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PUBLIC HEARING
before
ASSEMBLY HIGHER EDUCATION COMMITTEE
Passaic County Community College Accreditation

May 22, 1990
Library
Passaic County Community College
Paterson, New Jersey

MEMBER OF COMMITTEE PRESENT:

Assemblyman William J. Pascrell, Jr., Chairman

ALSO PRESENT:

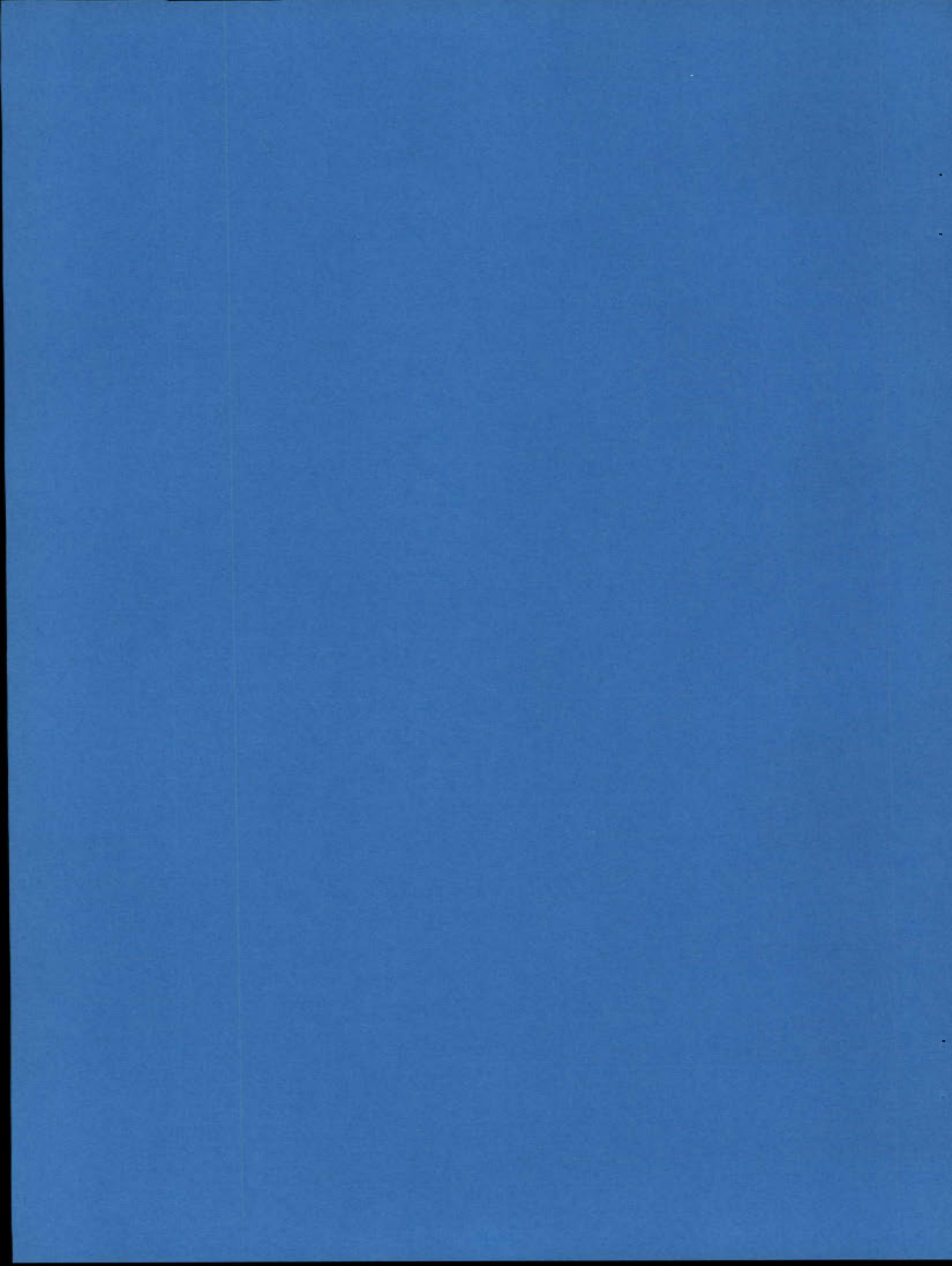
Assemblyman Joseph A. Mecca
District 34

David C. Hespe
Office of Legislative Services
Aide, Assembly Higher Education Committee

* * * * *

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NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

The Assembly Higher Education Committee will hold a public hearing on the following topic:

Passaic County College Accreditation

The hearing will be held on Tuesday, May 22, 1990 at 10:00 a.m. in the library of Passaic County Community College, College Boulevard, Paterson, New Jersey.

The public may address comments and questions to Joyce W. Murray, Committee-Aide and persons wishing to testify should contact Patricia Scott, secretary, at (609) 984-6843. Those persons presenting written testimony should provide 10 copies to the committee on the day of the hearing.

