

Community members demand VVC take action

April 24, 2013 8:13 PM

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[Jose Quintero, Staff Writer](#)

VICTORVILLE • A meeting to address what organizers say is a "lack of leadership" at Victor Valley College will be held Monday.

Organizers say the goal is to form a Community Action Committee to demand that the College's Board of Trustees take all measures to keep the college accredited. The college has been on warning that it could lose its accreditation since 2005, and it has been on probation since 2011.

Lynne Glickstein, a local attorney and VVC instructor who was critical of college president/superintendent Dr. Christopher O'Hearn at a board meeting on April 9, is one of the organizers of Monday's meeting at the Spring Valley Lake Community Center at 6 p.m. Glickstein said the goal is to "make things better" at the college and wants to provide accountability, responsibility and transparency.

"The college has a huge impact on this community," Glickstein said. "At some point our community has to speak up, we just can't let everything go down the tube. ... We can't keep going down the same path."

The college was placed on probation in 2011 by the Accreditation Commission for Community and Junior Colleges for failing to comply with several standards. VVC has until Oct. 15 to meet those standards or lose its accreditation, which is needed for student degrees, transfers to four-year schools and financial aid. The college was given nine recommendations to address, and six have been met.

The three remaining recommendations are about 80 percent resolved and the college is on track to solve those issues, O'Hearn said.

Earlier this week, a letter publicizing the meeting was emailed to several people, including O'Hearn.

Glickstein urged the Board of Trustees at the April 9 meeting to find a "proven successor" to fix the school's accreditation woes.

The committee that scheduled Monday's meeting does not believe the public is fully informed of the critical issues at the college, the letter read. The goal is to have the community voices heard and to make the Board of Trustees aware of their frustrations about the accreditation issue.

Glickstein said the Board of Trustees work for the public. She said it is the public's job to let Board members know what they think so they can represent the people who elected them.

"The school is being wasted because we can't clean up the accreditation issues," said Diana Carloni, an attorney who has spent 10 years on the VVC Foundation. "Eight years on warning is enough. It has been frustrating. We need the jewel of the High Desert repolished."

The group of community members want community representation at every VVC board meeting and seek speakers who will demand a response when questioning procedures, protocols and expenditures.

Jose Quintero can be reached at 760-951-6232 or [jqintero@vvdailypress.com](mailto:jquintero@vvdailypress.com).