

**TITLE:           PROGRESS ON IMPLEMENTING RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE  
ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY TASK FORCE  
(Budget and Finance Committee, Information Item D.4)**

**BACKGROUND:**

This item provides a summary and progress updates on the implementation of the recommendations of the Environmental Sustainability Task Force endorsed by the State Board for Community Colleges at its September, 2009 meeting. Updates were received from the colleges in Spring 2011, 2012, and again, in 2013. Attached is an “At A Glance Summary” of the progress made towards the implementation of the goals to which the colleges have committed.

A detailed report of all responses received from the colleges can be found at the Facilities home page on the VCCS website.

Responses indicate that the colleges continue to expand current practices and operations to further promote sustainability as a part of the culture on each campus. Highlights from the colleges' responses for the June 2013 update include:

**1. Environmental sustainability scholars program/Guidelines for modifying courses**

- Colleges continue to encourage faculty to include sustainability content in existing courses.
- Several colleges have expanded their course offerings to include new courses and/or career studies certificates with a focus in sustainability.
- A few colleges offer non-credit courses that emphasize wind, solar, and weatherization topics.
- Tidewater installed a geothermal simulator, trained their faculty to use the simulator, and now uses the device in the Renewable Energy Technologies program. Also, Tidewater's faculty in the Automotive Technology program continue to pursue a Compressed Natural Gas Vehicle program and expansion of hybrid vehicle coursework throughout the program curricula.

**2. Annual funding for professional development**

- Most colleges reported that they continue to provide resources for professional development opportunities, specifically for faculty development, which may be used for sustainability-related opportunities (e.g., conferences, training, etc.).
- Members of Germanna's Environmental Sustainability Committee attended a webinar to learn how to incorporate philosophies into the curricula; toured VCU's Rice Center; presented two well-attended sessions at the college's annual learning day; and participated in other professional development opportunities.

### **3. Gaps between existing college programs and industry needs/ Programs and scholarships to bridge gaps**

- Previously, several colleges completed an analysis to identify gaps in course offerings needed to meet industry needs and then, developed courses and/or implemented program enhancements to serve industry needs. Colleges reported that they continue to make adjustments to course and program offerings to serve their local businesses and industries.
- This summer, Lord Fairfax is hosting a Lunch and Learn series on energy Management that will feature ways to reduce energy costs for schools, universities, government agencies, and healthcare providers.
- This past spring, Virginia Highlands opened the solar-powered coffee shop (Wolf Grounds), which is operated by students, uses organic products and renewable energy, and serves as a hands-on learning laboratory for students enrolled in a variety of academic programs. Funding provided by the Virginia Department of Mines, Minerals, and Energy supported the installation of solar panels and wind mills, which will help provide power to Wolf Grounds.

### **4. LEED silver or Green Globes two-globe standards**

- Complying with the Governor's Executive Order #19, colleges continue to conform to either LEED silver or Green Globe two-globe standards for capital outlay projects.
- A few colleges reported plans to develop design and construction standards/guidelines to further support sustainable development and operations of college facilities.
- Many of the college's master plans now incorporate sustainable features.
- Piedmont Virginia's Horticulture Club operates an organic garden that is funded from local funds and serves as a practical learning platform for environmentally-sound horticulture.

### **5. Program for ensuring a healthy learning and work environment**

- A few colleges reported that they participate in the CommonHealth program to promote healthy living.
- Danville has an active health improvement program with opportunities to receive a flu vaccination, take an exercise class, learn about preventative healthcare practices, complete health screenings, and participate in weight loss programs.
- Thomas Nelson's Environmental Sustainability Task Force teamed with the college's Student Government Association for their annual Spring Fest/Earth Day activities to promote the recycling of cell phones, laptops, and desktop computers, and used a local vendor authorized for the proper disposal of these items.

### **6. Preventative Maintenance Program**

- Many of the colleges continue their preventative maintenance practices.
- Several colleges reported using a software or web-based program to assist with their preventative maintenance operations.

- Virginia Western completed several projects that resulted in greater energy efficiency, such as: replacement of ADA doors that provided weather-proofing for exterior doors, improves visibility, and brings in more light; replacement of light fixtures that uses less electrical power, but produces the same amount of light; and upgrades to LED lighting for light fixtures in parking lots.

#### **7. Reduce fuel consumption and carbon emissions**

- A few colleges have implemented a web-based, social networking, ride-share system to promote carpooling.
- A few colleges offer shuttle services and/or discounted rates for public transportation.
- Danville conducted an experiment with the college's security contractor to study the feasibility and desire to use electric bikes (eBikes) instead of traditional bikes and foot patrols. Results were favorable due to quicker response times and better coverage because more "rounds" can be made per shift.

#### **8. Sustainability committee**

- Most of the colleges have active sustainability committees, many of which are a part of the college's governance structure.
- Several colleges reported revamping the college's "green page" to better inform, promote, and/or generate awareness of sustainability initiatives.
- The System Office Green Team partnered with Institutional Advancement to provide VCCS tumblers to System Office staff as a friendly reminder of the environmental benefits of choosing reusable cups over canned/bottled drinks, as well as to promote the recalibrated Achieve 2015 strategic plan. VCCS tumblers were distributed to staff at the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual VCCS Earth Day Celebration.

