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COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT NO. 508
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FCCCC President's Address
CCC Board of Trustee's Meeting
Thursday, August 6th, 2015

Chancellor Hyman, Chair Middleton and members of the Board, good morning.

First, I'd like to welcome our new Chairman and Trustees: Chairman Middleton, Trustee Gardner, Trustee Goldman, and Trustee Kent: we look forward to working with you and benefitting from the various expertise you bring to the Board.

This is an exciting time to join the City Colleges; the District is making progress meeting the ambitious, and extremely important Reinvention goals set out by Chancellor Hyman; just a few days ago, I was forwarded a magazine article in *University Business* that highlighted the recent work of the City Colleges. Such swift progress on these goals is a feat given the current financial challenges faced by all of public education and also given the size of our seven college system.

Part of why I am here this morning is to tell you, new Trustees, what makes this an amazing institution to serve. Our mission is vital to this city, especially to segments of the population that have been underserved by traditional universities. The faculty here at the City Colleges of Chicago are committed to serving our students, and with that commitment comes passion. You have heard some of these committed and passionate educators speaking today.

A central part of our mission is to "eliminate barriers to employment and to address and overcome inequality of access and graduation in higher education." It is clear how we as an institution are working hard to address employment and graduation rates and are increasingly focused on metrics related to college completion. Faculty Council supports this focus and understands its necessity as a matter of public trust and as a part of nation-wide shifts in thinking about higher education and two-year colleges. But, within these new parameters, we are also committed to ensuring that we not lose sight of our core mission to provide access of opportunity for the citizens of Chicago to a quality education and to overcome issues of longstanding inequality in our city.

The faculty are committed to open dialogue and want to encourage this as a regular practice, especially in regards to our mission. A few very large decisions were made over the summer while faculty were on break and unable to swiftly respond. Because we found out about many of these changes after they were already implemented, we have included a brief appendix further commenting on those issues.

With a district the size of ours, and with a mission as important as ours, there will at times be differences of opinions about the best ways to move forward. We, the faculty, believe that it is through dialogue on key issues we can move forward most productively. Faculty need to be involved in making those hard choices for three key reasons. First, we have access to our student

population in a way that administrators do not and that gives us a privileged kind of information that we need to have the opportunity to share. Second, faculty are often here for many decades, allowing us to provide a historical perspective and provide continuity. Third, we see it as one of the most fundamental parts of our job to be experts in education and – as experts – it can only serve the institution to have faculty involved in the key decision-making at a learning institution.

We know that funds are limited; we know that the District has hard choices to make. We are committed to providing service and knowledge that allows us to uphold our mission and to support our students. We want to make sure that our mission is at the heart of all of our tough decisions.

We had a productive, and passionate, meeting yesterday with Executive Vice Chancellor Lynnerup, and we will continue to demonstrate that faculty hold a unique and important perspective, invaluable when navigating a complex and large institution such as ours.

We look forward to the many more productive conversations to come. Thank you.

Appendix to Faculty Council Address to the City Colleges of Chicago Board of Trustees:

The City Colleges of Chicago Faculty Council, on behalf of the seven city colleges, is providing this appendix to the City Colleges of Chicago Board of Trustees and District Administration as a way of documenting a number of shared concerns that we have regarding major decisions made over the summer break, to which we have not had or been given the opportunity to formally respond. These decisions included the registration date change, the tuition structure change, and the announced consolidation of the Child Development Program. We are deeply troubled by these decisions for the following reasons:

- Access: Major decisions such as the registration date change, the tuition fee increases, and planned program consolidations risk significantly limiting access. The planned consolidation of the Child Development Program from six colleges to one North side college *greatly* limits access for students on the South and West sides in particular by increasing their commute time by up to an hour and forty minutes each way.
- Timing: Both the new Fall 2015 registration date change and the tuition increases were announced during summer break, *after* students and faculty had departed campus for the summer. Most of our students are still unaware of these changes, and those students who had already registered for the fall term agreed to a now-outdated payment structure and will be sent additional billing.
- Fairness: In an effort to incentivize full-time course-taking, the new flat fee tuition structure unfairly penalizes our part-time and international students. Though administration has suggested that the new structure is a benefit for students if they take

more than 12 credit hours, we find that this incentive may encourage students to take more courses than they can realistically complete.

- Social Justice: As City Colleges of Chicago shifts its focus towards completion metrics, faculty want to ensure that we do not increase barriers of access. We want to make sure that we do not close the door on our most vulnerable students, but instead work together as a District to better support all students and thus realize our full mission.

Democratic systems hinge upon how and why decisions are made; as a public institution designed to serve the city of Chicago, we have a great responsibility to ensure that our decisions best serve the entire community. As faculty, we see it as our responsibility to work with the administration to make sure our decisions uphold our full mission. When we are shut out of the decision making process, we are unable to fulfill this obligation.

Respectfully submitted,
Faculty Council of the City Colleges of Chicago