PCCD staff in their efforts to develop a District-wide *Educational Master Plan* that, in conjunction with similar plans by each of the four colleges, will enable the PCCD Board and staff to address the difficult challenges facing the district. Findings and conclusions in this paper draw from the *Scans*, including quantitative empirical evidence and qualitative input from meetings and focus groups with PCCD faculty, staff, and area community members. This paper also addresses the need to plan for more than one possible future in the work on scenarios.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE EXTERNAL SCAN

The purpose of the *external scan* is to help address the above questions by describing the environment external to PCCD, and covers events, trends and likely futures relevant to PCCD planning – mostly, but not entirely, within the district’s service area, the northwest Peralta County and the East Bay Area – for the following categories:

- Demographics
- Culture and Infrastructure
- Technology
- Economics and Jobs
- Public Policy
- Educational Policy, Practice, and Trends

PCCD’s SERVICE AREA, ranging from the bay-shore to hilltop, and from Albany on the north to San Leandro on the south, contains many competitors, few major roads, and difficult transportation despite public options like BART (see again Chart A).

Estimated *demographic trends* in PCCD’s several part service area provide PCCD with a picture of its potential student enrollment – markets or niches. The actual future enrollment of those students depends as well on PCCD policies and strategies. Findings and their implications include:

MODERATE AREA GROWTH CONTINUES, shifting to the northern part of district: suggesting new district *off-campus community centers* in that area as well as others.

MORE DIVERSE POPULATIONS, foreign immigrants are ½ of area growth: suggesting the need for continued, robust *ESL programs*, possibly with a *non-credit* component.

AN AGING POPULATION, WITH LOWER NUMBERS OF HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES: suggests earlier PCCD *intervention into K-12* to sustain transfer credit programs and marketing to new 55+ niches, through *non-credit, community and contract education*.

HIGHER HIGH SCHOOL DROP-OUT RATES, BUT ALSO HIGHER INTEREST AND PREPARATION OF GRADS: suggests the need for *urgent K-12 early intervention* with academic and career counseling as well as instruction.

STUDENTS ARE CHANGING, becoming more IT/Media conversant, but with less time for study, greater need for study and time management skills, and more diverse learning styles (as they become more culturally diverse): suggesting more work on *basic skills* and *staff development* oriented to student needs and learning styles - *proactive* and in “communities” or *groups* – with more *technology* and in flexible *facilities*.

The East Bay’s *aging infrastructure and changing culture* impact what and how PCCD colleges educate students. Significant changes in values, lifestyles, family formation, language, and other factors affecting the quality of life – transportation time, air and water quality, energy, child care and the like – can be expected as PCCD’s service area region grows rapidly and as local communities become far more multi-cultural.

EAST BAY AREA TRANSPORTATION WORSENS, despite BART and other options, representing the student’s greatest single direct cost: suggesting PCCD can reduce student costs by course *scheduling* (fewer, longer), *distance education* (largely online hybrids), and more *sites* for courses.

Economic cycles and consequent job formation are important to PCCD planning because:

- as the PCCD area economy improves (declines) and individuals in the labor market go to work (need retraining), *PCCD enrollment* falls (rises), other things being equal.
- development of the regional PCCD area economy dictates labor market needs and the kinds of available jobs, which in turn suggest *PCCD curriculum* change.
- as California’s economy improves (declines), state general and local property taxes and *PCCD’s funding* rise (falls), impacting the college’s ability to deliver programs and services.

PCCD HAS A MAJOR ROLE IN AREA DEVELOPMENT, *responding* to area labor market needs, *training* for emerging sectors, and *marketing* to area niches with low college-going rates.

PCCD CAN TRAIN FOR MOST AREA JOBS, including *transfer programs* for managers, accountants, teachers, software engineers; and *workforce preparation* of RNs, 1st Line Supervisors, carpenters, green technologists, logistics (supply-chain and distribution managers, truckers), teacher aids, customer service reps, home health aids, wholesalers, and other career skills high area demand.

RECENT ECONOMIC GROWTH resulted in ample budgets and lower student fees, leading to increased PCCD enrollments: suggesting that *future PCCD enrollments* will depend in large part on the economy, Prop.98 funding, student costs, and PCCD budgets – subject to changes in PCCD’s funding .

STATE’S ECONOMY IS TURNING DOWN (AGAIN/ALREADY), with the State General Fund (SGF) deficit up (its level tripled in recent months), P98 funds likely down, fees possibly up (?) even as enrollment demand increases: suggesting that PCCD examine *several future scenarios* and plan for budget contingencies, with greater long-term utilization of *alternative revenue sources* and *differential pricing*, investing more in *community and contract education*, and *partnering* with business and non-profits – NGOs, agencies and the like.

PCCD’S OPERATING BUDGETS, with outlays per FTES historically above the CACCD average and balances once below, are now closer to the average (Chart N) and below average for a *district with small colleges*, suggesting arguably higher (by 7%) PCCD operating support.

THE FEDERAL DEFICIT CONTINUES: suggesting *modest changes to federal programs* like the Workforce Investment Act (WIA), Perkins Act occupation education and Higher Education Act – from which PCCD has gotten less-than (California community college)-average support. Pell financial aid grants will continue to lag changes in PCCD’s college-going costs.

MANY, INCREASING COMPETITORS IN THE EAST BAY: suggesting PCCD must become more competitive with *high demand disciplines*, lower-cost delivery largely through *more online instruction*, and a *more collegial climate* on the four campuses.