#### **9. Procurement practices**

- Several colleges incorporate sustainability criteria into requests for proposals to procure goods and services.
- A few colleges indicated the current practice of purchasing recycled and environmentally-preferable materials, Energy Star appliances, and green housekeeping products.
- Blue Ridge utilizes services and materials available through Virginia's Office of Surplus Property for modular office system walls and furniture, which allows use, re-use, and re-use again of these components throughout the campus.

#### **10. Information technologies**

- Most colleges continue to realize the benefits of virtual servers and SharePoint sites, and now cloud computing.
- Several colleges utilize document management systems for greater efficiency, less paper, and a reduction in the need for large amounts of physical storage space.
- With virtual desktops, Central Virginia is able to replace desktop PCs with a thin client device, which consumes less energy and generates less heat.

### **11. Community leaders/ Integrated sustainability program**

- Most colleges reported that they are working with localities and community and industry leaders to obtain support for sustainable practices.
- John Tyler hosts community events throughout the year to promote partnerships with community leaders and groups. The college's signature event, Fool for Art, brings in approximately 6,000 attendees for fund, hands-on, educational activities to celebrate Earth Day.

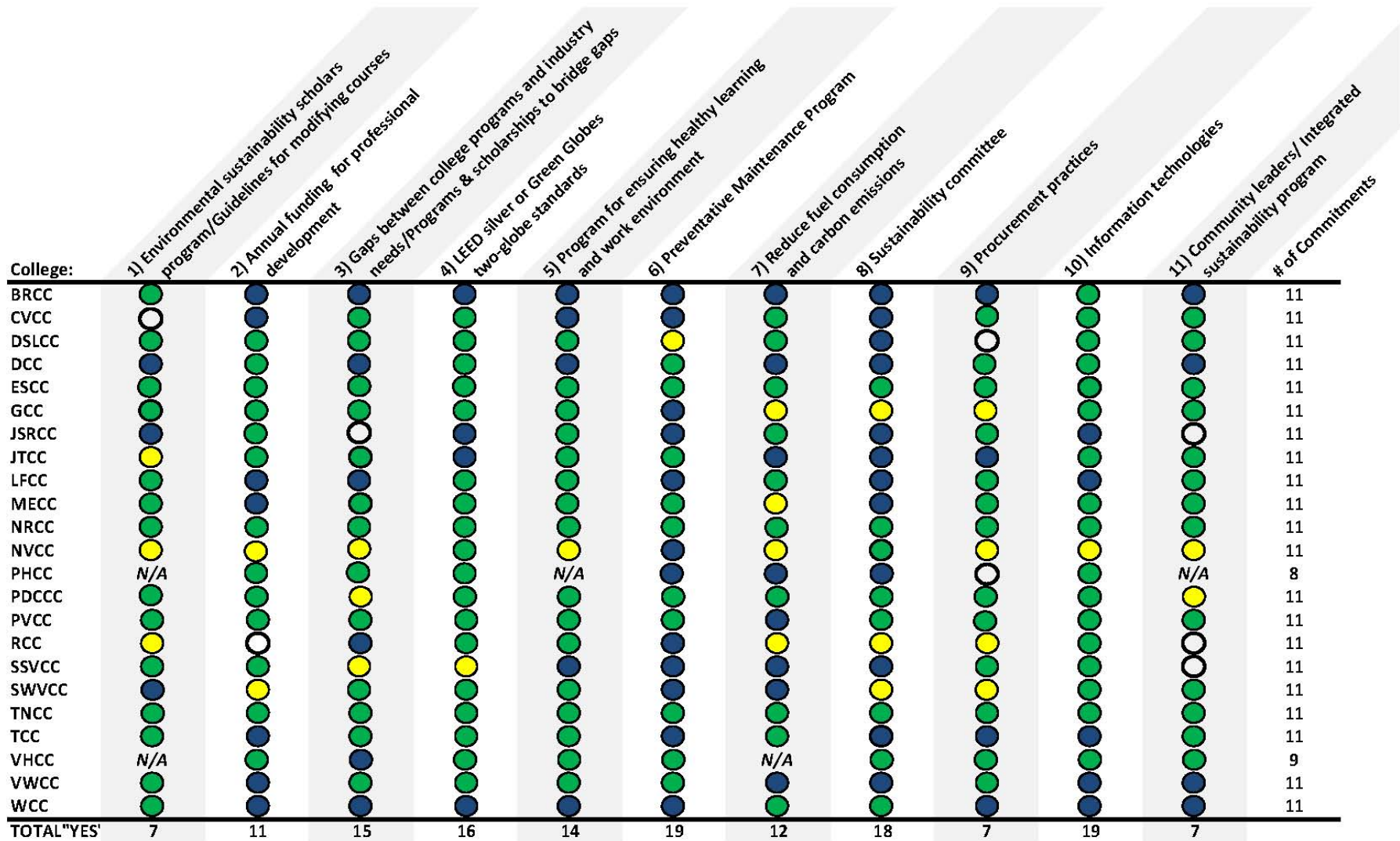
#### **ACTION:**

No action is required.

#### **RESPONSIBLE INDIVIDUALS:**

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**AT A GLANCE - JUNE 2013**  
Progress on Implementing Recommendations of the  
Environmental Sustainability Task Force



KEY: ● Completed ● Progressing As Expected ● Progressing With Challenges  No Report Yet