

## Carl Sandburg College

### A Vision for the Future

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For the past forty (40) years, Carl Sandburg College (CSC) has fulfilled its obligation to provide a comprehensive range of programs and services as called for in the Community College Act of 1965.

More recently, CSC has responded to the needs of communities within our district by mobilizing our resources (human, technological, and financial) and activating M.A.S.H. Unit #518 (**M**obile **A**cademic **S**ervice **H**abitat). By delivering courses and support services when and where they were most needed and effective, the College has enabled hundreds (plus) in their efforts to find new meaning to their lives.

Leading by example, the College Board of Trustees heartily endorsed the concepts and recommendations contained within our PHENIX PROGRAM (see attached), designed to prioritize district-wide activities, provide a much needed sense of direction, and most importantly, express a strong **belief in a positive future**. This initiative features:

#### **Three (3) Primary Strategies**

1. **Make further capital investments** into expanding and renovating the College's Physical Plant as called for in Phase V of the SMART (bonding) initiative (**S**trategic **M**anagement and **R**esources **T**ogether).

This has been substantially completed with the new Allied Health Building becoming operational in January 2006; the Adult Education Program expansion into the old Maintenance Building; the Cosmetology Program relocating into the Downtown Annex Building; and the old Bookstore having been renovated to house our new Student Success Center (SSC).

2. **Launching new "Silos of Opportunity,"** including academic programs; expanded student recruitment and retention efforts; stronger relations with our public school partners (as evidenced by the ENVOY Program and the EduNet Project) and a strategic realignment of the CSC Foundation designed to facilitate "localized" fund raising in support of Dual Credit programming.
3. **A commitment to operating the College within the framework of the existing financial resources.** This will continue to be the most challenging strategy to achieve, given the lack of state support and declining value of local properties (equalized assessed valuations) due predominantly to farm land re-assessments.

Combined, these core strategies are intended to result in a "Re-shaped Institution" which is expected to unfold and become more clearly defined during/between the 2010 and 2014 fiscal years.

Building upon a quality and dedicated workforce, the college offers itself as a “beacon of stability” in the midst of relative uncertainty i. e., declining public school enrollments, changing workforce requirements, heightened state and federal demands for “accountability,” and increased competition in the arena of economic development.

Under girding the PHENIX Program are three (3) formal planning initiatives designed to ensure that the College leads, and remains connected to, its’ various communities:

### **Three (3) Planning Initiatives**

#### **1. District Site & Construction Master Plan**

Last updated in October of 2003, the College architectural firm of Phillips Swager Associates (PSA)/Dewberry is meeting with college constituents from across the district to refresh this formal document. This will help to ensure that all facility improvements are addressed in an order which best addresses our most critical needs.

#### **2. Re-Accreditation**

Having received a maximum accreditation (extension) of ten (10) years from the Higher Learning Commission in the fall of 2001, the College’s Instructional Team has already begun the planning process to determine which pathway best fits Carl Sandburg College as we gear up for re-accreditation in the year 2011.

A formal investigation of AQIP (Academic Quality Improvement Program) is currently being conducted as but one option, with final determinations anticipated by fall 2006.

#### **3. Strategic Thinking/Planning Initiative**

This unprecedented and comprehensive planning process is intended to result in:

- The articulation of a formal vision statement by the Board of Trustees of the College.
- A re-visited and refreshed Mission Statement by the Board of Trustees.
- The inaugural utilization of a Strategic Planning Committee (SPC) comprised of additional representatives from all constituent groups and charged with identifying and articulating the College:
  - Statement of Purposes
  - Core Values
  - Institutional Focal Points/Goals
  - Strategic “Pressure Points”

Using (among others) the traditional tools of an environmental scanning survey and a SWOC analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Challenges), the SPC will be asked to identify, articulate, and organize the desired outcomes that the College should be achieving in the future; the preferred performance standards and measurements we hope to accomplish these outcomes with; the current status of our performance and related trends.

It is anticipated that Unit Objectives and Action Plans will be incorporated into annual budget requests by budget managers and committee chairmen in response to this strategic thinking/planning process.

### **District Priorities**

Given that Carl Sandburg College has never had the luxury of infinite financial resources, we have accepted the premise that money is not the issue, priorities are the issue.

As such, the “batting order” of priorities to be employed by the College as we engage an uncertain future is as follows:

1. **STUDENTS will continue to come first.** Ultimately, we want all decisions made in response to the simple questions of “what is the best interest(s) of the student?”
2. **TECHNOLOGY will continue to be used** to check-mate the traditional barriers created by geographic distance (3,000 square mile district) and to weave together a seamless and localized delivery system capable of allowing access to the full spectrum of educational needs of our citizens, including non-credit and credit programming from pre-kindergarten through doctoral course work.
3. **ENVIRONMENT will be monitored** both within and outside of the College. Board appointed citizen(s) advisory committees, SPC planning activities, ENVOY reports, and the employee communications program will be used to ensure that the College’s **leadership** will be connected to and supported by effective **follow-ship**.
4. **HUMAN RESOURCE & ORGANIZATION DEVELOPMENT will be used as a problem solving technique.** Building upon a unique rolling collective bargaining agreement (thru June 2010) the College recognizes that our greatest asset is our human resources.
5. **LINKAGES between and among constituents** within the College district, as well as external/neighborhood organizations will continue to be priority with an eye towards maintaining high quality/low cost programs and services.
6. **STABILITY within the College’s operations** will continue to enable our students to better deal with the uncertainties impacting their own individual lives.

7. **ASSESSMENT of operating outcomes** will be done on a continuous basis. Consistent with the Board's approach to POLICY GOVERNANCE, efforts that don't result in the desired outcome will not be "penalized." Rather, the College will build on our knowledge of what does not work and encourage risk taking.
8. **LEARNING will be assessed** at the course, program and institutional levels with a commitment towards continuous improvement.
9. **DATA will be enhanced and incorporated** into the College's decision making process.

### **The Next Forty Years**

Carl Sandburg College will serve as the hub around which the West-Central Illinois K-16 educational wheel will rotate. The College will either deliver directly the programs/services desired by our constituents or, by serving as a no/low cost conduit, broker access to those that fall outside the scope of our mission.

The College is uniquely positioned across our ten (10) county district to provide a growing array of K-16 (+) educational programs, non-credit activities, support services, and economic development activities.

These may target the full spectrum of businesses, from individual entrepreneurs (rural access to high-speed/broad-band internet) to emerging limited liability corporations (LLC) and established companies proactively looking to invest in their own futures (TIF Districts and Enterprise Zones).

**M.A.S.H. Unit #518 (Carl Sandburg College) will continue the heritage of delivering quality programs and services WHEN and WHERE they are needed.**