



DIESEL TECHNOLOGY ADVISORY BOARD MINUTES

FRIDAY, MAY 7th, NOON VIRTUAL VIA ZOOM

I. Meeting called to order at 12:10 p.m.

II. ATTENDEES

Wes Emmert, Wilcox and Flegel
Kenny Tarrango, Wilcox and Flegel
Kerry Tuck, DSU/Peterbilt
Jonny Krause, DSU/Peterbilt
Barry Walter, LCC
Tamra Gilchrist, LCC
Jim Dillinger, LCC
Lynell Amundson, LCC

III. AGENDA ITEMS

a) Updates from LCC

Enrollment, class schedule, CDL Simulator and current schedule, Restart Grant
Barry Walther, diesel technology faculty, shared with the group that enrollment is still low. Students don't want to participate in classes online; most are hands-on learners. He has seen more students participate when courses are delivered using a hybrid model – partially online, partially in person. He expects to see numbers continue to decline for second year students. He does expect to see students begin to return as more options open with COVID case numbers declining.

Barry added that LCC has been using various new strategies for outreach and has revamped advising to ensure students are getting the information they need to get started in the program.

Jim Dillinger said the current environment creates challenges for everyone. Employers are telling him that they are hiring anyone with any type of mechanical background or anyone exhibiting an interest in mechanics. Barry agreed that the college is competing with employers because students are going to work, working extra hours and overtime which jeopardizes their ability to participate in education.

Jim shared with the group that it is typical to see enrollment changes along with economic changes. He also expects to see students returning as the economy returns to some semblance of order.

Kerry Tuck asked about number of students on scholarship. Neither Barry nor Jim had that information. Barry said many students are not aware of scholarships and efforts are underway at LCC to make sure students know there are many scholarship opportunities



including information in an entry level class that teaches students to seek out scholarships.

Members in attendance continued discussion about employers hiring anyone with mechanical aptitude or interest in learning; requirement for two-year degree is being waived to get employees on board; and many companies are conducting on the job training and developing apprenticeship models to train employees.

Tamra mentioned option for Running Start that allows students to get college credit while still in high school. Both Jim and Barry have had Running Start students and see it as good opportunity for students. Wes mentioned that he also reaches out to the high schools to get students thinking about opportunities with Wilcox & Flegel. Additional discussion about other models that might work to build a bridge from high school to college and get more people interested in working in the trades.

Jim and Barry shared information about LCC's CDL simulator and how it is being used currently. Plans are underway to incorporate more of the simulator into classes as well as scheduling time for industry partners to come to campus and try out the simulator. Tamra asked if industry partners are interested in hosting students. Employers agreed it is a good option and offered to come to campus and visit classrooms to share information about their industry with students.

Jonny Krause encouraged LCC to reach out to Cascadia Skill Center's diesel program and recruit students to continue their Diesel Technology education at LCC.

b) Industry partner updates

Business and industry partners will share information regarding their status and how they are working during the current environment.

Kerry Tuck shared with the group that DSU/Peterbilt has been purchased by Jackson Group. They are still learning what the new ownership will look like. They have remained busy and have projects planned through the first quarter of 2022. All areas of the business – service, parts, repair shop – continue to be busy. He added that new owners have already leased additional property in Lewis County and he expects to continue to see growth in business.

Wes told the group Wilcox and Flegel is busy as well and they have several open positions. They are a 24/7 operation and offer great jobs with four days on/four days off. He added that in December 2020 Wilcox and Flegel added a driver training program which includes hazardous materials training. They are getting good employees from the program. The addition of a hazmat endorsement for CDL drivers brings an increase in hourly salary, currently at about \$35 an hour. He like other industry partners are concerned about the difficulty in getting employees on board and worry that the demand for CDL drivers and increased pay for those jobs is going to affect getting and keeping quality mechanics.



c) LCC updates and next steps

LCC expects Summer and Fall quarters 2021 to function much like Winter and Spring have this year but faculty, staff and students look forward to returning to in-person instruction.

IV. PROGRAM OR COMMUNITY EVENTS

Jim shared with the group that LCC has hosted open house events and other activities that bring students into the lab to see equipment and get an introduction to the program. Many of these activities have included inviting parents in to see the program as well. LCC faculty and staff look forward to offering these events again.

Industry partners said they would be happy to bring equipment to campus, to speak with students and parents, and to share more information about their industry.

V. Meeting adjourned at 1:10 p.m.