ADOPTION OF “LEARNING COLLEGE” CONCEPTS: suggests a community college system like PCCD embraces *collaboration*, adequate *staff support* (training and technology), appropriate facilities (adequate technology and learning spaces) outcome *assessment*, and use student *learning communities*.

CHANGED TEACHING STYLES AND TECHNOLOGY: suggest greater utilization of *active learning classrooms* where faculty lecture, students research the internet, problem-solve, develop, present and discuss findings with faculty feedback – a proactive process that requires *more-than-the usual lecture space* for the technology and moveable tables and chairs.

CHANGING POLICIES AT UC AND CSU – HIGHER FEES, SHORTENED ADMISSIONS (IN THE SHORT TERM): suggest, other things being equal, a short-term *increase in the <25 year-old student cohort* pursuing PCCD transfer curricula and services.

SUMMARY OF INTERNAL SCAN

The *Internal Scan* is one of several papers designed to help Peralta Community College District (PCCD) in its strategic educational and facilities planning. PCCD's Trustees have adopted a District-Wide Strategic Plan with goals to: (1) advance student access and success, (2) engage area communities and partners, (3) build programs of distinction, (4) create a culture of innovation and collaboration, and (5) ensure financial health.

Like the external scan, the purpose of the internal scan is to help address the project's research questions by evaluating the environment internal to PCCD, examining metrics that measure the colleges' performance, and from commentary by community, staff and students on that performance. This evaluation is based on the PCCD Trustees' goals and the district's underlying mission, vision and philosophy, and is organized around *delivery, learning and finance*.

Delivery

PCCD delivers its instruction in four relatively small colleges and virtually all by classroom-based credit classes, little online or in the non-credit mode. PCCD's community service and contract education also are minimal, far smaller than typical community colleges in California.

Preliminary review of colleges' facilities, together with faculty focus groups, suggests a general lack of technology tools in PCCD classrooms – too few projections systems, smartboards, and computers – all needed to support current styles of teaching. Moreover, the importance of information technology (IT) suggests that *all* faculty and students should have computer access. About six of every 10 community college students enroll with computer access, the others do not and need help with it.

Key to PCCD colleges' general access are their enrollment management (EM) strategies, that to be effective must be integrated and go well beyond simply marketing, scheduling or "productivity." Among EM strategies, student "pricing" must acknowledge the cost of students' transportation – a concern as an increasing proportion (now one out of every four students) attend two or more PCCD colleges; one out of four come from outside the district as well. Marketing, delivery and content all should be differentiated for the colleges' three distinct student cohorts or "niches:" <25 year-olds, 25-54 year-olds, and 55+ year-olds. Market penetration (MP) among PCCD communities/neighborhoods is uneven; MP for district residents is stable, and for Hispanics continues to be low. Shifting area population suggests more neighborhood centers like Fruitvale.

Learning

Fewer (than average) students from PCCD feeders reach high school graduation, but when they do they are more interested and prepared than is usual. Still, four of every five who are assessed on entry lack college-level skills. Moreover, today's students even while more literate in IT skills, seem to have fewer study skills and less time for study

than in the past. Despite this, PCCD college students' success in *basic skills* courses is at the average of community colleges, and higher than average in effectively moving on to higher-skilled classes. The instructional challenge at PCCD colleges is made all the more difficult by the high proportion of students who come with post-collegiate skills – one in every five has a baccalaureate, producing a wide range of learning capabilities – and the many learning styles that result from a culturally-diverse enrollment.

The PCCD colleges' performance in *transferring students* is average or above (compared to other colleges) as measured by the expected rates – half of PCCD students who intend to transfer, prepare and do so within six years of starting. More PCCD transfers stay in California than is typical, and not surprisingly, many more go to UC Berkeley.

Overall, PCCD colleges' *workforce preparation* programs tend to be undersized relative to the area's job training needs, especially for teachers (and aids), RNs, engineers, carpenters, green and bio technologists, customer service reps, 1st line supervisors, logistics workers, machinists, home health aids and the like. PCCD's role in workforce preparation should be (1) as a "major strategic player" in the area's economic development, (2) to respond to area labor market needs, largely replacements for vacancies in existing jobs, and (3) as the enrollment manager and marketer of programs to potential student niches.

Finance

PCCD's *fiscal health* arguably is better than it has been for decades what with an adequate reserve, recent passage of two capital bond measures, and the OPEB bond solution to the district's unfunded retiree health benefits.

That said, the need to fund priorities such as access for the <25 year-old cohort (including K-12 interventions), technology, distance learning, basic skills, ESL, community centers and the like becomes problematic with the emerging State budget situation and PCCD's heavy reliance on State revenue. The deficit, fiscal emergency and proposed suspension of Proposition 98 argue for greater PCCD "extramural" funding – contract, community education, partnerships, and other cost-recovery pricing of instruction.

PCCD spends less per student than would be expected with its small colleges and their diseconomies of scale – less for *instruction* because of relatively high faculty productivity, heavy use of tenured overloads and part-time faculty, lower faculty salary payments, and specialization – at just one college – of potentially high cost programs. *Student support services and administrative* costs per student at PCCD are about average, while (from another perspective) classified salaries, employee benefits and operating expenses and equipment are above average cost.