Issued 5/14/90

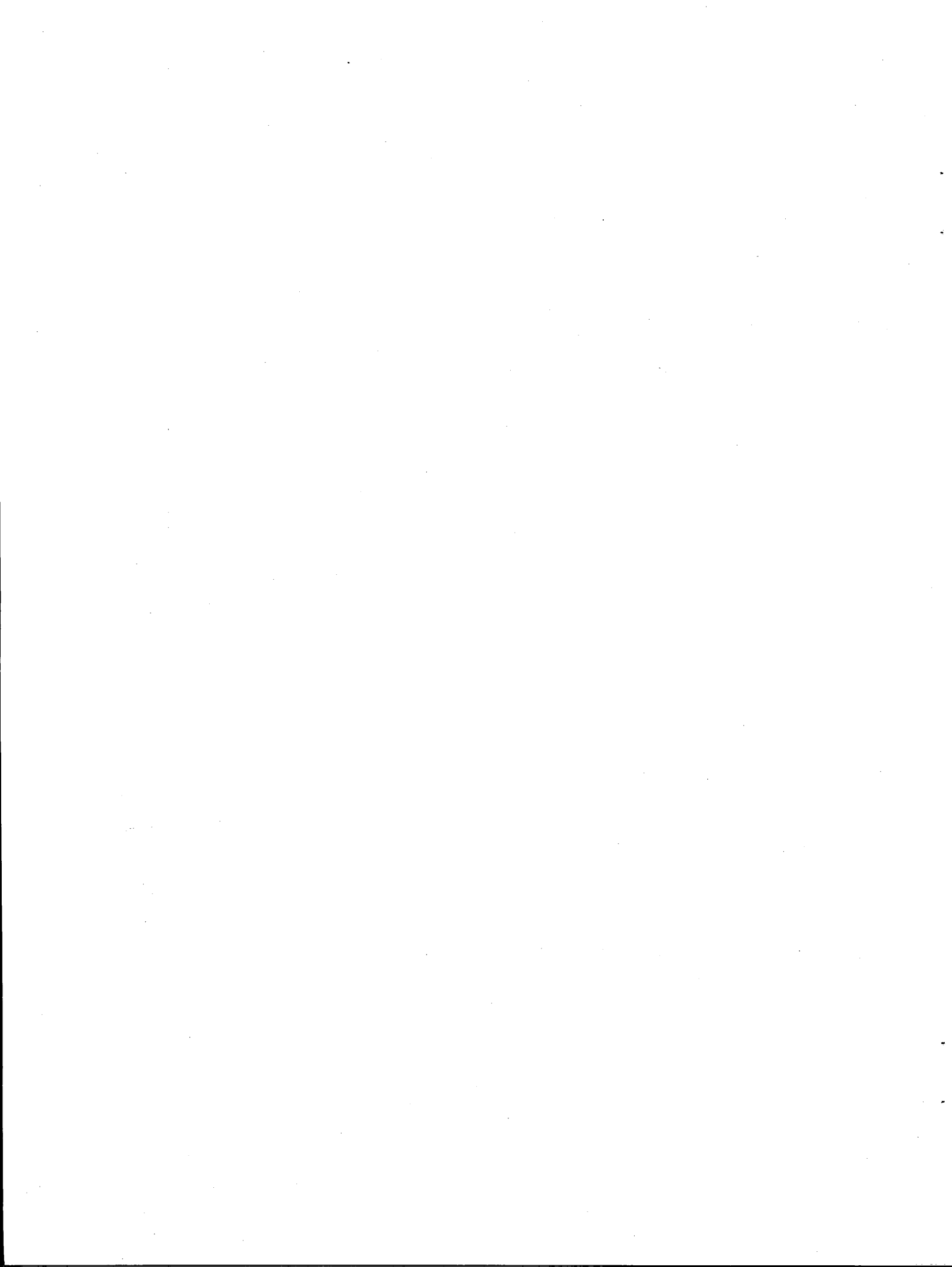


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"Chancellor's Report to the
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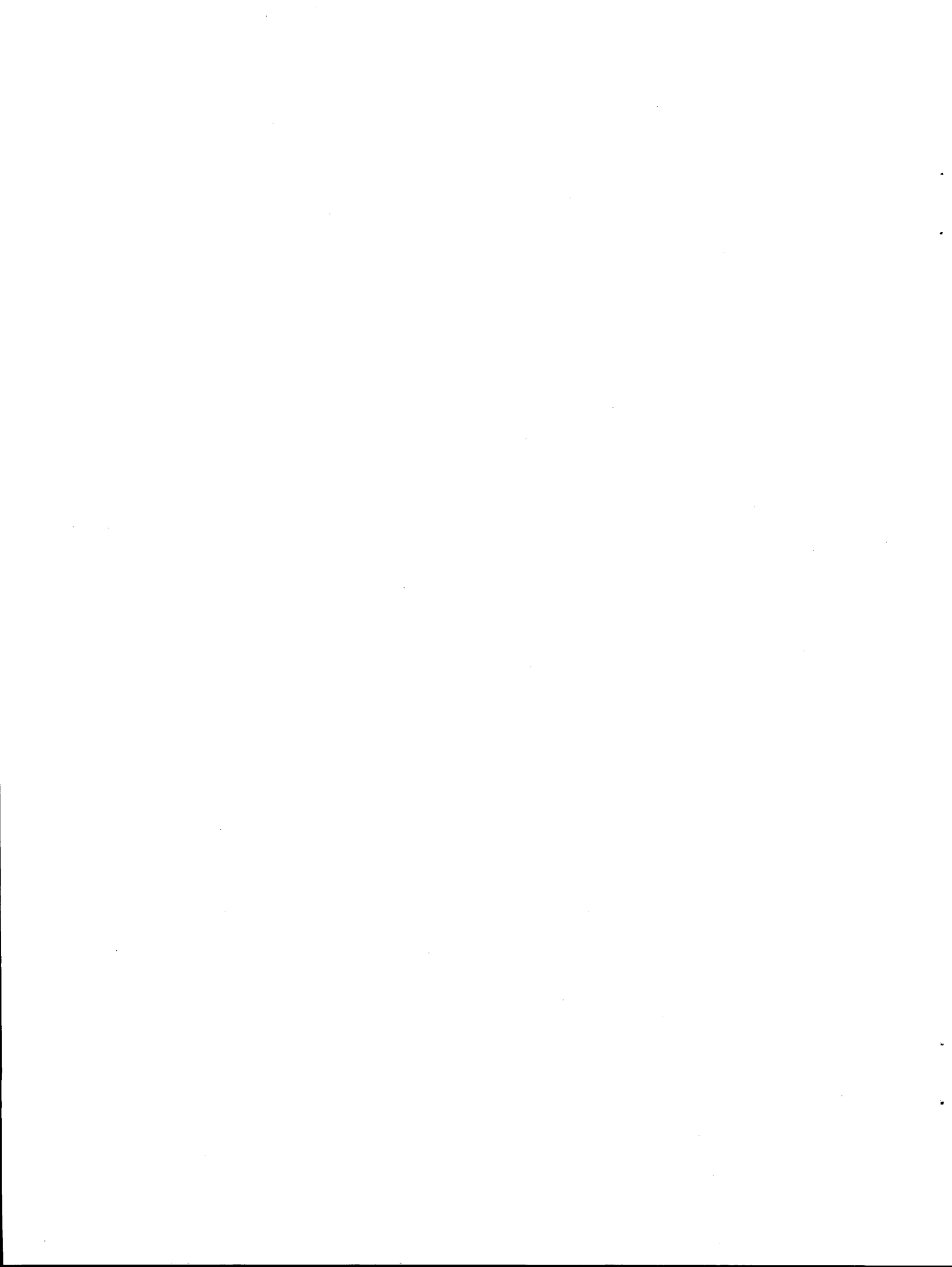
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Letter to Kenneth E. Wright
from T. Edward Hollander
Chancellor
New Jersey Department of
Higher Education

24x

* * * * *

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ASSEMBLYMAN WILLIAM J. PASCRELL, JR. (Chairman): Good morning. We are going to begin our hearing this morning. I want to thank you all for coming. This is a hearing concerning the County College's accreditation. I just want to make sure who the people are who are going to be testifying. Do you have my list there?

MR. HESPE: (Committee Aide) Yes, I have it.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: I first want to introduce the people who you see up here. To my right is Assemblyman Joseph Mecca, who is serving on the Higher Education Committee right now. To his right is David Hespe, Office of Legislative Services. To my immediate left is Larry Hamm, who is a member of the Assembly Majority Staff. Then we have Stan Counts, who follows me all over the State, and Diane Wiacek, from the Hearing Unit of the Office of Legislative Services.

All right, we have a list we are going to stick with in terms of testimony. The first three people out of the cage will be: Mr. Ken Wright, Dr. Phil White, who will represent the Chancellor -- Dr. White is the Vice Chancellor -- and Freeholder Norm Robertson. They will be the first three speakers. If anyone has a time problem please let us know, and we will try to accommodate you. We will go until 12 or 12:30. We are prepared to come back again early in the month -- early in June, if we have to finish up.

I want to start by reading a letter from the Chancellor, which I received-- It was sent to me on April 26: "Dear Assemblyman Pascrell: The Passaic County Community College recently received an order from the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools to show cause why the accreditation of the College should not be removed.

"The action was taken on the recommendation of a Middle States team that visited the College in October 1989. The Commission on Higher Education of the Middle States

Association informed the College, by action letter dated March 16, 1990, that it found: 'No evidence to allay its ongoing serious concerns about the College's progress in the areas of institutional planning and outcomes assessment. These concerns are also linked to larger issues of overall institutional operation, effectiveness, and financial and educational viability.'

"Ordinarily, the Board of Higher Education accepts Middle States accreditation of an institution as sufficient for the continuance of institutional licensure and approval. Therefore, a show cause order is a very serious concern to the Board of Higher Education, in light of its institutional licensure responsibility.

"On April 12, at the invitation of Freeholder Director Richard DuHaime, I met with Freeholders, members of the Passaic County Community College Board of Trustees, and President Wright to discuss implications of the show cause order. I have subsequently sent a letter to President Wright reiterating concerns I discussed at the meeting on April 12. The Department of Higher Education--" By the way, the letter he sent to President Wright is attached.

"The Department of Higher Education will continue to work closely with the Middle States and the College in their efforts to strengthen the governance of the institution and to correct deficiencies identified by the Middle States' team with respect to institutional planning and outcomes' assessment.

"We will continue to monitor the situation carefully, and will keep you informed. Sincerely, T. Ed Hollander, Chancellor of Higher Education"

The letter to Ken Wright is very, very specific. Members of the Board of Trustees received copies of that letter, and Richard DuHaime, as well as the Board of Chosen Freeholders, received copies of that letter.

We are talking about the significance of the show cause action, the implications for the institution, which we have all worked very hard -- since 1972 -- to establish as a fine institution of higher learning in Passaic County. So this is not chopped liver we are talking about today. We are talking about important matters. We want to know today -- by the end of this morning's hearing -- the impending situation; you know, where we are, where we are in terms of September? How can the Assembly Committee on Higher Education be of any assistance? That is what we are all about.

So, let us start today. I would ask all speakers to be brief, and to the point. We don't want any Sermons on the Mount, not even from the Chairman -- who is me. Try to capsulize. Try to synthesize. Use the old Walt Porter method. Say it like it is, then get the questions and get it over with. Right, Director Porter? (affirmative response from audience)

Now, our first presentation this morning-- The Chair, if I feel anyone is going on too long, will cut you off. I am permitted to do that, right, Stan? I get all of my orders from Stanley.

Okay, so our first presentation-- The first witness this morning will be Mr. Kenneth Wright, President of Passaic County Community College. Good morning, Ken.

K E N N E T H E. W R I G H T: Good morning. I think I can get through this in about 10 minutes; then answer any questions, if you would like.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: I would think that Mr. Wright and Dr. White should be permitted, you know, at least 10 minutes each. I would ask everyone else to stay within a five-minute framework.

Mr. Wright: There are a number of attachments that are not part of my remarks, but you will be able to sort them, skew them, as we go, I'm sure.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCARELL: Fine. Everything will be on the record. Is that correct, Diane? (speaking to Hearing Reporter and receiving affirmative response) We are now ready to go, for the record.

MR. WRIGHT: Mr. Chairman and Assemblyman Mecca: I thank you for the opportunity to testify on a matter dear to my heart. It is indeed a pleasure for me to welcome you here to Passaic County Community College. Let me begin by apologizing for the fact that our existing Board policies prevented us from accommodating you at the earlier date which was your first choice in the matter. I am aware of the fact that this caused you some difficulty, and I am pleased that you did not allow that to interfere with your decision to hold your hearing here. It is an honor for the College to be your host.

As you no doubt have learned by now, I have resigned the presidency at Passaic County Community College effective June 2, 1990. This is a direct result of consternation and confusion surrounding the findings of a visiting team from the Middle States Association. While I am here to present to you some views about the general considerations about the Middle States accreditation process, I am prepared to discuss, in as detailed a way as you see fit, the specifics of the Passaic County Community College's recent experience and, in particular, the Middle States report. I submit herewith a copy of that report, with passages which I believe to be particularly significant underscored.

As an aside, you deserve to be informed that the Middle States Association has a very strictly adhered to policy that portions of reports such as these are not to be taken out of context. The question of whether or not they should be released is a decision up to the receiving institution, but in no event should they be released piecemeal. The purpose of that policy is to avoid precisely the kind of distortion which has surrounded the episode at this institution in recent months.

Amid all the publicity of the last two decades about the decline of educational standards in the public schools, it is easy to lose sight of the fact that American higher education remains the best in the world. This is the conclusion of a recent study by the prestigious Carnegie Commission lead by Clark Kerr. It is also generally acknowledged around the world, a belief which manifests itself in a continuing stream of foreign nationals who come to the United States to study intending to return to their homeland. Dr. Kerr states unequivocally that in his opinion the two factors which contribute to the acknowledged superior quality of the American system of higher education are:

1) Institutional autonomy -- the independence of the various institutions of higher education from other structures such as government or corporate leadership; and

2) The voluntary nature of the higher education approach to quality; in other words, the accreditation process. I wish to agree most emphatically with Dr. Kerr's assessment.

The academic enterprise is so vital to the future of this country that it combines with the vote and freedom of the press to establish the foundation of our future. And history is replete with episodes such as the Hitler youth, when a despot attempted to perpetuate his reign through the manipulation available in education. Obviously, mostly we don't deal with circumstances that extreme. Even less egregious violations of institutional autonomy can be devastating, however, and we must never relax our vigil on that all important question.

