



# WeConnect

through Professional Development

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## **LEAP Solution Team #2: Enhancing Outcomes Through Flex Learning Communities (3 themes)**

**BUSINESS PLAN**

June 13, 2008

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# WeConnect

through Professional Development

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

College of the Canyons is clearly committed to excellence in professional development and our professional development program is nationally recognized - winning the 2007-2008 Institutional Merit Award from the National Council for Staff, Program and Organizational Development (NCSPOD).

The solution team believes offering additional opportunities for interested faculty, staff and administrators to delve into topics in depth, collaborate with colleagues from all employee constituencies, and produce concrete results will enhance our award winning professional development program.

The WeConnect program addresses these concerns and will allow the college's faculty, staff and administration to work together on topics of shared interest and passion over the course of an academic year resulting in a product that can be disseminated and utilized by the district.

WeConnect centers on the formation of strike force teams tasked to study a topic in depth over the course of an academic year. The task forces should remain small enough to facilitate collaboration – approximately 10 -12 members.

The strike force topics will come from the ranks of the district's faculty, staff and administration. Strike force topics will change each academic year. Anyone can submit a proposal for a strike force topic.

In the inaugural 2008-2009 year of the WeConnect program the following three task forces will be established:

- Technology: Generation Next
- Partnerships: How to raise funds and make friends
- Identity: Our Community, Culture and Connectedness

The WeConnect program is, by design, intended to include participants from all district employee constituencies. Employees who wish to participate in a strike force will need the support of executive management to make this program a success. The Office of Professional Development will notify all employees by April 1<sup>st</sup> each year of the strike force topics approved for the fall. Interested employees will have until June 1<sup>st</sup> to register to participate in a strike force.

The program will be a component of the district's professional development program and will be marketed through the normal marketing of other professional development opportunities. Information will be available through a specially designed WeConnect website. Presentations will also be made to the various professional development committees, MAC, Academic Senate, Classified Senate and other campus groups as appropriate.

The program itself is not expected to have a significant negative financial impact on the District and could, in fact, be revenue generating. The anticipated impacts on district resources are difficult to quantify but are expected to include some financial resources, employee time, district facilities and district equipment and supplies.



# WeConnect

through Professional Development

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## **INTRODUCTION**

### **WeConnect - Mission**

The mission of the WeConnect Program is to connect all employee groups through professional development strike force teams working collaboratively on topics of shared interest and passion in order to effect change.

### **WeConnect – Goals/Objectives**

The WeConnect program has three main goals/objectives:

- To increase cohesion and collaboration among all employee groups;
- To provide an opportunity for sustained, action-oriented in-depth inquiry into a topic of shared interest and passion; and
- To produce results that can be shared with and utilized by other faculty, staff and administrators in the district.

### **WeConnect – Philosophy**

The WeConnect philosophy arises from the elements of the college's philosophy:

- Respect for all people;
- Partnership with the community; and
- Creativity and innovation.

### **WeConnect – Vision**

The WeConnect vision is connectedness!

### **Program Description**

WeConnect is a program designed to complement the College of the Canyons award-winning professional development program and will be managed by the Director, Professional Development.

WeConnect is an opportunity for the college's faculty, staff and administration to work together on topics of shared interest and passion. The program centers on the formation of strike force teams tasked to study a topic in depth over the course of an academic year resulting in a product that can be disseminated and utilized by the district. The task forces should remain small enough to facilitate collaboration – approximately 10 -12 members.

At the end of each academic year the strike force teams will enjoy a culminating event where some form of recognition of their achievement will be awarded (i.e. a certificate or pin).



## WeConnect

through Professional Development

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The Coordinating Committee will evaluate the success of the WeConnect program based on the outcomes achieved by each strike force.

### Strike Force Topics

The strike force topics will come from the ranks of the district's faculty, staff and administration. Strike force topics will change each academic year. Anyone can submit a proposal for a strike force topic. The form to propose a strike force topic will be available on the intranet. (See Appendix 1 for Proposal for Professional Development Focused Inquiry Strike Force Theme.)

Proposals may be submitted to the Director, Professional Development through March 1<sup>st</sup> each year for implementation in the fall. Those proposing strike force topics will be invited to make a presentation to the Professional Development Coordinating Committee in support of their proposal. The proposals will be reviewed and approved by the Coordinating Committee which consists of representatives from each of the district's three professional development committees.

Proposals will be assessed based on the degree to which they meet the required elements listed below. A decision as to which strike force topics will be approved will be made and communicated by April 1<sup>st</sup>.

In order to qualify as a WeConnect Strike Team, the following criteria must be met:

- Strike force topics must involve and be marketed to all employee groups (faculty, staff and administration);
- The strike force topic must be of sufficient depth to warrant study over the course of an academic year;
- The strike force must produce a concrete result/product which can be disseminated to and implemented by the district.