Questions about PCCD's unusual expenditure patterns and future funding uncertainties suggest the need for PCCD to begin a *cost and benchmarking study* to examine fixed and variable costs, implement a *budget allocation model* to fairly and effectively distribute

appropriations across the colleges, and develop a long-range (five year) *budget simulation model*.

PLANNING THEMES

Classroom Technology

A preliminary review of college facilities, together with discussions at faculty focus groups, suggests a general lack of technology tools in PCCD classrooms – too few stationary or mobile projections systems, smartboards, computer stations/laptops in the classroom or even tables for group work – the equipment situation termed as “pathetic” by one faculty member. Faculty have long since shifted away from simply lecturing to students seated in chairs, it doesn’t work well (probably never did), and students expect (well-working) media and prefer to learn proactively and interactively in a hands-on fashion, and (research shows) far more productively in groups than individually.

Moreover, the importance of information technology (IT) in all aspects of today’s world suggests that all faculty (part-time as well as full-time) should have access to computers – a laptop or ready access to area(s) with stations. (Purchase of laptops for full-timers is underway.) Arguably also as a matter of PCCD policy, *all* students should have access to computers. Studies show that about six of every 10 community college students already have computers, either laptops, stations at home or their convenient library or cybercafé. Students at PCCD colleges are probably similarly equipped, and, if so, provision should be made for the other four students, possibly through partnerships with hardware vendors.

Distance Learning

Use of broadcast and interactive TV in California community colleges is declining while online instruction is growing rapidly – up by 371% since 2000 while traditional face-to-face (FTF) instruction has increased by just 2%. The average California community college delivers 6% of its instruction online; PCCD delivers 26 FTES (<1%) this way and if it were to move just to the statewide average would need to enroll about 1,100 FTES online. Arguably, given their locations, PCCD colleges should deliver more by this medium.

To reduce student transportation (high in the East Bay) and become more competitive (the East Bay has many PSE options, among them many virtual), PCCD should increase its online delivery – just under two dozen online courses in its Spring 2008 catalog – preferably using the *hybrid model* where online classes include an FTF component with the requisite TLC for struggling students and the opportunity to chat with faculty and join a community of student colleagues exists.

There are several options for the online platform, ranging from “outsourcing,” with, say, *Blackboard* to use of *eCollege* to use of an open source approach like *Sakai*, *Moodle* or

other of those available “free of charge.” The latter option has the advantage of requiring PCCD colleges to develop in-house expertise, rather than relying on an outside agent. And since PCCD would be “starting from scratch,” it has alternatives for organizing online instruction that range from the *centralized*, Open College, approach (like Riverside CCD) to the *decentralized* college by college approach. The latter could have college staff (faculty with released time) managing online courses under the auspices of local departments, all coordinated by some key and skilled district staff with facility (hardware, software, training, etc.) where economies-of-scale dictate. Many community colleges have restricted their online efforts to general education, to the exclusion of vocational or workforce skills, but the online method can be spread across the entire curriculum, even to fundamental or basic skills classes - a tricky, but not impossible task. As students gain language and computational literacy, they need to gain information technology literacy.

(Note on priorities #1 and #2: Three out of every four Alameda County voters passed Peralta Colleges’ \$390 million Measure A bond on June 6, 2006. Funds from the sale of these bonds are to help renovate aging classrooms, build new science and technology labs and modernize facilities that are decades old. Priorities #1 and #2 are seemingly among the high-level candidates for allocation of Measure A monies.)

Fundamental Skills

PCCD students are more literate in technology than ever before, but not necessarily more literate in language and computational skills. Roughly four of every five enrolling are assessed with less-than college level skills in English and/or Math. Moreover, faculty observe that today’s students seem to have fewer study skills and less time out-of-class for study, along with few time-management skills. Moreover, many faculty, especially in courses without prerequisites, spend a portion of class time not on the course’s content, but in teaching students needed basic and study skills. Compounding this problem, one of every five PCCD students has a baccalaureate degree – twice the rate at a typical community college – so that many classes have students with both pre- and post-collegiate skill levels. In addition, PCCD students have diverse learning styles due to their diverse cultural backgrounds, further complicating teaching and learning.

The set of solutions that will solve the learning skills/styles problem isn’t clear. Efforts shown to be successful include accurate assessment and placement, study skills classes, teaching fundamental skills in context (of every discipline), students working in groups, modular skills courses, self-pacing, and student responsibility, but close monitoring, among others. What is clear is that faculty professional development on how to address skill deficiencies and learning style differences can be helpful as can “classroom research” to assess the specific are varying needs and capabilities of students. Earlier intervention with students – in high, or even middle, schools appears essential in PCCD’s situation; that is, relatively low feeder high school completion rates.

Retention and Success

This theme involves researching, selecting, implementing, and evaluating packages of strategies/best practices (known to work) in assessment (in and out of class), counseling, academic follow-up, placement, after-PCCD follow-up, etc. And, determining which students need these services. Recent study shows that statewide, in California community colleges, 1/3 of credit students are exempted from orientation, three of every 10 from assessment, and one of five from counseling. Less than half of those directed to counseling actually receive services. (Peralta figures probably exceed these statewide numbers because of its higher-than-average percentage of students already with degrees – 23% vs. 15%.) The difficulty of improving counseling, not surprisingly, derives largely from scarce staffing. Statewide, the ratio of counselors to students is 1:1,900 (at PCCD colleges, it's 1:.....); a Counseling Task Force recommends 1:900; and a recent Carnegie Report recommends 1:300.

