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Wilbur Wright College

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FCCCC President's Address
CCC Board of Trustee's Meeting
Thursday, November 6, 2003

Chairman Tyree, Chancellor Watson, members of the Board, Officers of the District, faculty, staff and all others present, Good morning.

I am going to talk first about the activities on Committee A and Faculty Council and then a bit about the book, *Race in the Schoolyard*. I'm going to conclude with some questions to ponder for the next month.

In October, members of Committee A and the Faculty Council of the City Colleges of Chicago continued the lively debate about Math 112, and we've asked that, when the syllabus has been vetted and finalized by the different math departments according to the LAI demands, that it be presented to the local curriculum committees at each college and then to Committee A and Faculty Council. This follows the protocol for courses in the system and facilitates communication among faculty members and administrators. We don't want this initiative to fail and we think that this is the best way for it to succeed.

There has also been a push to systematize and to rationalize the studio art courses throughout the district. Committee A and Faculty Council approved changed to twenty-eight advanced level studio art courses that would make the transfer of these courses clearer to the transferring institutions and easier for the registrars at each City College. We are also awaiting a few new courses from art faculty and a reorganization of courses, in order to offer an Associate in Fine Arts. Faculty at both Harold Washington and Wright, in particular, are working on this initiative, and our committees should approve these changes perhaps by the end of the year. In addition, art faculty at Wright College has brokered an articulation agreement with the Art Institute of Chicago based on portfolio review, and Harold Washington and Truman are also interested in this articulation. One of the especially exciting aspects of this collaboration is that the Art Institute has promised to separate the scholarship funds, so that students from a 2-year institution only compete with other community college student and not students from other 4-year institutions.

Let me now turn to *Race in the Schoolyard*. I hope that this was a stimulating and challenging read. One of the more compelling arguments in this book is the idea that racial identity is not a stable, unchanging, innate thing but a social construction, always

chapter of the book); instead, it arises from uninformed and unreflective behavior and thoughts. She argues that race is a powerful and often negative factor in education and that we are not color-blind, only blind to the pernicious effects of denying race as a factor. To pretend that race (and class and economic and ethnic and gender identity) do not influence major and minor events in our lives and in our schools is to allow inequality to persist.

Okay, let's say that she's right. What do we do and how do we do it? What do we mean by race and racial identity? Does a diverse faculty best serve a diverse student body? Does it need to be diverse in the same way? How do we integrate multiculturalism into the curriculum and what is honest multiculturalism? What narratives do we include in our classes? What best serves our students who have been poorly served in their k-12 studies? In sum, how do we confront this issue in a meaningful and sensitive manner?

I don't know, but I do know that we cannot ignore the issue.

Respectfully submitted,



Polly Hoover

President, FCCCC