

**March 26, 2007**

## **STATE BOARD APPROVES COMMUNITY COLLEGE PETITION**

BOISE — The Idaho State Board of Education today unanimously approved a petition to create a new community college district in southwest Idaho.

"I'm thrilled that we are moving forward," said State Board of Education President Laird Stone. "There is significant need for a community college in this area of the state and we hope the good people of Ada and Canyon counties embrace this opportunity to help their children and grandchildren for years to come."

The vote now clears the way for an election to create a new taxing district, specifically designated to form and fund a new community college. An order from the State Board approving the petition presented by the Community College Yes! group and authorizing a vote will be sent to the Canyon County Commissioners. The date for that election will be chosen by the Canyon County Commissioners. The Canyon County Commissioners have the jurisdiction, even though the proposed community college district incorporates Ada County, because the actual physical location of the college is in Canyon County. That location is the current West Campus of Boise State University, located near the Idaho Center and on Nampa-Caldwell Boulevard.

The State Board of Education received the petition, which included 3,200 signatures, satisfying the legal requirement of at least 1,000.

Section [33-2101](#), Idaho Code, designates specific criteria to be met in-order to form any new community college. Those requirements are:

- • The community college district must contain four (4) or more school districts
- • The aggregate enrollment in grades nine (9) through twelve (12) must be at least 2,000 students
- • Net taxable property value of no less than 100 million dollars
- • Review of academic courses to be offered and existing post-secondary opportunities within the proposed district
- • Number of prospective students
- • Financial viability of the new institution including available facilities

The proposed community college district includes eleven (11) public school districts, with an aggregate high school student enrollment of more than 25,000 9th-12th grade students (fall '06).

The net taxable market value of the proposed community college district as of September 2006 is in excess of \$35 billion dollars.

There are more than 13 institutions of higher learning, both public and private, within the proposed community college district. Those institutions include:

1. Boise State University
2. University of Idaho
3. Idaho State University
4. Albertson College of Idaho
5. Northwest Nazarene University
6. Treasure Valley Community College of Oregon
7. Boise Bible College
8. George Fox University
9. Stevens-Henager College
10. University of Phoenix
11. Apollo College
12. ITT Technical Institute
13. Lesley University National Outreach

The historic mission of community colleges is to embrace "life long learners," i.e. non-traditional students (those typically over the age of 24). Thus, the total population of the proposed community college district, from which it

could draw, is estimated to be in excess of 515,000 residents. Ada and Canyon counties jointly comprise the largest metropolitan area in the country (outside of Washington DC) that does NOT have an existing community college.

The State Board of Education is particularly interested in increasing access and affordability of post secondary training and education and believes that a comprehensive community college is critical in meeting this need. Therefore, the Board overwhelmingly endorses this effort and is anxious to see more educational opportunities come to fruition in Southwestern Idaho.

For more information, please visit [www.boardofed.idaho.gov](http://www.boardofed.idaho.gov)