This work relates closely to the theme of "basic or fundamental skills" and might even be tied to that, recognizing that PCCD colleges are already working on the issue. As part of this, the notion of bona fide and common teaching/learning labs for English, Math and certain other disciplines with tutors and study aids – at each of the colleges – should be considered for funding from Measure A. (These facilities really work!)

English as a second language (ESL)

Current patterns in which PCCD area population growth is made up of roughly equal parts of natural (births less deaths) and foreign immigration – less losses to Contra Costa County and other domestic locations – are likely to continue short of a significant, but unlikely change in immigration law. Population projections over the next two decades show that area population growth will be made up of Asians and Hispanics, less declines in African Americans and Whites, along with modest growth in other groups. The consequence of these trends is a continuing significant demand for English as a second language (ESL) training by PCCD colleges.

All four colleges offer robust and growing programs with large class section sizes (averaging 30) counterbalanced by lower-than-average 7.7 section per-year faculty loads for an average productivity of 29.8 FTES:FTEF ratio. All work is taught in the credit mode and there is concern that lack of mid-level non-credit ESL offerings at PCCD colleges may prevent the transition of many area individuals from K-12 (adult schools) to PCCD and postsecondary education. Other concerns have to do with integrating ESL contextually into all disciplines as appropriate (particularly workforce training or vocational ESL), and difficulties recruiting ESL faculty. In any case, the marketing and delivery of ESL should be allocated sufficient PCCD resources if the language needs of its community are to be adequately-served.

Community and Neighborhood Centers

Preliminary analysis of PCCD's market penetration (enrollment/population cohort or MP) shows substantial differences in both level and recent change by neighborhood and community across the service area. The formerly high MP area around Merritt College has declined rapidly. Areas like Emeryville and Berkeley West with formerly average MP rates are increasing rapidly while others like Piedmont and Kensington report low and rapidly decreasing rates. Future population growth will shift from South Oakland to North Oakland and Berkeley. With continued growth, BCC will be fully occupied within several years. And community focus groups call for PCCD to do more outreach, more "Town and Gown" activities, and with accessible job-training partnerships.

These arguments all suggest more PCCD community or neighborhood centers. Not only beyond BCC in the northern area, but in other areas as well. Other than Merritt College's Fruitvale Center, PCCD colleges have few outreach/off-campus centers or operations. Centers can focus on specific training like in Fruitvale, serve underserved niches in specific neighborhoods, and/or be located at worksites for specific job training partnerships (more on this elsewhere). Or, for those 55+, at Senior Centers. Churches and K-12 schools also can serve as accessible sites for instruction and other educational services.

Enrollment Management

Enrollment management (EM) at most community colleges is often limited and efforts at one component often neglect counteracting efforts or trends in other components, with surprising enrollment consequences that are surprising but entirely logical. For instance, efforts at better marketing, if in the face of student price (tuition and fee) increases and possibly even budget and section cutbacks may be successful, but will not appear so because enrollments are reduced by other factors. Overly limited EM strategies like just FTES or productivity goals, lack the necessary comprehensive analysis and deployment.

EM strategic tools include: *marketing, pricing, enrolling, instructing, retaining, student life, and follow-up*. Obviously there is some overlap with other planning themes. However, an EM Plan – with its goals and strategies for their achievement – should incorporate policies and practices in all these areas and, if possible, provide enrollment simulations (in the best way PCCD staff can). With an appropriate model, actual enrollments can be analyzed, strategic consequences sorted, and strategies evaluated – to be continued or revised based on their success (failure) and changes to enrollment goals – not least to inform the budget process about areas for changed allocations. Also important for PCCD EM is an effective division of labor between the district office and the colleges, with appropriate branding and collaborative effort(s).

Intervening early with K-12 students

Poor persistence rates in PCCD's feeder high schools along with projections of a downturn in K-12 enrollments and graduates following 2008, suggest that for PCCD colleges to serve their communities, particularly the younger component that tends to enroll in general education for transfer, they (the colleges) must partner with high schools to inform and interest more students in preparing for post-secondary education (PSE), be it for transfer or for more immediate job training. While PCCD area high school graduates appear better prepared than most such students elsewhere in California, fewer graduate from PCCD feeder high schools – two of every five 9th graders in the Oakland Unified School District (OUSD) do not make it to graduation.

Early intervention efforts may vary from counseling and engagement as early as in middle schools to counseling and courses taught at the high schools for college credit by college faculty to enrollment by high school students at PCCD colleges when they are capable of performing the academic work, sometimes by their junior or senior year. Of PCCD students in 2000, 6.3% were enrolled concurrently in K-12 high or adult schools (substantially higher than the statewide average of 4.6%). Like other California community colleges, PCCD colleges have since reacted to changed funding for these students and now enroll just 4.6% concurrently, but the proportion should grow as the colleges increase their intervention efforts. Some other states report much higher concurrent enrollments. In Iowa, for instance, concurrent high school students comprise about one-fifth of community college enrollments.

Campus Climate and Student Life

If PCCD colleges are to competitively enroll younger students – most of whom enroll to complete their lower division general education in preparation for transfer – they (the colleges) must, among other things, create an inviting environment that replicates as much as possible the lower division in- and out-of-class ambience of a four-year college or university. Obviously, without dorms, all students commuting, most working (four of every five), and many with dependents, this is difficult.