With that as a background, I wish to make before you today two points:

One, the most serious problem confronting the new leadership at Passaic County Community College will be the continuing infringement upon the independence and institutional

autonomy of the College. This infringement manifests itself in an improper trustee appointment process and in improper communication between members of the Board of Chosen Freeholders and members of the Board of Trustees going quite beyond the appointment and budgeting processes envisioned by law. Indeed, it is sometimes evident in decisions made, or in some cases not made, by the Board of Trustees about matters which should be decided on the sole basis of academic merit.

The second point I wish to make -- I wish to recommend to your consideration, is a general accommodation which was originally offered by the New Jersey Department of Higher Education for the ostensible purpose of easing the burden upon colleges of State licensure visits and Middle States accreditation visits. This accommodation has, in fact, resulted in a contamination of the Middle States process. The latter process was established for the purpose of reviewing the question of how well the institution being reviewed serves the mission set before it. State licensure reviews questions related to broader questions more regional in nature. Though the difference is subtle, it can and, indeed, at PCCC it did, thrust politics into what should have been a purely academic debate: I recommend that these two processes -- State licensure on the one hand, accreditation on the other, and both legitimate -- will be better served if they are kept separate.

Now let me elaborate on those two points, if I may: N.J.S.A. 18A:64A-8 states, in pertinent part: "The appointing authority of the county shall establish a trustee search committee of not less than five members who shall be residents of the county. The members of the trustee search committee shall not be elected public officials and shall not be eligible for appointment to the board of trustees for a period of six months after their service on the trustee search committee. The trustee search committee shall nominate individuals according to criteria promulgated by the Board of Higher Education for consideration by the appointing authority of the county for appointment to the Board of Trustees."

It is possible that the appointment process at PCCC complies with the letter of the law. The process certainly does not comply with the law's spirit. I have never in 15 years here known the name of a person who served on any trustee search committee, nor am I aware of any public solicitation for candidates. The resulting Board composition and conduct has not complied with the Middle States Association's Guidelines contained in the "Characteristics of Excellence in Higher Education," published first in 1982 and revised most recently in February of 1990. You have in your packet there two pages copied from that booklet from Middle States. The pertinent part on page 30 refers to: "The Board, functioning always as a collective body--" Our trustees are sometimes asked by Freeholders to act independently of the full Board. Each of the trustees knows which Freeholder appointed them, and on page 32: "Members should represent different points of view, interests, and experiences, as well as diversity in age, race, ethnicity, and gender." That is not a description of our Board of Trustees.

Nor is the process or composition in agreement with the Higher Education "Guidelines for the Selection of Trustees for County Colleges" adopted by the Board of Higher Education on January 22, 1982. There is a copy of those guidelines attached in your packet as well. An important question that arises here, if I can believe what I read -- some of our Freeholder Board being quoted in the press recently-- They believe that the College is an agency of the county. It is most assuredly not an agency of the county, and if you wish to pursue that there is a New Jersey Supreme Court ruling to that effect somewhere back in the early '70s. I can get the citation, if you would like. It has to do with a case at Ocean County College, where some employees of the college sought Civil Service protection. According to the county, civil servicing went all the way to the New Jersey Supreme Court, and

the Supreme Court said: Community colleges in New Jersey are not agencies of the county. In fact, it is a partnership. It is not an agency of the county.

At minimum, the trustee search committee should--

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Excuse me for one second, Ken. I'm sorry.

MR. WRIGHT: Yes.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Can that be done with a minimum of time, so we do not disrupt the present? (unidentified person arrives in room at this point with portable amplifying system to be set up)

MR. WRIGHT: I will be happy to delay, Mr. Chairman.

ASSEMBLYMAN MECCA: Will he have to start over? (no response)

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: As long as it is not blaring in anyone's ear. Try it out, Ken. (Mr. Wright and Chairman test newly installed equipment for sound) Turn the mike on. There you go.

MR. WRIGHT: Okay? Can you hear me back there? (negative response from audience) How about now? Anything coming through over there?

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: You have to get right up close, I guess. That's good. Let's see what this does to our tape. Is it okay? (affirmative response from Hearing Reporter) Thank you, Diane.

MR. WRIGHT: At minimum, the trustee appointment process should be characterized by the following conditions:

1) Appointments to a trustee search committee should be made publicly known for a particular year and should be made well in advance of the date when new trustee appointments are needed.

2) An extensive search for interested and qualified candidates to serve as trustees should be conducted and be made widely public -- the search itself, that is.

3) Appointments should adhere to composition recommendations of Middle States and qualification guidelines promulgated by the New Jersey Board of Higher Education.

What we get instead at PCCC, are individual trustees appointed by individual Freeholders who sometimes continue direct communication links with the respective trustees for the furtherance of political objectives, often at the expense of academic objectives.

During the recent turmoil at PCCC, we were treated with several examples of individual Freeholders attempting to coerce individual trustees who obviously disagreed with them. This took the form of abusive language, embarrassing public statements, and, in one outrageous case, a trustee being summoned from an executive meeting by a Freeholder in a blatant attempt to coerce that trustee's position and to improperly influence the Board's discussion.

I wish to emphasize that I am not here to impugn politics, which sometimes is unfairly criticized and, in fact, is merely the way the best system in the world -- ours -- makes public decisions -- and I support that process. Nor is it my purpose to single out individual officials or particular parties. The examples I cited above are simply recent examples of what has been a continuing problem in the entire 20 years I have been associated with community colleges in New Jersey. The points of the Middle States and BHE guidelines are:

1) To raise the caliber of trustees who, as the title implies, should be charged with the public trust for colleges; and

2) To see that academic decisions are insulated, insofar as possible, from the vagaries of other political needs and expediences. In other words, they are an attempt to allow longer term issues of institutional integrity to survive short term mood swings.

The above-referred procedural examples were the most egregious instances of a creeping tendency toward increasing domination of the academic community by the political body. And their purpose was the worst of reasons. The College had not been sufficiently responsive to political goals. But the consequences of such imposition of political will is more clear in a recent substantive example:

The College is space poor. It suffers from what is euphemistically referred to as overutilization of its physical plant. We were forced to discontinue a \$180,000 grant-funded REACH program, which our community badly needs, for lack of space. We lost the \$180,000. We were forced to turn away students we could not accommodate, and others who sought a full-time load couldn't complete their schedule for lack of space. The resultant loss of revenue to the College is over \$300,000 and counting. And yet, when we proposed a modest expansion through lease, the College was prevented from acquiring desperately needed space. This occurred through Freeholder influence upon the trustees because it did not serve Freeholder reelection purposes.

Recent growth of enrollment is choked off for lack of space.

A \$2.3 million grant is threatened by lack of housing for the badly needed program. Child care and student lounge services are absent for want of space. Ironically, because of the funding partnership for PCCC, this results in an increased burden for the taxpayers in Passaic County of about \$120,000 per year and growing. Even more ironically, it is the academic community at PCCC being blamed for lack of planning, when they have indeed planned but they have been thwarted.

In other words, the Freeholders themselves have been the creators of the obstacles to planning which they now declare require corrective action on their part. It is much like the arsonist who wants to be seen as the hero when he comes in to rescue a person who is threatened by the flames.

If the body politic is serious about wanting a well-run College, they must find some additional physical plant and lend support to the faculty and staff so that this vibrant institution can realize its natural growth pattern.

I would like to call your attention to the Middle States document which I have presented to you. There are several passages in there that I think are significant, and at this moment I would like to call your attention to page 9. There is an underscored section near the bottom which I think says all that needs to be said about why the institution is having difficulty with planning:

"Planning is minimally a matter of prudent management. For Passaic County Community College, it is a matter of survival. Many in the College, including the top administration, have clearly demonstrated by their efforts an understanding of the significance of planning to the educational viability of the College. Yet others" -- notice that, yet others -- "over a three-year period, have permitted the College to continue to be buffeted about by external economic, demographic, political, and historical forces, rather than exercise leadership in determining the College's future through planning."

That pretty well concludes my prepared remarks, Mr. Chairman. I would be happy to respond to any comments or questions, and I thank you very much for the opportunity to be heard on that is obviously a very important matter.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Thank you, President Wright. Assemblyman Mecca?

ASSEMBLYMAN MECCA: I will defer to you first.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Yes, I have some thoughts. As you know, there was much speculation about why this Committee chose to have this hearing, and, by the way, we will be looking at other matters in the State along these same lines.

MR. WRIGHT: Good. I particularly commend to you the two major issues I have raised here, which I think are statewide in nature.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: We must be careful to follow your lead, not taking things out of context. So, while you read out of context certain parts of Middle States, there are other things in the Middle States report which share-- You know, there is plenty of blame or responsibility to be shared equally. What we are concerned about is that we should be playing on a level field, and that we zero in on what the major factors are.

I have a difficult time. I am free to say these things now, because having been through a campaign where I was accused of everything but being an ax murderer--

MR. WRIGHT: Didn't I hear that?

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: That is behind us now, and the record will speak for itself. But I must say, I find it difficult to accept some of the things you say, Ken, on a professional basis, when you, as the President of this institution, were the very person -- three or four years ago -- were the extoller praising the very Freeholders whom you now take to task. When I say there is plenty of blame to go around, I do not mean the Freeholders, or yourselves. The State has responsibility here, too.

As a member of the Appropriations Committee, I have been attempting to fight to get more dollars for community colleges, which have been treated like stepchildren. Stepchildren get treated better, thank God, than the community colleges of this State. I guess you could go into any county in this State and find that there is some kind of political influence, some of it good, some of it not so good. But what I find very revealing in the Middle States report, is that they-- I had the impression, I came to the conclusion, that there was something endemic at the institution; that within the

institution itself, the professional staff could not get its act together.