### 2008-2009 Strike Force Topics

In the inaugural year of the WeConnect program the following three task forces will be established:

- **Technology: Generation Next**  
The strike force will research and identify key technologies essential to expanding access and promoting student success. They will identify steps required to implement these technologies and strategies useful to district faculty, staff and administrators.
- **Partnerships: How to raise funds and make friends**  
The strike force will develop communication-based tools and informational materials that will enhance cooperation between faculty, instructional services, the COC Foundation, the community and our business partners.



## WeConnect

through Professional Development

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- **Identity: Our Community, Culture and Connectedness**

The strike force will be identify what has and continues to make our community special and what is unique about our culture. The strike force will develop and employ strategies for capturing, disseminating, and creating evidence of our past and current community and culture, along with strategies for supporting continued connectedness within and among all members of the COC family.

Each member of LEAP Solution Team 2 will participate as a core member of one of these task forces. Each of these task forces will have two to three members of the Solution Team providing leadership.

- Technology: Generation Next  
Wendy Brill-Wynkoop and Donna Voogt
- Partnerships: How to Raise Funds and Make Friends  
Claudia Acosta, Jon Amador, and Cynthia Madia
- Identity: Our Community, Culture and Connectedness  
James Glapa-Grossklag and Donna Haywood

### Participation in a Strike Force

The WeConnect program is, by design, intended to include participants from all district employee constituencies. Employees who wish to participate in a strike force will need the support of executive management to make this program a success.

The Office of Professional Development will notify all employees by April 1<sup>st</sup> each year of the strike force topics approved for the fall. Interested employees will have until June 1<sup>st</sup> to register to participate in a strike force. Registration will be available on the intranet. (See Appendix 2 for WeConnect Strike Force Registration form.)

Participants are expected to meet a minimum of 41 hours in meetings, workshops or other activities spread out over the academic year. Participating faculty members will receive up to 41 hours of flex credit based on their documented participation on the strike force. Administrators and classified staff do not have a flex requirement to satisfy.

### Management Team

The WeConnect Program is proposed by the following representative cross-section of district faculty, staff and administrators:

- Claudia Acosta - Department Chair, Modern Languages
- Jon Amador - Department Chair, Radio TV Film
- Wendy Brill-Wynkoop - Department Chair, Photography
- James Glapa-Grossklag – Dean, Distance Learning Programs and Training
- Donna Haywood - Director, Budget Development
- Cynthia Madia - Administrative Assistant III, Facilities
- Donna Voogt – Director, Human Resources



# WeConnect

through Professional Development

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## BACKGROUND

College of the Canyons' Professional Development program is nationally recognized winning the 2007-2008 Institutional Merit Award from the National Council for Staff, Program and Organizational Development (NCSPOD) for excellence in delivery, impact and promotion of staff, program and organizational development programs. In addition, Leslie Carr - Director, Professional Development - serves as the statewide Chair of the California Community College Council for Staff Program and Organizational Development for 2008-2009.

College of the Canyons is clearly committed to excellence in professional development. The solution team believes our award winning program can be made even better in the following key ways:

- 1) The current program does a great job of providing workshop opportunities on a wide variety of topics. However, in most cases the offerings are short-term in nature and do not offer the opportunity to delve into a topic in depth. The solution team would like to maintain the current variety of offerings but add an option which requires in-depth study of a relevant topic.
- 2) The district does a great job of communicating professional opportunities to all employees. However, the bulk of participants are coming from faculty fulfilling their flex obligation. The solution team would like to add an option that actively targets administrators and classified staff to work together with faculty on projects of shared interest.
- 3) The solution team would like to see an option added which requires action where participants preserve what they've learned and disseminate it for use by others.

The WeConnect program addresses these concerns and will allow the college's faculty, staff and administration to work together on topics of shared interest and passion over the course of an academic year resulting in a product that can be disseminated and utilized by the district.

## MARKETING

The WeConnect Program will be marketed through a combined effort including:

- The WeConnect program will be included in the marketing of the district's professional development offerings;
- The strike force leaders who proposed the strike force will work with the Director, Professional Development to determine and implement other appropriate marketing strategies; and
- Strike force leaders will identify and personally invite key participants;
- The WeConnect program will have a page on the district's professional development website.



## WeConnect

through Professional Development

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- Presentations will be made to the various professional development committees, MAC, Academic Senate, Classified Senate and other campus groups as appropriate.

### **IMPACT ON DISTRICT RESOURCES**

The WeConnect Program itself is not expected to have a significant negative financial impact on the District and could, in fact, be revenue generating. The anticipated impacts on district resources are difficult to quantify but are expected to include the following:

- Professional development staff time required to market the program and process registrations. The marketing of the program can be included in the marketing of the overall professional development programs.
- Professional Development and Computer Support Services staff time to maintain the WeConnect website. The Website has been built and it is estimated that the WeConnect website will take approximately one hour each year to maintain.
- Administrators and classified staff time to participate in strike forces.
- Teams will need use of facilities to meet.
- Use of district equipment and supplies.
- Mileage expense for task force field trips.
- Stipends for guest experts and presenters. These costs are estimated to range from \$500 to \$2,000 per guest expert or presenter.
- Costs of culminating event (i.e. printing certificates or having pins made)  
Estimated expense at \$250 or less per strike force.

