

# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

August 4, 2013

The one major problem that will prevent Victor Valley College from getting off probation is the annual commitment to what the education management experts consider “generous health and welfare benefits to the employees” and maintaining a staffing level that depends on taking funds from the Reserves, because the annual costs exceed annual revenues.

The full-time faculty union representatives and their surrogates do not want to concede anything until the Reserves are depleted. The Acting Superintendent was once a union person who has demonstrated continued commitment to pull funds from wherever possible to increase benefits to union members. And two Trustees are committed to appointing Joe Range, who is backed by the union.

Budgeting for 2013-14 is now taking place. Two years from now, budgeting work for 2015-16 will have to take place. The Board of Trustees passed a resolution more than a year ago to balance the budget by fiscal year 2015-16. However, the resolution cannot be implemented without a board approved plan, which still doesn't exist and most likely will not as long as the board will not appoint a fifth member who will vote to hold the Superintendent accountable for getting a suitable plan board approved and implemented, which means setting limits on future labor negotiations with the unions.

The Accrediting Commission (ACCJC) was looking for a fiscal plan last October. Because, in April of 2012, VVC hired an expert consulting team (Fiscal Crisis Management Assistance Team – FCMAT) to provide specific recommendations and the team had not yet delivered their report, the ACCJC gave VVC one more year, until this October. The FCMAT gave VVC the report in April, 2013. Another four months have passed and the only thing that has happened since is the FCMAT report was forwarded to the Shared Governance Budget and Finance Committee. VVC still does not have a board-approved plan in place and in the process of implementation, and it is only two months before ACCJC returns for an accounting.

How is ACCJC going to view VVC in October without a board approved plan in place to cap employee health and welfare benefits and staffing levels?

Does ACCJC give VVC another extension, or do they make VVC “show cause” why VVC should not lose accreditation?

How is the VVC board going to appoint an Interim Superintendent without at least a majority demanding accountability from that superintendent for getting these things done?

How can the trustees be confident in an Acting Superintendent who is committed to doing the opposite of what the ACCJC and FCMAT says needs to be done?

How can anyone not call this situation a crisis for the Victor Valley?

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