Bakersfield College builds support for potential bond measure

Bakersfield College has been hard at work educating the community about the college’s facilities needs ahead of the potential bond measure.

The Bond Blue Ribbon Committee is a group of Bakersfield leaders that meets twice a month to discuss efforts and progress on bond education. Mayor Harvey Hall is the chair, and former Congressman Bill Thomas serves as senior advisor.

The group is also working with a list of community leaders and key organizations, and are making personal contact with them. This includes key political leaders, oil industry, agriculture industry, chambers, etc. Jay Rosenlieb, partner at Klein Law, leads this initiative.

The Speakers Bureau is a group of Bakersfield College faculty and staff that partner with members of the Blue Ribbon Committee to give presentations to local community organizations. Norma Rojas-Mora, president of the Latina Leaders of Kern County, leads this initiative.

The group has given over 15 presentations to various groups, including the Kern Community Foundation, the North Rotary, the Wounded Heroes Fund, the Rotary Club of Bakersfield - West, California Teachers’ Association, Black Chamber of Commerce, BCSD Foundation, Kiwanis Club, Kern County Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, and more.

The newly-formed Writers Bureau focuses on a writing campaign to provide articles and columns for local newspapers and journals, as well as providing support and research capabilities for community members who want to write their own pieces. Cheryl Scott, Vice President, Kern Economic Development Corporation, and Fran Florez, Mayor Pro Tem of Shafter, are leading this initiative.

If the Board of Trustees votes for a potential bond in July, the Writers Bureau will also facilitate getting statements of support from influential people and groups in the community. These letters of support and endorsements will be placed on a website through the Bakersfield College Foundation.

Bakersfield College has also created a series of email newsletters, titled “Letters from BC.”

The email newsletters are being sent to a list of over 600 people in the Bakersfield area, and are planned for about once every 2-3 weeks.

A website, www.abetterbc.com, showcases the efforts that have been done so far, and serves as a repository of information for the various groups.

Promote this campaign by visiting and forwarding the link to friends and other community members and organizations. Get active on social media with the Facebook Page A Better BC and on Twitter @abetterbc2016.
Bakersfield College has been named a Champion for Higher Education by the Campaign for College Opportunity, an organization that works to ensure all Californians have an equal opportunity to attend and succeed in college. This award recognizes community college campuses and CSU campuses that have excelled at implementing the Associate Degree for Transfer in California by ensuring the pathway to higher education is available for deserving students.

There are many challenges to producing more college graduates in California, and few affordable, student-centered solutions on the table. A strong and effective transfer pathway is one of them. California’s Associate Degree for Transfer (ADT) program, established by the STAR Act in 2010, cuts through redundant requirements that created unnecessary hurdles for students seeking to transfer from a California Community College to a California State University (CSU) campus.

Bakersfield College has moved from 4 Associate Degrees for Transfer to the current 23 active AA-T and AS-T degrees. Currently there are 5 additional ADT’s pending state approval.

A reception took place on June 2, in Sacramento near the Capitol Building during which Secretary of State Alex Padilla, author of the legislation to streamline community college transfers to CSUs spoke.

BC shows strong enrollment increase for summer, fall

The June 1st enrollment report shows increases in FTES for summer and fall.

Bakersfield College is up 3.7% for Summer 2016 over Summer 2015. That represents an increase of 52.6 FTES.

BC is also up 4.7% for Fall 2016 over Fall 2015. That represents an increase of 238.1 FTES.

Bakersfield College is wrapping up hiring 39 new faculty for the 2016-17 academic year.