All costs should be integrated into the Professional Development Budget. The costs associated with this program are fixed and generally speaking will not vary based on the number participants.



Appendix 1:  
Proposal for Professional Development  
Focused Inquiry Strike Force Theme

Appendix 2:  
Strike Force Registration

Appendix 3:  
WeConnect Promotional Flyer

Appendix 4:  
Strike Force Interest Card

Appendix 5:  
WeConnect Website  
<http://sites.google.com/a/canyons.edu/weconnect>



**APPENDIX 1  
PROPOSAL FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT  
FOCUSED INQUIRY STRIKE FORCE THEME**

Title of the proposed strike force project:
What is/are the concrete objective(s) of the strike force?
What need will this strike force address? Who will benefit? Why is it worthy of a year-long effort?
Are there other committees, task forces, groups, etc. on campus doing work which may tie in to or may conflict with your proposal? If so, how do you propose to work with these groups?
What product will be produced at the end of the project? How will the work of the task force be disseminated to the campus community and be preserved for future reference and use.
What resources will be required for your project to be successful? Address personnel, space, supplies funding and any other issues. If you have indicated a budgetary need please address how this need can be met.

Submitted by: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Professional Development Coordinating Committee Use Only</b>			
<b>Approved</b>	<b>Funding Needs</b>	<b>Space Needs</b>	<b>Other Needs</b>

**Application Deadline: March 1<sup>st</sup> for projects to commence in the fall.**

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## PROPOSAL FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOCUSED INQUIRY STRIKE FORCE THEME

### Page 2

You will be offered an opportunity to make a presentation to the Professional Development Coordinating Committee in support of your proposal. The date and time of the presentation will be communicated to you.

Please be prepared to address the following questions in your presentation.

1. How will the proposed strike force support the mission, philosophy, goals and objectives of the district?
2. How will the strike force project appeal and be marketed to all campus employee groups (faculty, staff and administration)?
3. "WeConnect" is a year-long professional development opportunity. How often and for how long will your strike team meet?
4. Will the strike force include participation from community or other non-employee constituencies? If so, who?

All Proposals should be submitted to:  
Leslie Carr – Director, Professional Development  
Deadline: March 1<sup>st</sup> for projects commencing in the fall.



**APPENDIX 2  
STRIKE FORCE REGISTRATION  
(ONLINE REGISTRATION FORM)**

Employee Classification

- Full-time Faculty       Administrator       Classified Staff  
 Other

Employee Name

COC Extension

Home Phone

Email Address(es) Contact

Which strike force topic are you interested in participating in?

The WeConnect strike force is a year-long professional development opportunity. It is expected that task forces will meet at least 41 hours over the course of the academic year. Are you willing and able to participate over the 2008-2009 academic year?



# WeConnect

through Professional Development

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- What are you passionate about?
- Would you like an opportunity to work with colleagues who share your interest?
- Are you looking for a way to make a difference?

**WeConnect** is a Strike Force approach to Professional Development.

- **WeConnect** is a year long professional development opportunity;
  - **WeConnect** is focused inquiry on topics you are passionate about;
  - **WeConnect** is a joint effort of all employee constituencies working together;
  - **WeConnect** is outcome driven. You will make a difference!
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## 2008-2009 Themes

Technology: Generation Next

The COC Identity: Our Community, Culture and Connectedness

Community Partnerships: How to raise funds and build relationships for success

Learn more at the **WeConnect** website  
<http://sites.google.com/a/canyons.edu/weconnect>






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**APPENDIX 4  
STRIKE FORCE INTEREST CARD**

 <p><b>WeConnect</b> through Professional Development</p> <hr/> <p><b>STRIKE FORCE INTEREST CARD</b></p>	
<i>I'd like more information about:</i>	
Mark one	Themes
	1. Technology: Generation Next
	2. Partnerships: How to Raise Funds and Make Friends
	3. Identity: Our Community, Culture and Connectedness
Name _____ Ext: _____ Email: _____  <p style="text-align: right;"><i>You make a difference!</i></p>	
<p><u>For more information on any of the strike forces contact one of your colleagues:</u></p> <p>For theme 1: Wendy Brill-Wynkoop, Donna Voogt          For theme 2: Claudia Acosta, Jon Amador, Cynthia Madia          For theme 3: James Glapa-Grossklag, Donna Haywood</p> <p><i>Return card to Leslie Carr in Professional Development.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><a href="http://sites.google.com/a/canyons.edu/weconnect/">http://sites.google.com/a/canyons.edu/weconnect/</a></p>	



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### APPENDIX 5 WECONNECT WEBSITE

<http://sites.google.com/a/canyons.edu/weconnect>

#### WeConnect Home

**WeConnect is a Strike Force approach to Professional Development**

- WeConnect is a year long professional development opportunity;
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- WeConnect is outcome driven. You will make a difference!