Granted, whatever these other outside forces were which do exist -- and this does not say that they have existed, or have not existed-- I am talking about the people who get paid to do the job at the institution. It seems to me that the report is very clear, to me, that planning was not a front-burner issue at the Passaic County Community College. Now, maybe I haven't read the same report that you read. I don't know. I think I have. I know you are an intelligent person. I have always considered you to be very perceptive. In fact, I would like to think that I had something to do with you being here.

MR. WRIGHT: You did.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: But now we come to the point of, well, fish or cut bait, in looking at the institution and where it stands. I am very concerned. You know, in a show cause order, the institution has so much time to respond to the criticisms that are laid out in the Middle States report. The criticisms are one thing; the deficiencies are one thing. What is very, very important to me is that the Middle States report feels that we do not have the wherewithal at this institution to correct the problem. That is what I-- When I saw this, I said, "There is a good chance" -- and remember, this was back in March, mind you -- "that this institution may not open in September."

Now, you might consider that to be hyperbole -- an exaggeration of sorts. Did I overreact? You tell me.

MR. WRIGHT: Well, I certainly think there is no chance that the institution, nor was there ever a chance that the institution would not operate -- would not open in September. Middle States is a long, deliberative process. It is a constructive process. They tell us what needs to be corrected, and they believe fully that we are on our way.

In fact, we have been given some indications in that regard; that things are moving in a very positive direction. I certainly want you to continue in your remarks--

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Right.

MR. WRIGHT: --but the most significant thing you said is about inferring from the report -- and I think we ought to go over that in some detail -- whether it is endemic to the staff. I think this staff is very able. If we simply get out of their way, the staff at this College will correct whatever problems need to be corrected, and I refer specifically to the report. Several passages are--

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Do you firmly believe that the reason why you have not been able to plan and implement the plan at this institution is because of Freeholder interference? Do you really believe that?

MR. WRIGHT: No.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: You don't believe that?

MR. WRIGHT: No.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Okay. Why haven't we?

MR. WRIGHT: It has been a complex set of issues; the confluence of several streams coming together. If you look at the bottom of page 7, you will find reference Middle States made to what I think is the heart of the issue. The staff prepared the beginning skeletal outline -- and by "beginning" and "skeletal" do not be misled-- It was a 13-page document, which was submitted to the Board of Trustees with my recommendation after the staff prepared it in the fall of 1986.

At the bottom of page 7, you will notice: "The long, unacceptable delay by the Board of Trustees in addressing the issue of planning has forced the College to implement, informally and unofficially, goals submitted to the Board of Trustees three years ago. A tremendous amount of energy and time has been expended writing or responding to acrimonious, invective, intimidating, and somewhat threatening

correspondence. This type of correspondence has only served to exacerbate the College's planning problems, and has created a climate whereby serious policy issues survive only after a horrendous verbal assault, if indeed they survive at all."

Let me tell you something about Middle States: Middle States couches its terms in very calm, measured ways.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: I served on Middle States; I know.

MR. WRIGHT: This is inflammatory language. You never see language this powerful written in a Middle States document. I have been on over 50 Middle States teams, and I have never seen anything written that strongly in all my life, and I think that is worth--

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: And what is your conclusion from that?

MR. WRIGHT: My conclusion is that they are saying that is the serious issue. So the staff--

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Are you saying, therefore-- Then your answer to my question is, no, it wasn't the Board of Freeholders. It was the Board of Trustees--

MR. WRIGHT: With respect to planning--

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: --which had the primary responsibility for us not implementing our plans.

MR. WRIGHT: If you want the immediate cause. But let's remember, Middle States is not something that comes in today and takes a snapshot and says you are a good institution or a bad institution.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Right.

MR. WRIGHT: Middle States is a process by which institutions continuously review how they are doing, and what they want to know is what process is in place. They are not even saying, by the way, that we haven't planned. We have plans at this College. That is badly misunderstood. What they are saying is that the process is not good; how we got to this point is not good.

What happened here is, the staff-- I am really responding to your comment about whether it is endemic to the institution. The staff did its job. The staff prepared a very comprehensive set of goals and objectives. In fact, they were too ambitious to be met, and they knew that at the time because one of the things they wanted back was feedback on the question: What is really doable here? And the report refers to that later. It comes back to the point where these goals, which were forced to be applied unofficially, because they didn't have the proper approval-- The report comes back to that and says they are too ambitious, and that we don't have the resources to accomplish all of those things.

We agree with that, and I think members of the staff would agree with that. They have been about adjusting that in the meanwhile.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: On the question of interference, are you telling us here today that the main problem at this institution, and the main reason why it has a show cause order looking at it-- I mean, we are not simply talking about problems of accreditation, are we, Ken?

MR. WRIGHT: No, we're not. We have been talking about things beyond accreditation.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: We are talking about a show cause order, which is a very serious business here, isn't it? What does "show cause" mean?

MR. WRIGHT: "Show cause" means that the institution has not been sufficiently responsive to Middle States, and they want to see some action.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: So you haven't responded to the deficiencies that existed in the Middle States report?

MR. WRIGHT: That is correct.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: That is pretty serious.

MR. WRIGHT: That's serious.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Now, how much time does the institution have to prove to Middle States that it can circumvent these problems, these influences, so to speak, that have been the main reason for it not getting accredited?

MR. WRIGHT: We have until October 1 to submit the report. Now, that does not mean that we have until October 1 to solve all of the things that need to be done. As I have said repeatedly, and I will continue to stay on this point, this isn't a process which ends October 1, or ever. It goes on and on and on, and there will always be new issues to raise.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Right. Do you think the problems that impede the progress of implementation will be removed by October 1?

MR. WRIGHT: I am very concerned about that. I do not know. What I do know is that the staff knows what needs to be done. In fact, commencing a year ago, in June of 1989, a lot of things were set into place, and much progress has already been recorded. The Middle States team, when they visited, chose not to examine those questions, and I think properly so from their perspective, because it looked like a very recent flurry of activity. Now it looks like a whole year of a lot of work. There will be another six months worth of work piled on to that by the time the report goes. I am highly confident that Middle States will see that the staff is doing its job.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Did the impediments exist in 1986?

MR. WRIGHT: Yes.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Did they exist in 1987?

MR. WRIGHT: Sure.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: In 1988?

MR. WRIGHT: Yes.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: In 1989?

MR. WRIGHT: Yes.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Do you have correspondence from your desk to the Chancellor, or anyone, discussing these impediments?

MR. WRIGHT: Yes, I do. I think I have some correspondence. I specifically had a number of conversations talking about the trustee appointment process. The Chancellor is aware of my concern. In fact, he expressed, in an oral conversation, that the -- and I am sure he would share it -- point of trustee appointments is something that is of grave significance, and something that the Board of Higher Education pays a lot of attention to.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Let me be more specific: Do you have correspondence from 1986 and 1987 to the Chancellor, or to the Department of Higher Education, highlighting and outlining the impediments as to why you and your staff could not implement plans at the Community College?

MR. WRIGHT: No. I did not address anything on the specific question of not being able to plan. I addressed the specific question of the appointment process, the makeup of the Board, the relationship between the Board and the Board of Chosen Freeholders.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: If somebody dropped out of the sky into this institution and walked into this room and read the Middle States report, I would think that they would say, after hearing your testimony, objectively, that there is much to be said for impediments to implementation after there is goal setting and objectives and whether we can do this or not. There is much to be said for what stands in the way of getting the job done.

But, we have not dropped out of the sky, and we have been here for the last five years. I, personally, find it difficult -- there is a tremendous amount of difficulty -- being a resident of this county all of my life, to find anything in the record that I have looked at that indicates

your dissatisfaction with the powers that be and any specific impediments. It seems to me that you became, you know, responsive-- We are back and forth here. This is not going to be one-sided, I can assure you.

It seems to me that you are a born-again person since the accreditation report came through and you discovered all of these things that are wrong. Where were you in 1986, '87, and '88, when this institution had those same impediments? Do you think that is a legitimate question?

MR. WRIGHT: Yes, I do.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Okay. Go ahead and answer it.

MR. WRIGHT: Where was I? Let me answer that in two ways: First, in 1986 and 1987 and 1988, I was --- as I at that time judged to be the best course of action to follow -- working within the system trying to bring about change. I did not judge that to be up-front and confronting.

On the other hand, when it does get to that point where you think you ought to come out and confront-- I did that in 1977, if you want to go back a ways. At that time, I held a press conference, in which I declared that there were improper attempts on the part of the Freeholder Board to get me to hire somebody who didn't go through the proper hiring process.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: I remember that in 1977. I don't remember anything like that, anything clearly like that, or anything nearly like that in 1986, 1987, 1988, or 1989, but I will stand corrected if there were things.

MR. WRIGHT: That is always the question, isn't it? When do you cross over that line where that dramatic public action is necessary, and when do you stop on this side of the line and continue working quietly and persistently towards the improvement of the process?

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Well, I will conclude in this thing-- Let me tell you what I think. This will probably be

the last public situation you and I will be in. I don't look at it as confrontational, but I-- Let me tell you something: I put a lot of sweat into this school, and I am not going to see it go down the tubes for you or anybody else.

MR. WRIGHT: No more than I have, Mr. Chairman.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Okay. Now, in 1985 and 1986, you spent a lot of time -- you, personally, and excuse me for pointing -- in attempting to convince this county that we needed another major campus up-county. What shocked me through that whole process was not what you believed, but how you pursued it when you were told in 1986, '87, '88, '89, and, indeed, in 1990, by the Chancellor of Higher Education of the State of New Jersey that there was no way in hell that we could build a major campus up-county, because we just couldn't afford to do that.

If you would have spent more time minding the store here, instead of dealing with a political hot potato, maybe we wouldn't be here today. Of course, we are not dealing in maybes, Ken; we are dealing with what is. You probably have some second thoughts about that yourself.

MR. WRIGHT: Well, you may be right about that, Mr. Chairman. Lots of people will talk about that forever. We still don't serve the up-county area, and it isn't--

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: I agree.

