



Board of Trustees Meeting

# HIGHLIGHTS

Santa Clarita Community College District

Special Meeting of July 24, 2001

## Board Approves Resolution for Bond Measure

The Santa Clarita Community College District Board of Trustees voted unanimously Tuesday to place an \$82.1 million general-obligation bond measure on the Nov. 6 ballot. Voter approval of this measure will allow the district to develop educational facilities and programs to meet the current and future expectations of the community.

"The need has never been more pronounced for additional buildings and infrastructure that will enable us to provide the educational and training programs this community expects," Superintendent-President Dianne G. Van Hook said. "We're at a critical juncture in our ability to accommodate both our current and future enrollment.

"We must appeal to the stakeholders of this community for help," Van Hook said.

The district cannot rely on state construction funding, which is erratic, unpredictable and often too little, too late. To meet the community's expectations in a timely manner, the district must be able to issue bonds to pay for new or expanded buildings, educational and training programs, and infrastructure upgrades.

The tentative Facilities Master Plan, which is based on needs outlined in the recently completed Educational Master Plan, details the district's needs through 2010 and beyond. The plan calls for the build-out of the College of the Canyons campus and identifies the need to develop an additional facility, most likely in Canyon Country.

The existing college campus, as envisioned by the original master plan of some 30 years ago, was designed for a maximum of 5,000 students. The college surpassed that mark years ago and had a student enrollment of nearly 11,500 this past spring. Enrollment is expected to rise to 12,000 to 13,000 this fall and 20,000 by the year 2010.

The district has considered such a measure for several years. It recommended the current course

of action to the Board of Trustees only after all other funding options had been explored. A bond-feasibility study conducted in February indicated strong public support for a bond measure that would help the college.

A survey of likely voters indicated that 75 percent believe the college is doing an excellent or good job and 69 percent would support such a measure with a tax rate of \$15 per \$100,000 of assessed valuation. The bond measure that will be presented to voters carries an expected tax rate of \$15.97 per \$100,000 of assessed valuation.

"There's no doubt in our minds that you've taken the right step," Bond Campaign Committee Co-Chairwoman Rita Garasi told the board following its decision. "This community recognizes the leadership and contributions this college has made. This community is poised to say 'yes' because you have such a broad base of involvement – from senior citizens to high school students – and your leadership has been stable."

Passage of the measure will be governed by the rules of Proposition 39, requiring approval by 55 percent of the voters within the college district. It also requires accountability measures such as an oversight committee and annual audits.

The bond measure would be only the third for the district in more than 30 years. The original campus was financed with two consecutive bond measures that were approved by overwhelming margins of voters.

Proceeds from the sale of bonds would be used only for the construction, reconstruction, rehabilitation or replacement of college facilities, including the furnishing and equipping of college facilities, or the acquisition or lease of real property for college facilities, and not for any other purpose. Those restrictions mean the funds may not be used for faculty or administrator salaries or other college operating expenses.