

June 20, 2025

TO: Maria Coulson, Academic Senate President & PRAC Co-Chair
Dr. Dana Emerson, VP & PRAC Co-Chair

FROM: Jonathan Eldridge, Superintendent/President

RE: May 27, 2025, Memo Outlining PRAC's Recommendations

My thanks to you and all members of PRAC for the thoughtful and comprehensive approach to the recommendations outlined in your May 27 memo.

As I noted in my response last year, over 80% of the College's budget is tied to salaries and benefits. Each year, those costs increase, both through employee step/COLA increases and external factors impacting benefits. We have enjoyed stability with our faculty, staff, and administrators, as increasing numbers of individuals in each category reach the top of their respective salary schedule. As you know, this does, however, add to our personnel cost increases, which continue to outstrip our rate of annual revenue increases as we look to the future.

This is why VP Puch has led an effort with budget managers this past year to begin finding roughly \$1 million in savings in our nearly \$100 million budget each year over the next five years. This effort will allow us to both invest in critical areas—including new needs identified through PRAC's annual process—and begin tempering the impact of the increases noted above. While much work remains, I am pleased with these efforts in the first year and am confident the adoption budget will be a step toward reaching our longer-term goal of sustained financial stability.

With all of this as a backdrop, I am pleased to support PRAC's recommendations at this time, save for two items which need more review prior to implementation. These two items are:

1. CSC Specialist I. Given this position is designed to allow for increased enrollment at the Child Development Center, we need to understand what portion of the salary/benefit costs will be offset by new enrollment fees. Dr. Emerson will work with staff to determine this and report back, at which time we will develop a funding strategy for this position.
2. Administrative Assistant for Marketing & Communication. We may have capacity within other Admin Assistant positions to support some of the needs in this department. I will work with Nicole Cruz to catalog her department's specific support needs and determine which may be met within existing resources. At that time, we will develop a strategy for funding additional support if needed.

My support for the remainder of the recommendations outlined in your memo has been communicated to the requisite budget managers and Fiscal Services staff who are adjusting their budgets.

I additionally support all the Institutional Equipment Committee recommendations. Notices to those budget managers are also being made.

Finally, I have revisited PRAC's 2024 recommendations as indicated in my memo from last July. Based on the continued high priority of the needs, I am also approving 0.5 FTE for athletic training and the conversion of the PRIE analyst position (vacant) to a Senior Analyst position.

Looking ahead, I have asked VPs Emerson and Puch to plan for some amount of expanded (Saturday and later/evening) hours for the Center for Student Success when it opens in January 2026. Much of the staffing can be covered by adjusting existing staff schedules and student workers, but likely not all of it. I have asked them to identify a contingency amount in the coming year's budget for this purpose and to discuss with PRAC in the fall semester.

As always, I look forward to working with PRAC to continue innovating and improving, while meeting our fiduciary responsibilities.

Again, thank you.