

President Meek and Board members:

I apologize for any offense I may have caused with my comments at the last board meeting, especially to Trustee Storch. So, I write to you today to address the concerns expressed and clarify our vision for our students. The lease proposal we submitted to the board is not just a business deal, but is driven by the work evolving from Guided Pathways to support student success; specifically students transferring with an associate's degree to complete their baccalaureate at CSUB. In the California Community Colleges Vision for Success approved by the Board of Governors, there are six very aggressive goals, centered on completion and equity, with which all colleges within KCCD are required to align. AB705 is a law also centered on transfer completion, with very aggressive goals and timelines. The new Student Centered Funding Formula (SCFF) includes an emphasis on performance based funding constructed around completion and equity, with an aggressive timeline. **Guided Pathways is not an initiative or a project, but rather a framework for a transformation of higher education.** It is the framework driving the Vision for Success, AB705 and the SCFF. Bakersfield College undertook the completion agenda with vigor and commitment about five years ago and adopted the Guided Pathways framework to organize the multiple redesign efforts with a single focus on student achievement and student learning. As Bakersfield College transforms into a Guided Pathway College, the principles of pathways is being infused into our mindset and subsequently, into our decision-making, planning and implementation. It is a transformation with very aggressive goals and timelines with a singular focus on student success.

Historically, Bakersfield College has offered courses in Southwest Bakersfield for over 10 years. Initially, classrooms were rented month-to-month at high school campuses, such as Stockdale High School and Bakersfield Christian, and included late afternoon and evening courses. This practice continued with Fresno Pacific University (FPU) located on Stockdale Highway in 2015. In these environments, BC was not able to provide any student support services such as financial aid advisement, counseling, supplemental instruction or tutoring due to the restricted facility use. From a Guided Pathways lens, this existing structure needed to be improved to support students on getting on their path and staying on the path to degree completion.

In summer 2017, you, the KCCD Board of Trustees approved a 20-month sublease from FPU, which would allow for shared facilities and other resources to expand course offerings to morning, afternoon, evening and weekends. It was a great opportunity which resulted in a stunning increase in enrollment within the first year. This quickly made us realize that Bakersfield College was obligated to scale up its operations in the southwest, including the number of classrooms, in order to meet this significant community need. Having robust offerings with student support systems in a highly visible location in the vicinity of our number one transfer institution, CSUB, is the sweet spot for a Guided Pathways college.

Thus, aware of the March, 2019 end date for the sublease, we began negotiations with Castle & Cooke during the spring semester of 2018 to lease both the first and second floor of the building, providing over 40,000 sq ft of space. Unfortunately, the negotiations broke down primarily due to lack of compatibility between parking requirements set forth by the college and parking stalls currently available within typical business parks and office space rentals. Therefore, it is not a site suitable for a daytime college schedule.

Subsequently, the college administrative team considered seven other properties through the work of ASU Commercial on behalf of DeWayne and Nick Zinkin. The most significant issue that came from these sites is the leased square footage to parking ratios. The ratio for colleges is significantly higher than that of traditional commercial space occupants and doesn't make us desirable tenants.

The potential lease on CSU property with Gregory Bynum & Associates was an unexpected opportunity that materialized in mid-August 2018. I know that you appreciate the value of this particular location, but from a Guided Pathways lens, it is an amazing and ideal location for the very transfer pathways to CSUB in which we have invested much time and effort. It is the ultimate sweet spot for a Guided Pathways college. It gives us the opportunity to develop dual and concurrent enrollment with our southwest high school partners and increased collaboration with our CSUB partner to improve transfer rates and baccalaureate degree completion.

Since August 2018, Chancellor Tom Burke collaborated with President Christian and Trustee Bill Thomas on the Bynum lease agreement. In addition, Chancellor Burke worked with the BC administrative team (President, Vice President and the Dean responsible for BC Southwest) to diligently work financial and FTES analysis.

We stand ready to work through any issues individual board members might have. What has been discouraging is that by moving the item from the full board to the 3-member finance committee has in fact, shut down the conversation, as we wait, board meeting after board meeting, without the finance committee meeting happening.

On September 7th you had this information and on September 13th, without having the discussion, the item was moved to the Finance Committee with a 5-2 vote. At that meeting it was announced that the Finance Committee would meet on October 3rd. We hoped that the administrators at the college and district could work with you to resolve issues and fine tune the lease agreement. Instead the meeting was then rescheduled to November 14th, 9 weeks after the first airing of the lease. We were informed that it took 9 weeks for the 3-member Finance Committee to find a time to meet that the three of them would be available. In the meantime, the administration at the college and district have worked with the KCCD broker, Jeff Andrew to provide expert analysis and a recommendation. We have sharpened our pencil to reduce the cost on the Bynum lease. All this information was provided to you on October 30th.

KCCD Board of Trustees, the recommendation to co-locate BC with CSUB comes from the Chancellor of KCCD, the President of BC, the administrators, faculty, staff and students of BC. Please support our recommendation, so we can continue to be a flagship district when it comes to increasing our student completion numbers. Please support this pioneering model of co-location to advance baccalaureate completion for the south San Joaquin valley.

Transformation in higher education is challenging and we too feel the pressure with the aggressive timelines we must meet. Evolving as a Guided Pathways college means we adopt a Guided Pathways mindset from the college level to the district to the Board of Trustees.