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## SCCC/ATS Board Of Trustees Meet, Express Concerns Of Dodge City Merger

The Seward County Community College/Area Technical School Board of Trustees Monday expressed concerns in a resolution regarding its position about a proposed merger or affiliation of Fort Hays State University and Dodge City Community College.

“This would obviously have an impact on us, and it would be substantial,” said board member Dustin Ormiston.

Unintended consequences could harm the entire western third of the state — including Dodge City itself, noted board chair Ron Oliver.

In its resolution, the SCCC/ATS board noted concerns shared by Garden City Community College and Colby Community College, which could experience a “detrimental negative impact on enrollment, employer engagement and workforce development initiatives already in place.”

College president Duane Dunn said the resolution, supported by the deans and administration, could heighten awareness in Liberal, Seward County and across the state of Kansas.

“Sometimes, you need to bring attention to something that has potential negative consequences,” he said. “This is a concern to some of the other community college presidents in Kansas. If the domino hits, what’s the next phase?” A merger between a state university and a community college could set a costly and problematic precedent, observed board counsel Kerry McQueen.

Ormiston, a certified professional accountant, echoed such cautions.

“This resolution isn’t necessarily against anything; it’s not a slap in the face; it just says it needs to be vetted more.”

The board approved the purchase of a 3-D printer for the Drafting and Design Technology program, at a cost of \$21,250.00 from DepCo. of Pittsburg.

“The 3-D printer has really revolutionized the design/drafting industry,” said instructor Steve Merz.

“This is the coming thing in industry. Drafters are now doing this from their workstations. It saves thousands of dollars setting up special tooling, and the material costs.” At SCCC/ATS, the new printer will allow students to print and evaluate models of items like elbow joints or other projects, using a material that resembles Weed-Eater string.

“There are lots of applications for this. It’s really new technology,” he noted. The addition of 3-D printing can also serve as a powerful recruiting tool for the program, said Merz. Dean of Career and Technical Education Janese Thatcher agreed.

“Drafting needs a wow factor,” said Thatcher.

The trustees voted unanimously to approve the purchase with board member Rick Brenneman noting that he was pleased to add advanced technology to the program.

The Board approved the purchase and installation of an air conditioning unit in the technical building in the amount of \$14,999.00 from Sepulveda’s Appliance in Liberal. This is part of the Title V grant funded renovations, which included distance education opportunities.

In other business, the board heard reports from Dean of Academic Affairs Cynthia Rapp, Dean of Student Services Celeste Donovan, Thatcher and Dean of Finance and Operations Dennis Sander.

The SCCC/ATS Foundation funded five additional new Presidential Scholarships for 2014-15, and college representatives plan to attend 21 graduation ceremonies or award events in outlying communities.

Upcoming events include: evening final exams, May 7-13; day final exams May 14-16; a student art exhibit, also May 7-13; Nursing Capping and Pinning ceremony, 7:30 p.m. May 9 in the gym; commencement, 10 a.m. May 10 in the gym; Kansas State High School Diploma graduation, 3 p.m. May 9 in the gym; Telolith arts journal reception at 12:30 p.m. May 13 in the Shank Humanities Building; and retirement reception, 3-5 p.m. May 19 in SW229 C/D.

Allied Health Careers Camp runs from 9 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., May 28 and 29. Environmental Science

and the Food Safety and Science Academies are June 2 through June 5.  
The first summer session begins Tuesday, May 27, with two subsequent sessions starting June 2 and July 7.

SCCC/ATS Press Release