MR. WRIGHT: --quite so simple as you suggest. I did not come out of the chute suggesting we should have an up-county campus. In fact, I presented five alternatives to the Board as to how we could serve our mission better than we were. To this day, we serve one-tenth of 1% of the population in the up-county area. We serve close to 2% in the down-county area.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: We are doing a poor job serving up-county residents. There is no question about that. But your alternative-- Although you say you presented five, your

alternative was to build a major campus and have a separate, unequal situation exist, which we did not want to exist in this county.

MR. WRIGHT: Oh, no, no, not at all.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: We did not want it to exist in this county.

MR. WRIGHT: Certainly that is one reasonable objective, and is one of those that I pursued. But it was not the only alternative that I discussed, and never-- In fact, in my proposal, there were some very strong measures--

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Why did you--

MR. WRIGHT: --as to how to keep them from being separate and unequal. That certainly was not anything that I would support.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: I don't believe you would want it to be separate and unequal, but--

MR. WRIGHT: But this is-- The point, Mr. Chairman, is--

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: The point is not the up-county campus. The point is what you did with your time, at a time when there should have been concentration on planning. I mean, this Middle States report is replete with-- The criticisms are almost like deja vu. You read two pages, and then you think you read that one page before. I mean, it is specific things, but it is almost like a duplication of things.

It is a pretty serious business here, and I know you are a very serious person. I suggest that maybe we should not have been into the political sphere as much as you were, and maybe you should have tended to the store. Maybe I'm wrong.

MR. WRIGHT: That is a reasonable inference to draw.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Okay. Mr. Mecca?

ASSEMBLYMAN MECCA: Mr. Wright -- Dr. Wright -- I'm sure there is enough blame to go around to all parties.

MR. WRIGHT: No, it's Mr. Wright.

ASSEMBLYMAN MECCA: Mr.? Okay. There is enough blame to go around to all individuals. I am thinking back to-- Last year I heard a speech by Governor Kean in Washington. In this speech he incorporated a letter to the next Governor, and he started out by saying, "Dear Jim" -- assuming it might be Courter or Florio. He went on to describe what would be the goals of the next Governor for the State.

I was hoping to hear today that we might look a little ahead prospectively, knowing that the problems had been hashed and rehashed in the press, with you, with Middle States, and perhaps you could give us a little bit of a vision, as an outgoing President, as to what the next President of this College will have to deal with, and what direction he might go in in bringing this back onto its feet and guaranteeing that every September from here on in, this place will open.

MR. WRIGHT: I think that was well put, and it is what I think our focus should be: What should be forthcoming in the future? In fact, I can give you reams of recommendations. I have here before me a document which, again, was created by staff -- our staff has done a terrific job in this county -- "Planning Activities Over the Next Several Months and the Next Year for Passaic County Community College." Staff will be recommending to the Board of Trustees, on June 25, a set of one-year goals that are very well-thought-out. I have seen where they stand at this point, and while they are not quite finished, they are getting pretty close, and there is a springing out of planning activities that have been going on for quite a while.

The primary concern confronting the College is space. It is such an imposition that we don't have a child care center; we don't have a student lounge; we have inadequate office space; we do not have enough classroom space; we are turning students away; and we are turning revenue away. And that is costing taxpayers money. That is the most serious

problem confronting the College, but not by any means the most important academic question. Bricks and mortar is where it ought to start, as a minimum sort of thing; beyond that, the notion of programs. We need to continue to develop the technology programs -- engineering science -- which has been held up for reasons having nothing to do with the quality of the program. That is another issue that we need to deal with. We have laser fiber-optics on the drawing board we are considering, but which we have not fully decided on yet. The computer integrated manufacturing program has gotten underway and is doing quite a good job. We are doing a good job of transferring students out of those programs on to the four-year colleges.

We need to continue to develop our health professions technologies, which are outstanding, but we have to always be on our guard there. Eternal vigilance is something you always need in these kinds of things. We need to develop our full-time faculty. We are too dependent on part-time faculty in many areas. For example, English as a second language, which is the largest single area of the College and may, at this point, enroll almost half of our student body.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: How do you know for sure about that?

MR. WRIGHT: I think that is about right. I think it is about half of the student body that is enrolled in English as a second language, and the full-time to part-time ratio is terrible there. Not that the part-time instructors are not good -- they do a fine job -- but they come to the classroom and teach, and they don't participate as much in the curriculum decisions and committee work and other academic deliberations. We need to strengthen their full-time faculty. I am talking about quantity. We need more full-time faculty.

I could give you other more specific and more detailed things, but those things exist. If you would really like to

see those, I think staff could put together for you a fairly impressive document about what the needs of this institution are for over the next several months and into the five-year period.

In addition to that, now, this talks about a planning process which will continuously review all of these kinds of things. Let me make the point that: What Middle States talks about is the planning process and the outcomes assessment process. They are not saying that planning hasn't been done, and they are not saying that outcomes have not been assessed. They are saying that we haven't done the process to involve everybody in the way it should so there is a continuous flow of data and information to all of the important decision makers at the College.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Do you want to follow-up on that?

ASSEMBLYMAN MECCA: In following up on that, although the plan is clear, you might have further advice to the new President as to his relationship with the Board of Trustees and the Board of Chosen Freeholders.

MR. WRIGHT: Well, I have asked the Board of Trustees and I have asked the tenured faculty and I have asked other members of the staff to consider the two points that I have made to you about the appointment. I think, irrespective of what you say about all else -- and I agree, I don't think we should be looking back to see what happened back there-- It should be: What can we do to strengthen the institution? I don't see how anybody can disagree on the point of the trustee appointment process and the qualification process and all of those things, and I hope there is no disagreement about the need for the autonomy of the Board of Trustees.

This Board of Trustees, as the name implies, is responsible for the public trust. They hold this College in public trust. They are the ones who should be making those

decisions. They should be supported, and they should be helped. They should not be attacked and inveighed.

ASSEMBLYMAN MECCA: Thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Thank you, Ken. We appreciate your time and your efforts. Hopefully, you will be available to the Committee after this.

MR. WRIGHT: I certainly will, and I thank you very much for the opportunity to be heard. I am most anxious to assist in any way I can if any more information is required, not only after this hearing, but in the months to come.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Make sure all testimony is received by David Hespe. Make sure we have a copy of everything.

Dr. Philip White, Vice Chancellor, New Jersey Department of Higher Education, renowned scholar, friend.

D R. P H I L I P V. W H I T E: Thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: How are you this morning?

DR. WHITE: Very well, thank you. First of all, I would like to introduce Ms. Valerie Van Baaren, of our staff. She is the Assistant Director in our Governmental Affairs Office. I would also like to begin by thanking Assemblyman Pascrell and the Committee members of the Assembly Higher Ed Committee for convening this public hearing. I think this indicates to the College, and to its students--

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Excuse me for one second, please?

DR. WHITE: Sure.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: The mikes are too close? Excuse us for one second, Dr. White. (discussion about microphones at this point) Go ahead, please, Dr. White.

DR. WHITE: Okay. If I may begin again, I have a very short statement I would like to read this morning.

Good morning to Assemblyman Pascrell and Assemblyman Mecca. I would like to thank Bill Pascrell and the other

members of the Assembly Higher Ed Committee for assembling the public hearing. I think this indicates a true and deep commitment to the Passaic County Community College and its students. Chancellor Hollander regrets that he is unable to be here today. He had a Student Assistance Board meeting in Princeton this morning.

Today, Passaic County Community College is operating in difficult times. The College is under a show cause order from the Middle States Association, the regional accrediting agency. The College must show cause, by October 1, 1990, why its accreditation should not be removed. This action means that the College's peers in higher education perceive that the College is no longer meeting the Middle States standards of excellence in the primary areas of planning, outcomes assessment, and governance.

Ordinarily, the Board of Higher Education accepts Middle States accreditation of an institution as sufficient for continuance of institutional licensure and approval. In the event that serious problems resulting in a show cause order are identified during the Middle States review process, the Chancellor may:

- 1) Contact the President immediately to determine how the institution will address the Middle States concerns;
- 2) Recommend further assessment or a full licensure visit by Department of Higher Education consultants; and/or
- 3) Bring the issues before the Board of Higher Education for discussion and action if the institution does not address the concerns of Middle States.

If an institution loses its accreditation, then the Board of Higher Education must consider if the institution should retain its licensure to operate within the State. Therefore, a show cause order is a very serious concern to the Board of Higher Education.

The viability of this College is of vital importance to the citizens of Passaic County and especially to its urban constituents. I believe that Passaic County Community College has a strong faculty committed to providing the best education possible to its students. The student body is highly motivated for higher education. There is a critical need for the College to continue to offer quality education and degree programs and to meet the needs of students in Passaic County.

The time for responding to Middle States concerns is also a time for renewal of a strong leadership team that can make critical decisions and generate the fiscal and other resources the College needs to recover and thrive. At this time, the most important step that the Board of Trustees and the College can take to respond to Middle States and strengthen the institution, is to secure a strong leader.

Strong presidential leadership will require an individual who will work effectively with the trustees and county leaders. This individual must be capable of setting a clear and concise agenda for the institution and moving quickly on the immediate issues facing the College. This will include recognizing that at this moment the institution cannot be all things to all people. In light of the Middle States concerns, the focus must be on addressing the issues of the urban campus and, through collaboration and the assistance of others, including other county colleges, implement innovative methods for serving up-county residents.

Under these circumstances, with the school under a show cause order and without a permanent President, the Board must move ahead quickly to assure effective interim executive leadership while an extensive nationwide search for a well-qualified President goes forward. Please be assured that while the institution addresses the immediate concerns identified by Middle States, the Department of Higher Education will cooperate fully with Middle States and the College in

order to help preserve the institution's accreditation and licensure.

