

Comments Re Board Agenda Item 8

4/22/2009 9:10:00 AM

Good evening Trustees, District Administrative Center Staff, colleagues and members of the viewing public. I'm KvP, President of the Laney College Faculty Senate, Vice President of the District Academic Senate, and a tenured psychology faculty member here in the Peralta district.

I will preface my remarks with a brief history of the evolution of the ILET standards document, my/our involvement in the process and how it came about. Late last spring, during a facilities advisory committee meeting we learned that the Dept. of General Services had set an intention to begin installing smart classrooms during the summer of 2008. We were NOT a committee of any kind, but a small ad hoc group of academic senate presidents who volunteered to be involved in meetings with the consultants who were working on developing these standards.

Some of us are wondering why these standards are even being presented for board approval, in the absence of a similar requirement for any/all other measure A expenditures.

This board approval request sets a precedent that has implications for devaluing faculty expertise in making recommendations that specify classroom instructional needs in the area of educational technology and beyond.

E.g., when the science labs need retrofitting, will the standards for how that is to occur require board approval? When office or classroom furniture is upgraded/replaced, will standards for making those decisions require board approval?

I will note that these ILET standards intentionally do NOT include specifications for laboratory classrooms, because it has been acknowledged that different discipline-specific labs are likely to have different technology equipment needs. Will the board also be expected to approve and/or second-guess faculty recommendations for those specifics, lab by lab?

Having this additional step of requiring board approval would also slow down the process considerably. The final document of standards specifications was

completed in late 2008. Laney has been attempting to get approval to move ahead with its smart classrooms installations since then.

In addition, the supportive documents for this item include a detailed proposal for scope of work to design, bid and build the 3 levels of "smart classrooms" specifically at Laney College. Some of the major decisions referenced in this document were not made at the college level. This document is the first time we have seen that specific classrooms have been assigned to one of the 3 levels. We don't know who made those decisions or why the senate was not consulted about them.

In the meantime, in some ways, this was perhaps a fortunate, if frustrating, delay, in that it allowed for the discovery of a presentation/podium package that combines several of the individual components in the standards list into a turn-key solution that would cost considerably less for at least level 1 of the standards being presented.

This turn-key solution is already in use at Merritt, and was discovered by our head librarian, Shirley Coaston, when she attended an event at Merritt where the equipment was being used for a presentation.

[Provide handouts to board trustees et al]

I will acknowledge one significant oversight of ours, in that the ILET standards neglect to address ADA accessibility from the point of view of the faculty member or other presenter. To be completely honest, I didn't think of that until saw the Nomad Tech brochure, nor did anyone else who was involved in the development of these standards. This is an oversight that must be addressed if we are going to make necessary accommodations for faculty/presenters who are in electric chairs.

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