And, given PCCD's older student population, the effort should be to create a collegiate atmosphere for all students, not just the young, full-timers, but also those older with families, through activities – clubs, government, intramurals, forums, functions and the like – along with inviting “commons” areas where students can learn, study, gossip, lounge, eat, hang, “whatever” – areas that encourage students to “stick around” after class and engage with friends, colleagues and faculty. A number of four- and two-year colleges have recently constructed an effective *student learning commons* for this purpose. At present, Merritt, Laney and Berkeley City (even in its new building) appear to lack such areas. And as for Alameda, who knows? We'll have to wait until the construction “dust” settles to figure that out.

Another aspect of student life, student health, needs consideration. Few support services are available at PCCD colleges for the physical and/or mental health, not to mention

personal, problems of students. Likewise, lack of adequate food and bookstore operations can be a factor in recruiting and retaining students.

Niche Marketing

Community colleges tend to market too broadly and generally; that is, typically-small marketing budgets are stretched across general efforts through radio, TV, newspapers, direct-mail brochures, course schedules, and the like that are directed to most, if not all in some cases, area residents. There is little research on how successful these efforts may be. In any case, PCCD should try efforts directed at specific niches: less-than 25 year-olds who require training for a first (real) job. 25-54 year-old workers who have recently become unemployed and need skills for a new job or who, if still employed, want skills for promotion. Entrepreneurs who own their own business, but need “back office” skills. 55+ year-olds, some of whom need workplace skills (often information technology), others who need survival or avocational skills.

Working with employers or other partners, PCCD colleges can tie these clientele niches to likely jobs and devise appropriate marketing strategies to appraise the niche of the opportunities – in high schools, malls and fast food establishments and via, say, PDAs for the young; job sites and employment agencies for workers; TV, senior centers, volunteer organizations, churches and other like vehicles for those older. Faculty, counselors, and marketers are all generally involved, with results always evaluated for decisions about further or revised efforts. Data on market penetration for clientele niches by community or neighborhood area (ZIP Code areas) should inform marketing strategies as well.

Alternative Delivery: Non-credit, community and contract education

PCCD colleges rely almost entirely on regular credit instruction (generating FTES which, in turn, are supported from the State General Fund). Very little (less than 1%) of PCCD activity is generated through non-credit instruction, which also generates FTES, though at a lesser support rate. Non-credit classes, however, are a viable delivery mechanism for the many foreign immigrants and others PCCD should train in basic/fundamental skills, ESL (see above), citizenship, VESL, and other skills for job performance and for, say, seniors 55+, where credits are less important than knowledge and skills. While PCCD’s non-credit instruction is far below the average statewide (8%), only San Francisco of Bay Area community colleges offers a substantial non-credit program at its Centers.

PCCD’s activity in community service and contract education – both delivered at the cost of education, the former from enrolled students fees and the latter from employers or other partners – is just one-fourth that of the typical community college and far below that of colleges at both Chabot-Las Positas and San Francisco in the Bay Area. PCCD community focus group participants call for more PCCD partnerships with local area agencies, NGOs, and private firms that could involve contracts, public and private grants, and in-kind sharing of scarce resources. At present, PCCD colleges do little of this and any expansion will require “entrepreneurial” staff, possibly at the district level, to aid

college faculty and staff in the time-consuming activity of identifying opportunities, making the appropriate contacts and applications, implementing the initiative(s), and generally monitoring the work.

More community service classes – less than 50 annual FTES are instructed this way now at PCCD colleges – would provide the opportunity to differentially-price PCCD students at or near the cost of education in those cases where most students enrolling can afford to and would pay the fee. This is often the case among older students and obviously among those with higher incomes..

Programming

Important to PCCD is the research, analysis, planning and implementation that goes into the identification of needed new programs, along with the expansion and reduction of existing programs. This is an on-going process and is informed by Unit Plans, Program Reviews, and data from the McKenzie Report, EDD, ABAG, local public agencies, and other such relevant sources.

To effectively program its curriculum, PCCD's role appears to be three-part: (1) as a major "player" in area economic development, positioning itself for emerging industry sectors like logistics, green technologies, art and digital media – often via partnerships, (2) responding to the area labor market, giving priority to high demand area job sectors like health, education, and public service where most of the are from retirements (rather than sector growth), and (3) the enrollment "manager and marketer" to potential student niches, informing them about opportunities and matching them to and training them in appropriate job skill clusters for gainful employment. Besides its less-than-baccalaureate workforce training, this PCCD responsibility applies also to transfer and baccalaureate level jobs where the greatest local demand is for general managers, teachers, computer software engineers (both applications and systems software), accountants, auditors and civil engineers.

Scheduling

There is little question that PCCD colleges can be more competitive and provide greater service to area residents through more flexible and smarter scheduling. The ideas are to fit courses better with students' working and family schedules and to reduce their cost of transportation. The fit with students' schedules outside class depends upon the niche. Evening courses have always served working residents, but probably not non-residents commuting in for work from outside the district and who might prefer classes at noon or just after work. One of every four PCCD students resides outside the district's "boundaries," and market penetration to the south (San Leandro, San Lorenzo, and Hayward) is increasing, though (curiously given BCC's new building) to the north in El Cerrito and Richmond it is decreasing. Even so, many students are enrolling in BCC's Saturday curriculum (where most work is taken online) or in its weekend curriculum because of the convenient fit.