That is the end of my statement.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Thank you, Dr. White. Can I assume -- never assume anything-- Can I assume from what you are saying that the Department of Higher Education wants this institution, as it is known, the Passaic County Community College, to continue to survive and grow?

DR. WHITE: Absolutely. That is our first priority.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: So there is no agenda-- Let me be very specific here, very clear. There is nothing in the agenda, either on the table or off the table at the Department, which would move this institution either toward losing its identity or losing -- or being absorbed by another institution?

DR. WHITE: No, there is not. What we are concerned with right now, is that Passaic maintain its accreditation and licensure.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: So, we want to maintain this Passaic County Community College as it is known to us today?

DR. WHITE: As it is known today. That is correct.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: I ask you that question because there has been much speculation as to what is on the agenda at the Department. I have asked that question to the Chancellor, and I wanted to ask that question of you publicly, because obviously it is a concern to us in the county -- to all of us.

DR. WHITE: Absolutely. I understand that.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: The Middle States report is a little bit different than the report which responded to Hudson County Community College, is it not?

DR. WHITE: That's right, it is.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Could you just very briefly tell us what the difference is?

DR. WHITE: Well, in Hudson County, the principal concern was a concern that the institution had been adrift

since 1988 because it had had no permanent and effective leadership during that time. Since 1988, I believe there have been either two or three interim Presidents at Hudson County, and they were unable to project a vision of the College and to enable the College to respond effectively to Middle States' concerns.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Let me ask you-- Let's get down to some nuts and bolts. Do you think the State has lived up to its responsibilities and its obligations to this institution?

DR. WHITE: Yes, I do.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Do you know that of the \$17 million bond issue in 1974, the first bond issue listed only a \$9 million or \$10 million expenditure on the part of the State in the building of this institution and connecting it with the old Telephone Building? You are aware of that, are you not?

DR. WHITE: No, I was not aware of that.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: This institution has probably cost the State less money than any other institution of higher learning in the State of New Jersey. I would recommend that you take back to the Chancellor, and I would recommend that you take back to the Department of Higher Education, a facility study as to what the needs of the institution are. When I see these large suburban campuses being built throughout the State of New Jersey, and how much of the taxpayers' money is being spent, and when I see what little old Passaic County Community College has, indeed, spent since 1974, starting out in an old Telephone Building here and then expanding from that point on, I wonder if one could -- not only myself, but others besides me -- very reasonably conclude that we are not playing on a level field here.

DR. WHITE: I suppose one could, given the facts as you have laid them out.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Well, I want to know if they are the facts. You know, this is how I perceive the facts.

DR. WHITE: Well, I think that in many instances, certainly in a neighboring community college that I could name, the taxing capacity for that county is higher than it may be for Passaic County.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Right.

DR. WHITE: And that the residents are more easily able to -- you know, build a large, as you put it, munificent suburban campus.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Yeah, a Taj Mahal. Let's get even a little bit more specific: If this is primarily a State institution -- you heard the President define it, cite chapter and verse -- then it would seem to me that the primary responsibility is with the State of New Jersey, to see--

DR. WHITE: See, that is where I would disagree with the President. I don't see the county colleges--

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: What have I misinterpreted?

DR. WHITE: No, I don't see the county colleges as being primarily State institutions. Certainly if they were primarily State institutions, the State would have a lot more direct influence on the governance of the institutions. They would have structures that would be very similar to the State colleges.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Do you think the students at this College are being served by the College?

DR. WHITE: Well, I think the students of the College have been served by the College. I think that certainly should the show cause order go forward and the College lose its accreditation, the students would not be well served at all.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: How do you respond to the President's assessment that there is not -- that because-- He says we are "space poor." Those were his words, right? Lacking space, we have not been able to develop programs that

meet the needs of our students. How do you respond to that, as-- I don't consider you a bureaucrat.

DR. WHITE: Sure.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: You are a hands-on person, and I say that behind your back, as well as to your face. I mean it sincerely.

DR. WHITE: Thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: But, how do you respond to something like that?

DR. WHITE: Well, when I looked at the enrollment figures in the College over the past several years, I noticed that enrollment has been declining -- FTE enrollment has been declining. I think there are certainly things that can be done even within the confines of having limited space. I certainly think there are programs that can be mounted that would be directly responsive to the needs of the students here, that really don't have a direct impact on space.

I looked at, for instance, the number of new programs that Passaic has come forward to the Department with over the past three or four years. I could only find two new programs. I heard the President talk about laser fiber-optics technologies. That is a very expensive kind of program to mount and, you know, I would think that there might be other programs that are more directly responsive to the needs of students here which would not require the kind of outlay in resources that that kind of a program would require.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: But wouldn't you agree, Dr. White, that maybe it is because of a tunnel vision on the Department's part -- and I say "maybe" -- as to how you respond to what is, for the greater part, an urban student body? We are not talking about--

First of all, I looked at the FTE -- the full-time equivalent student numbers, and they seem to be going back up again, unless I am looking at different numbers than you are looking at.

DR. WHITE: Yeah. According to the figures I have, the FTE declined from '85 through '88--

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Right.

DR. WHITE: --and then there was an upturn between '88 and '89. You are correct.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: One of the things we don't want to get involved in, or get trapped in, is thinking that because we have an urban population primarily at any institution, that therefore these are a set of curriculum, or courses, or programs, and, you know, we do not have the high expectations, sometimes. You are absolutely right, we do have -- let me use your words; they were better than mine -- an excellent student body--

DR. WHITE: Yes, you do.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: --the average age of which is between 27 and 29.

MR. WRIGHT: (speaking from audience) It has been declining lately. It has gone from 29 to 25 in the last couple of years.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Now it's 25?

MR. WRIGHT: Yes.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: I stand corrected. So, it is getting younger, but the point is still there that we have an older student population, so the needs are very different. The mission of the Community College is very different than the mission of Princeton University.

DR. WHITE: Absolutely.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: But on the same hand, both Princeton and Passaic County Community College, both of which get State money -- taxpayers' money -- have an obligation to the community, but the community obligation is stronger with the Community College.

Let's talk about that for a second: Has this College, in your estimation, met its responsibilities to both Paterson and Passaic County as a community?

DR. WHITE: Well, I think the College could probably be doing a lot more. I am bothered by the fact that until this past year we did see a long-term trend in decline in enrollment. That indicates to me that the student body -- the potential students who would go to Passaic County Community College -- certainly did not perceive that it offered all of the educational experiences that they felt they needed.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: As Chairman of the Higher Education Committee-- In the Assembly Higher Education Committee, the first thing we did, both in January and in February, was to meet with all of the major organizations' representatives that have anything to do with higher education in the State of New Jersey -- community colleges to the private colleges. Few received a dime, which is everybody. You came before our Committee; the unions did; the student representatives did -- we think very strongly about that -- to hear what people had to say.

Unfortunately, students are not in session now, so who speaks for the students? I certainly don't, and you certainly don't, and President Wright certainly doesn't. But, along that same trail, I really believe that if you get State money, you have a primary obligation, be you a private or public institution, to education in general and to the elementary schools of this State in particular. In fact, I have gone so far as to say that I would hold up State money to Princeton University, or to Passaic County Community College, if it did not involve itself in the elementary, pre K to eighth grade, in structural curriculum, organizational resources, personnel -- if they did not, because one of the complaints we get from all of these institutions is that they have to spend from 20% to 40% of the resources on remediation.

DR. WHITE: On basic skills, that is correct.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: So, we are throwing good money after bad. Do you think this institution could do much more

than it is doing right now in that regard? Does it have the capacity? Does it have the resources? Do you care that it does?

DR. WHITE: Well, certainly I care that it does. I think the primary task before the institution right now is to respond to Middle States. I certainly think--

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: What do you think our chances are?

DR. WHITE: I beg your pardon?

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: What do you think our chances of doing that are?

DR. WHITE: Well, it depends if the Board moves quickly to identify effective interim leadership. I think that once that is done, and once that leadership begins to exhibit some movement toward answering the concerns of Middle States, I think Middle States might very well provide an extension beyond the October 1, 1990 deadline. I am not talking for Middle States, but this is what I assume they would be willing to do.

But I think that what is absolutely incumbent on the Board to do now, what the primary task, numero uno, is, is to move forward to identify an interim President who can begin to put into place the kinds of processes and do the kinds of planning and outcomes assessment that Middle States has criticized the College for lacking.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Will you assist the College in finding a President?

DR. WHITE: We will do whatever we can to try to assist the College in identifying an interim leader.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Thank you. Assemblyman Mecca?

ASSEMBLYMAN MECCA: I have no questions, thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Thank you, Dr. White. We reserve the right to call you back; also to call on the Chancellor.

DR. WHITE: All right. Thank you very much for the opportunity to testify. I will make copies of my statement available to the staff later on this afternoon.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Thank you also, Ms. Van Baaren. We appreciate your time and your efforts. And you will get copies of that to us.

Norman Robertson, Freeholder Board liaison, I think, right?

F R E E H O L D E R N O R M A N M. R O B E R T S O N:
That is correct.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: I would ask that from here on, for the rest of the testimony, that you be as precise and concise as possible. Thank you. Good morning.

FREEHOLDER ROBERTSON: Good morning, Mr. Chairman, Assemblyman. Let me first say that I do not have a written transcript of my testimony, but I will try to keep my presentation short and well-constructed so that it can be followed. Let me again stress the point that I am the Freeholder liaison to the Board of Trustees of the Passaic County Community College. I, too, appreciate the fact that this hearing has been called, because the more exposure we can give to a remedial process here at the College, I think the better.

