

I am Stuart Weismiller, President of the NCC Foundation Board. I am here today to talk about how we already put students first from both a Foundation Board and a donor perspective.

- We appreciate the need for a transformational approach in a difficult budget situation.
- We also recognize that for students to truly benefit, any plan must preserve hard-earned and invaluable community financial support.
- Our goal is to leverage successful, innovative thinking and relationships in local communities.

On November 13, 2017, the NCC Foundation provided President Ojakian with three recommendations to be proactive in a difficult budget situation:

1. Leverage scale without sacrificing the brand reputation built over decades. Retain individual college names: 'Norwalk Community College, a branch (or member) of the Community College of Connecticut.'
2. Create the position of Provost vs. Vice-President for each campus, authorized to approve privately funded student success initiatives at the local level.
3. Consult local businesses and community councils on any curriculum changes that would negatively impact opportunities for student hiring and meeting local workforce needs.

To provide a context of our recommendations, I would like to share the following:

- The NCC Foundation is unique among CT community college foundations.
 - We receive no state funding
 - We assume 100% of our personnel, development, and operational costs.
 - NCCF manages more than \$27 million in funds.
 - Each year we provide \$2-3 million in support to NCC and its students.
- Several factors have led to our success in raising funds and meeting NCC's evolving needs:
 - Our engagement with the local community to promote NCC as an essential local institution.
 - Over the past 51 years, NCCF has cultivated a wide network of donors and partners who support NCC's crucial role in Fairfield County's economic and social development.
 - Our message has been clear: NCC students live, work, and raise families in Fairfield County; supporting NCC supports and strengthens our local community.
- A key ingredient of the NCC 'brand' is an excellent academic reputation that extends well beyond Connecticut and encourages highly selective 4-year colleges and universities to recruit and accept our transferring students.

- Since 2008, NCCF has awarded \$1.5 million in transfer scholarships to our highest achieving graduates to pursue Bachelor degrees.
- Fully 97% of our transfer scholarship recipients have graduated from their 4-year institutions or are still in school (the national 4-yr college graduation rate is 60%).
- 2017 examples include Columbia, Duke, Mt. Holyoke, and RPI. We are deeply concerned that the loss of the distinct NCC degree and its reputation will negatively impact future graduates as they compete for transfer admissions and financial aid.
- Despite our independence, the Foundation has developed a strong partnership with NCC leadership to further our common goals.
 - We rely on President Levinson's active participation in identifying funding needs, engaging donor support, and maintaining all-important community and business relationships.
 - Direct access and swift response are important considerations for our local partners and donors.
- We believe that the ability to approve donor-funded initiatives at the local level is critical to continued program support at or near current levels.

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