Two ways of reducing student costs for transportation – the largest single cost of attending PCCD colleges – are available. One, the use of distance learning as well as face-to-face instruction in a (hybrid) class is discussed in a separate theme. The advantage of coming to campus once every week or two, rather than three times per week, and doing the balance of course work online is obvious. Another way to reduce student transportation costs is to schedule classes with fewer (longer) meetings, perhaps fewer days per week and even at times when the commute eases – mid morning, mid-afternoon, and after, say, 7pm.

To efficiently deliver its courses, PCCD generally offers its high demand general education curricula – Math, English, basic natural and social sciences and the like – at all four colleges, while offering moderate demand and high cost curricula – like health and many workforce training programs (labs and shops with low class sizes) – at just one college. The trade-off is to constrain PCCD’s costs of instruction, but at the expense of the students’ private costs of transportation. (This may be illustrated by the fact that one in every ten PCCD students attends two or more of district colleges at once. One in four eventually attend two or more colleges if they persist over more than three years.)

It may be appropriate to identify those programs and disciplines for which student demand is sufficient that their courses might be taught productively at more than one college – among the possible candidates: administration of justice, certain health professions, community and public service, culinary, environmental technologies, and media arts.

Differential pricing of students

This involves on-going efforts like securing more and more-timely distributions of financial aid to students. Preliminary evidence suggests that PCCD colleges secure relatively high amounts of student financial aid, but that staffing limitations may prevent packaging and timely delivery.

Student tuition and fees represent just 7% of the cost for PCCD students and are routinely waived for low income students. The larger costs attributable to enrollment are for transportation, books and supplies, and child care – apart from the opportunity costs of students’ time in class and study (which may prevent them from needed work) – not to mention the costs of housing and food.

A recent study by the Institute for College Access and Success found that only one of every three California community college students (compared to 45% nationally) applies for financial aid grants, work-study or loans, even though an estimated two of every three are eligible. Thus, the importance of informing students, made all the more difficult by the multi-lingual, multi-cultural character of PCCD students. In addition, help with applications processing and timely delivery of aid are crucial, but depend on staffing, which is limited.

For low income students, efforts described elsewhere in these planning themes to reduce the cost of transportation through scheduling, distance learning and other delivery techniques can be powerful tools in improving their access to PCCD colleges. And, at the other, higher end of the income spectrum are those student niches who because of their socio-economic status may be able to afford and/or are willing to pay the cost of their education or near to it or have their tuition subsidized by employers and/or other interested agencies. These students may be served in community or contract education as discussed elsewhere.

Partnering with area colleges and universities

PCCD colleges' close proximity to many four-year colleges and universities in the East Bay offers the opportunity for partnerships that should ease barriers to the transfer transition for PCCD students. The character of these partnership arrangements can vary substantially. Some community colleges, like Canyons in Santa Clarita, host several four-year schools – public and private – who offer popular BA and MA degree programs on its (Canyon's) main campus. Other community colleges, like Highline in the Puget Sound of Washington state host upper division work by one school – in this case, Central Washington University, with much of the work tied to CWU's main campus, over 100 miles to the east, to other CWU centers through an effective ITV operation. BCC currently offers courses on the UCB campus and is designing in-service training for UCB staff.

Arrangements with East Bay four-year colleges and universities that encourage and ease transfer for potential PCCD students will make its colleges more competitive and further guarantee a viable transfer function in the face of the predicted decline in numbers of PCCD service area young students progressing through feeder high schools after 2008.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Project questions formed the basis of inquiry leading to the *Internal and External Scans*, planning themes, with the results summarized above. But a more direct summary of responses as follows may be useful as well, essentially providing a “different cut” of project findings.

- **How will the East Bay Area evolve and, as a consequence, how should PCCD evolve?**

While growing moderately, PCCD's area industry and jobs continue to be numerous and often at higher-skill levels. Meanwhile, the area population becomes more far more diverse, infrastructure increasingly in need of repair and transportation more difficult. Thus, PCCD colleges need to change their delivery to improve student access, accommodate different learning styles, incorporate improved technology and flexible scheduling, and keep content (curriculum and services) forward-looking – all important

to PCCD's role as a "major player" in the East Bay's cultural and economic development.

- **How should the curriculum evolve, where should it be located and how delivered: on-campus, face-to-face; partnerships; distance learning; and in what kinds of class and out-of-class facilities?**

The curriculum must acknowledge that most job openings, including those requiring baccalaureates, are in jobs that already exist, but that PCCD colleges also have a responsibility to help in the area's economic development by strategically partnering with firms in new industry and employment sectors. Much more of the curriculum must be delivered by online distance learning, and in (technologically) smart classrooms both off- as well as on- college campuses.

- **How can PCCD maintain robust basic skills instruction and an effective lower division, general education, transfer core, while augmenting its workforce preparation and contract training? In what specific skill areas ought the latter functions be expanded so as to meet the labor market needs of the East Bay.**

With great difficulty. PCCD colleges have many needs and can't "do it all," given typically scarce funding. While the district's fiscal health is better than it has been, the state (PCCD's primary revenue source) faces a large deficit and near-term funding growth is problematic. The Board will need to set priorities among competing educational needs, among which are the themes or issues described above.

