William C. Farmer Jr.
President’s Message
February 9, 2009

Dear Campus Colleagues,

Here’s my latest update of items that may be of interest to you.

1. **Student Success:** I spent last Thursday and Friday signing 350 letters of congratulation to students who earned a 4.0 GPA in Fall. My office also sent out 1,977 invitations to students whose academic records have qualified them to join Phi Theta Kappa, the college’s honor society. These positive achievements by our students give us reasons to celebrate the good work that occurs at Cerritos College. I’m also looking forward to the upcoming Academic Excellence Awards—always one of the highlights of the year—on March 24, 2009, where we will again celebrate student success in a very public way.

On Tuesday, February 10, I will be presenting the 2008 ARCC (Accountability Reporting for Community Colleges) data to the Faculty Senate meeting. This is the second year of data that has been gathered and, on these measures, our success rates are not where I would like them to be. Compared to our peer institutions, we emerge below average on every measure. I presented the data to the Board of Trustees at last Wednesday’s meeting and we had a rich discussion of what might be done to improve our success rates. Improving them will involve concerted efforts by all of us. There will be more about this in the near future.

2. **Enrollment:** The census date for 18-week classes was last Monday, and our enrollment continues to increase. Over 24,000 students are enrolled this semester at Cerritos and our FTES enrollments are up by 10.3% even though we have reduced the number of sections offered.

3. **Accreditation:** The progress report is now in its almost-final version and will be submitted to the Board of Trustees for their certification on February 18, 2009. My humble thanks go to all of you who sent thoughtful comments and offered examples of additional evidence to support one or more of the sections in the report.

This progress report is qualitatively different from the self-study we completed last year. The self-study was a comprehensive analysis of how the college, as a whole, measured itself against the standards of the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC). A progress report, in contrast, is a focused report that presents evidence of activities that respond to the specific recommendations for improvement issued by the commission. In our case, there were four recommendations to be addressed this year. A progress report, of necessity, is more reportorial than analytical because the commission wants to know what actions the college has taken to address it recommendations. That’s why it is called a report, not a self-study.
Even after the report is submitted, we will keep working on issues related to the four recommendations that must be addressed this year. Our goal is to compile additional evidence of our progress so that the visiting team can see all that we have done to address the recommendations when it arrives. We will be doing surveys of the campus to assess opinion on how much progress we have made on Recommendations 2 and 8. Look for those in the near future.

4. **Evaluation of Planning and Resource Allocation Process:** As you know, one of the four accreditation recommendations calls on the College to evaluate the planning and resource allocation process. The process of planning this year for 2009-10 is not complete, of course. We still have to establish the College-wide resource priorities list, build a tentative budget that reflects those priorities, wait for final approval of the State budget, and finally fund resource requests in priority order, and implement plans, to the extent that our actual revenues permit. A full evaluation of the entire planning and resource allocation process must wait till all those steps are done.

However, we can do a formative evaluation of this year’s planning and resource allocation process to date. We have asked unit managers and department chairs, division managers, area managers, and Planning and Budget Committee members, as leading participants in that process, to identify some of its strengths and weaknesses, and to suggest ways to improve it for next year.

If you are not in one of these groups but participated in the process and would like to provide your own feedback, please give your comments to your unit manager, your department chair, or a member of the Planning and Budget Committee. Thank you in advance for your help in this evaluation.

5. **Upcoming Events:** We have a number of exciting events coming up. We have a groundbreaking for the Classroom/Laboratory/Office Building that will house physical sciences and some of technology at 5 p.m. on March 4, 2009.

Then, on Friday, March 27, 2009, we will break ground for the new Southland Cerritos Center for Transportation Technology. We have invited Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger to join us and are hopeful that his schedule will allow him to join us.

6. **Lobbying Efforts:** Director of Governmental and Public Affairs Mark Wallace and several of our trustees are in Washington D.C. this week participating in a massive lobbying effort coordinated by the Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT). Here is California Community College Vice Chancellor Anne McKinney’s most recent update about those lobbying efforts:
Dear Colleagues:

Under sunny skies, billowing white clouds and temperatures in the low 60's, California CEOs and Trustees are fanning out across the Hill on the eve of the momentous vote for the federal stimulus package. President Obama's target date for signing the measure is Presidents Day (is that's or plurals?); therefore, advocacy is directed to leadership and Conference Committee members. Thematic focus is on community colleges as an engine for economic recovery in California.

Priorities include:

1. Restore Stabilization funding -- If the state were to allocate federal funds in proportion to current state funding levels (80 percent to K-12, 9.9 percent to CCC, 5.1 percent to UC and 4.6 percent to CSU, under the House measure, the CCC would receive $242 million in FY 09/10, funding 3.92 percent enrollment or 46,990 FTES -- thus avoiding significant course reductions in Fall 09 and maintaining significant investments in critical but high cost CTE programs such as automotive technology and green energy, among other career enhancing programs;

2. Retain community college specific language in the Senate measure which states that Workforce Investment Boards may provide "full cost" funding for community colleges to provide job training;

3. Use Title IV definition for "eligible expenses" in American Opportunity Tax Credit program, as it would capture more low-income students who would be penalized under the current definition because of access to BOG waivers and Pell grants which results in lowering deduction amounts in federal calculations; and,

4. Restore Senate modernization funding as CCC stands to gain $300 - $400 million, which would save jobs as well as create jobs -- shovels are in the ground and machinery is standing idle -- in a timely manner since the money was to be used within nine months after a campus contract was let. Senate language guarantees community colleges a minimum share of funding at the state level, based in FTES.

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Sincerely,  
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Cerritos College