First, let me stress one thing that I think the Chairman understands from some of the things I have heard this morning, and that is what actually has threatened accreditation. I don't say this for the purpose of affixing blame; rather, I say this for the purpose of trying to focus in on what the real, immediate threat to the College is. That threat can be seen in those documents that have been put forward by the Middle States Association. Specifically I am talking about the small team report, a team that was made up of several professionals from around the nation who have nothing at all to do with the local situation so as to inject as much

objectivity as possible, and the actual action letter from the Commission on Higher Education of the Middle States Association. In those two documents we can see what the threat is and what they are discussing in terms of accreditation.

You have both of those documents, I assume, available to you -- perhaps they have already been given to you -- so if I quote from them I understand you can always place your own context on them and determine for yourselves whether or not it is quoted in context.

As I look at the small team report, and as I looked at it when I first heard it in verbal form back in October of 1989-- Several things struck me as I took a look at it. First of all, it should be noted that the team was assembled in the first place in response to the Association's "very serious concerns about planning and outcomes assessment at Passaic County Community College." That is why they were sent in the first place, so it was really nothing new when the small team visit was made in October of 1989. They used as their guidelines, as Middle States does, the "Characteristics of Excellence in Higher Education," which is a book which is considered a bible of sorts, or at least sets forth the standards of accreditation for institutions by the Middle States Association.

They made several observations after making -- I am talking about the small team's report, at this point -- reference to the "Characteristics of Excellence" concerning mission, goals, and objectives. They noted that after a 1984 revision of a mission statement by the College itself -- and I am reading directly now -- "The College specified a set of goals and objectives that it identified as charting the course of the College for the next five years. Adopted in 1986 by the College's Academic Council, these were submitted to the Board of Trustees by the College President. No action was taken by the Board of Trustees until September 25, 1989." That was less

than 30 days before the Middle States Association small team visit, so I can certainly understand why they would have considered that a flurry of activity.

In their other observations, the small team also went on to say: "The Passaic County Community College has not addressed the directive to develop and implement a comprehensive program of outcome measures." One of the important things to take note of there, is the fact that they have not addressed a former directive, so this is not something that simply popped up in the last 12 months.

Later on -- and I might say that this is something that has been of great concern to me -- from their discussion of various administrators and members of the Board of Trustees, and so forth, they indicated: "It is clear that a more pro-active, decisive, harmonious, and visionary leadership would have greatly assisted the College to recognize the need for planning and to embrace an institutional planning process long before this critical juncture in the life of the College." That is important for its substance, and also for the observation that it was, in fact, a critical juncture in the College.

The President earlier quoted a portion of the report, but the sentence immediately following the portion that he quoted states: "The 'feverish' activity on the part of the Board between July and October 1989 is in marked contrast to the unresponsiveness of the Board over a five-year period to the planning concerns of the Middle States Association."

After making all of those observations and liberally quoting from "Characteristics of Education" -- excuse me, "Characteristics of Excellence" -- and making specific recommendations, they then sent their report to the Commission on Higher Education. Now, the Commission on Higher Education, as I understand the process, had to choose from a number of alternatives in terms of what action it would next take. The

most serious of those alternatives would be to issue an action letter requiring the College to show cause why accreditation should not be suspended. That, in fact, is the course they chose, the most serious of the courses available to them.

In doing so, they made one statement which I think is very important. On page 3, in sort of conclusionary language, they say: "There has been no comprehensive approach to planning. Planning has not involved the various constituencies of the College. The College has done little to develop and implement a coordinated, comprehensive program of outcome measures. Indeed, until recently, little action has been taken on the proposed revision of the College's stated goals. Based on the team's finding, the Commission views the College as having failed to respond satisfactorily to the Commission's longstanding concerns communicated in the past to the College." Once again, the reference to the fact that this has been an issue that has been around this institution for quite some time.

That really is what is immediately threatening the accreditation of this institution. Several things were done by the Freeholders, or observed by the Freeholders, in the wake of this small team visit. I should point out that I first took office in January of 1989, and as Chairman of the Education Committee of the Freeholders, acted as liaison to the Board of Trustees here. Between the period of January 1989 and approximately September going into October of 1989, I had the opportunity to observe the then Board of Trustees in action -- those are two words, "in action" -- just to clarify the record.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Let the record be clarified.

FREEHOLDER ROBERTSON: Okay. But I had an opportunity to observe the Board as it went through its processes, and sat very quietly throughout that entire nine- or ten-month period. When the small team visited the College, they asked to meet with me, and behind closed doors we did sit down. They asked

me very frankly what I thought of the long-range planning at the College, especially as to the Board of Trustees. I gave them my frank opinion, which I have shared with the Board of Trustees since then, and it has been part of the public record. I told them at that point that it was my view that the then constituted Board of Trustees was incapable of effective long-range planning.

At that point, the meeting became very friendly and open. Evidently, they seemed to feel the same way, and that seems to be reflected in their report here.

At the conclusion of their visit in October, they gave a verbal report to the College. I attended that verbal report, and it followed very closely-- When I compared my notes to the actual text, it followed very closely the final written report. It may, in fact, have been a first draft. When I heard that, it became very clear to me that the College was imperiled; that a lot of the things that we were hearing about the Middle States process and how things could go very smoothly, and we just have to assure them on a certain number of points-- I felt at that point that we had to take things very seriously.

One of the things that I supported at that time was the replacement of at least five of the Trustees whose terms had just then expired. In October of 1989 the terms expired, and the Board of Chosen Freeholders had an opportunity -- a narrow window of opportunity -- between the expiration of those terms and the Middle States report, verbal report, and the November reorganization of the Board of Trustees, to make changes, if changes were possible or desirable. It was largely felt throughout the Board -- and I certainly felt this way -- that changes needed to be made.

So, where we had the opportunity to replace five of the members of the Board of Trustees -- five of the eight appointed by the Freeholders -- we did so at that time, and

tried to put together what we felt was a representative sampling of a variety of geographic and ethnic backgrounds, including the Board's first -- not necessarily first, but first currently -- Hispanic representative, an attorney who had outstanding credentials from here in Paterson.

So, we were able to make those changes. The meeting of the Board immediately following the reorganization-- Actually, at the reorganization meeting, I asked to speak to the Board, and at that point I finally broke my silence and shared with them the observation that I had made to the Middle States Association and my deep concern -- this was not to just an individual Board member, but this was to the entire Board -- that something had to be done very seriously to address themselves to the points, paragraph by paragraph, that were raised in the Middle States small team report. This was before the actual show cause letter was issued in March of 1990.

So, we made those changes as we could. We asked them to please set out on a course and they, also, were very interested in setting out on a course to put together a retreat in order to do so, and began to discuss the specifics of a lot of what had been contained in the small team report. That is the process that was ongoing when, in March of 1990, the Middle States Association Commission on Higher Education issued its show cause order.

Two things were important about that: Number one was the order itself, which was issued in March, which, in fact, took, as I said, the most serious of the options available to them, and secondly, the Commissioner of Higher Education -- excuse me, not the Commissioner, the Chancellor of Higher Education -- also had had meetings with the President of this institution, and had had phone calls with members of the Board of Freeholders, at least one member of the Board of Freeholders, concerning the need for making further changes at the College at the top administrative post and also with the Board of Trustees.

In reaction to what appeared to us -- by us I mean Freeholder Director DuHaime, who obviously will speak for himself-- But for myself, it appeared very clear that the credibility of the Board of Trustees, the President of the College, and the administration of the College was going to be a very important point in terms of addressing ourselves to the points made by the Middle States Association in its action letter. And it was at that point, and not before, that a request was made by the Freeholder Director for the resignations of some other members of the Board of Trustees who had been on board at the time of the small team visit, and the President of the institution, and it was directly in response to those things happening.

While I indicate to you what the threat is about now, I should also indicate what I feel it is not about. I don't feel the threat is about the quality of our faculty or the commitment of our student body. We have an excellent faculty, I think. We have a very excellent administrative staff and a very dedicated student body. We have people who have some real educational needs here, and we have a lot of people who are working very hard to try to meet those needs. It is also not about a variety of hidden agendas that have made the newspapers. I think it is important for us to set the record straight on some things. I won't go into them in great detail at all, but I don't think the Chancellor of Higher Education had a hidden agenda when he suggested that we needed further changes in leadership. I don't think the Freeholder Director did either. I don't think the faculty did either, when it called for certain resignations. I think it does a disservice to the entire process to really try to divert attention away from what the real issues are. Those real issues are not set forth by me; they are set forth by the Commission on Higher Education in the report.

On the question of political interference, or I should-- Well, it has been couched as political interference, but let me say political action, or Freeholder action. Let me first say that between the time January 1989 and September 1989-- Again, I sat very quietly in those meetings and watched what went on. When I heard the report, it became very clear to me that potentially the life of this institution was being threatened by what was going on. And when the life of any county institution, or an institution in which the county is a partner, is threatened, and services to people in the county are threatened, everyone should understand that my view is that the Freeholders have not only the right, but the absolute responsibility to step forward and express themselves on the issue, which is something we did. I expressed it privately to the Board of Trustees immediately after the verbal report. It was only made public after the Commission on Higher Education issued its show cause letter.

So, it is important to draw that distinction between political interference and political action. I might also mention that during the nine or ten months that I sat quietly in the back, I can't recall any time that any of the other Freeholders, unless it was something that I didn't know about, attempted to affect decisions that were being made by the Board of Trustees or the ongoing day-to-day management of the College, as such. I can only speak for that period of time in which I was directly involved. I just offer that to the Committee as an observation.

In terms of a recommendation to this board -- to this panel -- let me say that I agree in some respects with some of the comments that were made concerning the trustee recruitment process. I think that is something that can, and should be improved. One improvement that has been made was made by way of regulation by the Department of Higher Education in December of 1989, when they indicated that no trustee would be seated

unless that trustee had been recommended by the screening committee that is put into place in each of the counties. I think that is a sound recommendation.