Students at all course levels lack basic skills and their diverse learning styles make it difficult to progress to higher orders of content difficulty. PCCD's transfer function has worked well, but needs to better access the local market of younger students. Workforce preparation needs to be expanded, in part through the use of more contract training.

Important specific job skill areas include the "old standbys" like teaching, health, public safety, and business, but PCCD also must be part of local strategies to develop new industries and/or jobs in art/media design, biotechnology, logistics, a variety of green technologies, and other key areas where developments in the East Bay are beginning or are yet to come.

- **How should PCCD be organized: as a four-college district (as at present), four-campus college, or in some other way? What delivery modes and organization and staffing changes will maximize the district's access and program quality?**

Despite inherent diseconomies-of-scale and, theoretically, higher costs from delivering postsecondary education by four relatively small colleges, PCCD operating outlays per student are lower than would be expected and specifically higher only in the areas of

planning, policymaking and coordination, categorically-funded student services, and classified salaries, employee benefits and certain operating expenses.

Under SB 361 (2006) there are revenue incentives to retain the four college structure, but this doesn't prevent further study to reveal possible cost-reductions and/or service improvements possible under the existing organization.

Clearly, greater inter-college collaboration, expansion of online instruction, more partnering and contract training, and addition of community or neighborhood centers all have potential to improve PCCD's benefit:cost performance. Other changes would benefit from "benchmarking" (aka comparing to like colleges) costs of PCCD functions and analyzing their implications for staffing and support.

- **What kinds of enrollment management strategies will enable PCCD to fulfill its mission, and meet its goals and objectives? What strategies best support the priorities of fiscal stability and sustainability?**

Effective enrollment management (EM) strategies must be comprehensive (see planning themes and *Internal Scan*) and consistent. For instance, effective development of new training programs for 55+ year-olds – in, say, teacher aids, customer service reps, or wellness – will succeed only if marketed, priced and delivered appropriately. Thus, coordinated and consistent policies and practices among several PCCD colleges' functions.

Likewise efforts to improve access to the <25 will be successful only if PCCD "intervenes" at the high school level, before the many young K-12 students known to drop out have done so and are already "outside the educational loop." For those who have (dropped-out), PCCD marketing must reach them in innovative ways – at fast food establishments, typically their first job, at Malls, through cell phones, iPods and other PDAs. But their curriculum must be relevant to their needs, skill levels and learning styles. A possible strategy with this niche is to integrate more basic skills into the regular collegiate-level curriculum.

To ensure that EM strategies are comprehensive and consistent, PCCD should assemble a cross-functional – faculty, managers and support staff from both instruction and support services – that will EM team that will

- **To what degree should the colleges make their market penetration (access) "more consistent" across their different service area communities and specific clientele "niches," and increase overall area access?**

Analysis shows that overall market penetration (MP) among district residents has been fairly stable during the past six years, while for certain of the four colleges in certain neighborhoods and among certain age groups there have large improvements, as well as large declines in others. Improved MP is needed for <25 year-olds – for both transfer and workforce preparation – and across the Oakland hills and certain neighborhoods to the

district's south. Moreover, new marketing and program content are needed to improve PCCD colleges' MP among the 55+ year-olds, in occupational as well as survival and engagement skills.

While PCCD enrollment of students from outside the district has increased substantially in recent years, MP rates for communities to the north like El Cerrito and Richmond have generally declined, while rates to the south, San Lorenzo, San Leandro and Hayward have increased. Reasons for these diverse trends need to be identified, just as for ZIP areas and age cohorts in the district, and EM policy objectives and strategies developed accordingly.

FUTURE SCENARIOS AND SIMULATIONS

Traditional strategic planning combines an assessment of PCCD's external and internal scans so that goals, objectives and initiatives for the four colleges may be identified and (importantly) prioritized to enable them position most effectively for their learners, given the existence of other providers (of similar learning), oversight agencies, each college's culture and resources.

Scenario planning builds on traditional strategic planning, but by contrast, adds the additional dimension of more than one possible future and, therefore, makes the process far more robust in selecting colleges' operating strategies – also, far more useful as an educational tool for staff facing an uncertain future and needing to build contingency plans.

The consequences of different futures for college enrollments – both the number and kind – can be simulated from an econometric model. Once the statistical parameters of the model are estimated, future values of the independent variables can be specified from plausible future scenarios and future enrollments then simulated and analyzed for each scenario. Scenario attributes also help in estimates of the future characteristics, entering skills and needs of these students.

In providing the basis for empirical analysis and, therefore, substantive future planning, the simulation model also clarifies the metrics that must be essential components of the scenarios that are to be written.

These metrics also support discussions about ways to deliver that learning: whether on the college's main campus(es) via active or passive (the traditional model) learning, at off-campus centers and/or work-sites, or through distance learning via online (Internet), televised, interactive video, CD-ROM or other media – all necessary ingredients for *linking facilities to educational planning*.

If much of a college's strategic planning is dependent upon the likely number and kind of its future students, enrollment simulations must not only be insightful so as to suggest

policy directions, but also be reasonably accurate so as to avoid overly large periodic revisions to the college's execution of its plan.

Future Scenarios

In general, the scenarios should be kept simple; the more complex the scenarios, the less likely the probability of their taking place, the more problematic their empirical consequences, and the more complex their implications. Scenarios also must be internally consistent; i.e., a falling economy raises unemployment and likely simultaneously reduces the college's public revenues and its ability to accommodate the increasing enrollment demand.

The first step in this process is to formulate a plausible, but "optimistic, status-quo" future, ***Scenario A***, in which the current subprime mortgage/financing and housing crisis is just a small "blip" and that interest rate reductions by the Federal Reserve Board (Fed), federal economic stimulus package, and underlying productivity strength of the economy result in a "settling," followed by an upswing in 2009 – with another downturn beginning 2011. But the swings are relatively moderate and, compared to past cycles, generally "optimistic." Proposition 98 is only temporarily suspended, and the California Legislative Analyst forecasts reasonably robust Proposition 98 revenues through 2011 despite the State Budget deficit.

Specific assumptions about external or "unmanageable" variables are displayed in Chart B above, including passage of Proposition 92 (2008), the Community College Initiative – to moderate tuition (enrollment fees) and secure a specific share of Proposition 98. And in Scenario A, the internal or "manageable" variables in the simulation model are generally unchanged, consistent with the "status-quo" theme of the scenario.

Scenario B, by contrast, assumes the current downturn progresses into a full-blown recession (technically, two consecutive quarters of declining GDP) similar to those of earlier decades – a cycling of the economy and the external factors that directly or indirectly influence PCCD enrollments (see again Chart B). This external alternative involves a significant downturn for three years ending 2010 and, like Scenario A, holds internal PCCD policies constant, but assumes the typical, reactionary (and substantial) Legislative increase in student tuition (enrollment fee) – in both 2008 and 2009, and that the Community College Initiative, Proposition 92, fails.

Scenario B also assumes the inflation and growth guarantees of Proposition 98 are suspended for one year. Despite these dramatic changes in external variables, the PCCD response is restrained – "managed" variables are valued as assumed in Scenario A.

To counteract Scenario B enrollment declines, PCCD could respond with either changes to student pricing or expanded programs and services or both, through budget reallocations and/or reserve draw-down, leading to the possible additional Scenario, C.

Chart B. PCCD Future Scenarios

| | A | B | C | D |
|--|--|---|--------------------------------------|----------|
| "UNMANAGEABLE" VARIABLES | | | | |
| ECONOMY | OPTIMISTIC, but cycling, down 2010 | PESSIMISTIC, and cycling down 2008-09 | Like B | |
| POPULATION | Stable, then slight increase | Stable | Like B | |
| UNEMPLOYMENT (RATE) | Varies 4-6%, 5% average | Varies 5-9%, 7% average | Like B | |
| COST OF LIVING (CPI) | Up 2.5%-4%, 3% average | Up 3%-5%, 4% average | Like B | |
| CSU STUDENT COST | Up by HEPI 4% average | 10-yr trend: 5.6% average | Like B | |
| "MANAGEABLE" VARIABLES | | | | |
| PCCD RESOURCE PRICES (HEPI) | Up by 3-5%, 4% average | Up by 4-6%, 5% average | Like B | |
| PCCD STUDENT TUITION AND FEES | \$15/unit in 2008 then up by HEPI (4% ave.) | Up \$6, \$6/unit in 2008, 2009, then HEPI | Like B | |
| PCCD STUDENT DIRECT COST | Up by trend in CPI | Like A | Reduce cost of transportation | |
| PCCD STUDENT FINANCIAL AID | No change | Like A | Raise BOGG, FA delivery | |
| PCCD OPERATING BUDGET | Cycles, with robust Prop.98, up 8% yrly ave | Cycles, with weak Prop. 98, up 5% yrly ave | Like B | |
| PCCD DELIVERY | No change | Like A | Raise distance learning | |
| PCCD PROGRAMS AND SERVICES | No change | Like A | Expansion | |
| PCCD MARKET, RG, ENROLL, RETAIN | No change | Like A | Initiatives | |

Scenario C poses the pessimistic external conditions of Scenario B, but in contrast to that scenario, has PCCD responding through a variety of policy changes.

Under Scenario C student pricing, the college could attempt to counteract the Legislature's action by reducing transportation costs through increases in online instruction, scheduling that reduces the number of class meetings, and by increases in student financial aid, possibly through greater use of BOGGs and more active financial aid management.

Among still other steps in *Scenario C*, PCCD could (1) expand curriculum, and (2) "manage enrollment" by initiatives in marketing, registration, scheduling, delivery, and retention. The difficulty confronting all these measures, of course, is the reduced operating budget in the scenario. In any case, due to the lack of specific empirical evidence or assessment of a similar experience, this simulation is clearly an approximation.

Future Enrollments

In summary, the three scenarios begin with two external scenarios – "optimistic" Scenario A and "pessimistic" Scenario B – and to the latter is then attached internal, "manageable" initiatives by PCCD to maintain its enrollments in the face of somewhat adverse conditions (Scenario C). This work is presented in the paper, *Scenarios and Simulations*, where each planning scenario produces quite different results, all of which can be compared to the latest State Chancellor Office's forecast.

After PCCD staff review and selection of the preferred enrollment forecast(s), FTES and WSCH – by college and delivery/program – will be derived for subsequent facilities planning by WLC.

The specific features of the scenarios summarized in Chart B and any other scenarios can be updated and revised, as appropriate, for on-going PCCD planning. The enrollment simulation model can easily accommodate changes in scenario assumptions so that their consequences for future enrollment, planning strategies, and long-range budgeting may be analyzed.