I believe that every effort has to be made on the part of the Freeholder Board, and anyone else, the screening committee certainly, to try to put together a Board that is representative of both the College community and the community as a whole, bringing into play as many talented people as possible; people who have experience not only in the community, but also in larger organizations, who will understand the balance sheets when they read them, and will understand finances when they are being presented to them. I think that is very important. That is one of the reasons I felt it was very important and was a primary person in recommending our first Hispanic member of the Board.

In terms of funding, I think some consideration should be given by the State of New Jersey to improving the degree to which they support their own partnership in the Community College sphere. The County of Passaic is probably, if not the top, at least among the top two or three counties, by virtue of the percentage of the county budget which the county government assumes. Just to give you an example of that, when the trustees came forward with a budget this year, they recommended an 18% increase in expenditure levels that wound up translating itself into a 40% increase on the local tax levy. That shouldn't necessarily be the case. I realize that has to do with funding formulas and that the more full-time equivalent students you have, the better you will make out from the State on funding, but some consideration should be given by the State toward putting money, for instance, into some sorts of incentive programs -- especially in the area of urban education -- programs that we can use, as an institution, and that we can use money for.

On the question of space, I also agree that a great deal of-- Well, I shouldn't-- Let me back off a little bit on that. Let me say that I think that space certainly is a problem here in Paterson. One of the problems we have had in the past was with City leadership in the City of Paterson and the acquisition of property that may have been on the private tax rolls, which would wind up on the public tax rolls. As a matter of fact, it was only last year that some consideration was given to the purchase -- in passing -- of a building that had gone on the market near the College in a good neighborhood, and the Mayor of the City of Paterson wrote a letter to the College saying that he would fight it tooth and nail, presumably because it would be taken off of the private tax rolls. I hope that the new City administration will be very open to anything of that nature. So, any influence that you might be able to exert with the new administration, Mr. Chairman, would be greatly appreciated.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: We'll take it up with them.

FREEHOLDER ROBERTSON: Okay. In conclusion, let me point to a couple of larger goals here: The Passaic County Community College is a very important institution to the life of this county. I felt very strongly about a merger with the Bergen County Community College, in part because I felt there was a reason the word "Community" was in the title. It needs to reflect the community. It needs to serve the community. There are some very important long-term, long-range, broad goals that we need to address. One is the failure of urban education, especially in Paterson, and in Passaic, and whatever we can do to become involved in that -- and I agree with you, Mr. Chairman, on that score-- Whatever we can do to become involved in that, we should do here at the County College.

I also think another broad objective is to try to do a better job in serving the people in our up-county area. We are not serving them adequately. The county community college

system throughout New Jersey is not serving them adequately. That does not mean that you rush out and build a \$40 million campus. What it means is that you look for creative ways to bring a community college experience opportunity to the people in that area. If that means partnerships with other community colleges and joint ventures-- Perhaps it does mean that, but it means planning for the future in a way that addresses these big needs.

So, after saying that, I really look back on what was said by the Commission on Higher Education and by the small team's report, and I understand even more fully now why planning is so important. As we look back on why we are in the soup, I must point out one important point that I failed to make earlier: The issues of esoteric institutional long-range planning as an institutional process and institutional outcomes assessment are very important, but they are also causes that need to be professionally led and professionally driven. It is difficult to take a lay Board, even if they have had broad experience in business or the community, and expect them to understand, in the sort of terms that are necessary, the importance of those esoteric educational areas. That is where professional leadership comes into play. That is one of the reasons why even though the original report by the small team did not take to task the administration as much as it did the Board, I have concluded, and I feel very strongly, that it involves professional leadership on that score as well. That is an important point to make.

So, planning is very, very important. I think what we need now is a time for healing at the College; a time for the institution of bold and farsighted leadership; a time for quick and decisive action on the part of the Board of Trustees, to put us on a track that will create the process that will do two things -- the planning process that will do two things: Number one, satisfy the Middle States Association that we are on the

right track. And I must disagree, and have great concerns when the President says, as he did today, that the Middle States Association believes fully that we are on the way. I don't believe that. I heard statements of that sort prior to them taking the most serious action they took. But we now have to put on track a planning process that will satisfy Middle States and chart a productive future for this County Community College.

It is in that vein that I appear before you this morning, and I appreciate the opportunity to do so, Mr. Chairman.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Thank you, Freeholder Robertson. Very, very quickly, let me ask you some pointed questions. You may choose not to answer them. That is no problem. Get back to me.

FREEHOLDER ROBERTSON: I assure you I will not take the Fifth Amendment, in any event.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: No need to in front of this Committee.

Let me ask you this question: Would you be opposed to a nonpartisan commission or advisory board -- advisory agency -- to assist the Board of Trustees? Before you answer that question, let me ask you this question.

FREEHOLDER ROBERTSON: In doing what?

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: I'll get to that.

FREEHOLDER ROBERTSON: Oh, okay.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Don't you think that the Board of Trustees-- Why should I be any more confident now than I was when all of this thing-- All of these bad things are happening down here, and all of these trustees don't know what they are doing, supposedly. Now we are going to an era where-- We are in nirvana. Now, all of a sudden, we've got trustees who are professionally anchored and everything is lovely and the rain is going to bring up all the flowers.

Why should I feel any more confident? The same people who are making the decisions as to who serves on the Board now, made the decisions as to who was on the Board -- except for yourself -- three or four years ago. I mean, is there a different process that we are attending to? Are the Board members being selected in a nonpartisan way, Mr. Robertson?

FREEHOLDER ROBERTSON: All right, now, which of those questions would you like me to answer first, Mr. Chairman?

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Start with the last one and go backwards.

FREEHOLDER ROBERTSON: Okay. Are they being selected in a nonpartisan way? To the extent that the government in the County of Passaic is organized on a partisan basis, the answer would have to be, "No." If this were a nonpartisan form of government, as they have, for instance, in the City of Paterson, or in the City of Clifton, you would say they are not being selected in a partisan way. So, if you took a look at--

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Yeah, but Norm, regardless of who were the majority in the past, whether Republicans or Democrats-- That has nothing to do with what I am asking, really. Listen to what I am asking: The Board members were always selected, when there was a Republican majority-- There was always an attempt to have some kind of balance of partisanship, so that there wasn't a total imbalance on the Board. That has not been the case in the last five years.

FREEHOLDER ROBERTSON: I would disagree with that, Mr. Chairman.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: You think there has been an attempt in the last--

FREEHOLDER ROBERTSON: No, I disagree, and I think it is, in some ways, naive to assume that a government that is organized on a partisan basis will, unless specifically required to by statute, organize its boards with an eye toward providing as many from each party. Some statutes require that;

this statute does not require it. If that is something that you are--

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: No, I am going back to the history of the Boards, though. And, while I am not naive enough to think-- You know, give me some credit. I am not naive enough to think that we can have an equal distribution of party majority, or have a majority. I have no problems with that whatsoever. But the party in power should not have unanimity. That I have a problem with. Do you have a problem with that?

FREEHOLDER ROBERTSON: The party in power, in this case, of the five trustees who were appointed most recently-- They are not all Republicans.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Well, how were they selected?

FREEHOLDER ROBERTSON: How were these five selected?

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Yeah. What is different in the process? I will go back to my original--

FREEHOLDER ROBERTSON: Oh, there is nothing different in the process.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: So the process is not being adhered to. Is that-- I mean, does the President have--

FREEHOLDER ROBERTSON: Now you are asking a different question.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Does the President have a legitimate point of criticism when he says that the Board of Freeholders -- forget about whether they are Democrat or Republican for two seconds -- is adhering to the guidelines presented by the State on how these Board members should be selected? Does he have a legitimate criticism when he says that?

FREEHOLDER ROBERTSON: If he says that the guidelines are flawed, yes, he has a legitimate criticism. I agree. I think so, in any event, because when you take a look at the commission or the panel or the committee that is to be the

search committee for new trustees, they, in fact, are appointed by the Board of Freeholders.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Right.

FREEHOLDER ROBERTSON: And in many counties, I would suspect, although I can't speak for many counties -- I can't even speak for this county prior to the last 12 months, or 18 months-- I would suspect that in many counties that just makes a one-step process a two-step process. So I don't know that that particular process does serve that well, because you then have to take a look at who is being appointed to those committees.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: So, as far as you are concerned, looking to the future--

FREEHOLDER ROBERTSON: But that does not mean -- if I may elaborate to the point you were making before--

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Sure, go ahead.

FREEHOLDER ROBERTSON: That does not mean, however, that I feel that a simple partisan identification will change the group dynamic of a Board of Trustees. I don't think it will.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: You don't want to go into, before this Committee, how each of those people was selected, do you?

FREEHOLDER ROBERTSON: Whatever you want to do is fine with me. What I'm saying -- when you were raising the question about partisan affiliation -- is, I have seen Democrats who were appointed by Republican boards -- who were the best friends of the people appointing them. I have seen Republicans appointed by Democratic boards -- who were the best friends of the people appointing them. So mere party identification doesn't tell you much. What you have to take a look at is what the credentials of the individual appointees are. And, I might point out to you, I am not suggesting that there is any sort of a nirvana whatsoever. There isn't necessarily any reason to

feel that much more confident, except to the extent that there is at least new blood on the Board, looking at it with a fresh pair of eyes, under circumstances that have drawn attention to the critical nature of the planning process. And they have so far, from what I have been able to see, responded accordingly, and they have not been afraid to make other changes, especially in the leadership of the College, that are necessary.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: When I get letters from some of the people who are on the Board -- the very Board you are talking about -- accusing the Chairman of this Committee of politicking, I wonder from whence you come.

FREEHOLDER ROBERTSON: From whence who comes?

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Whence you come.

FREEHOLDER ROBERTSON: I come?

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Yeah.

FREEHOLDER ROBERTSON: Okay.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: I mean, I have gotten letters from people I never even met before, who talk about the Chairman's involvement in this thing as a political thing. Like, I just discovered-- I tripped over Passaic County Community College on the way to Market Street one day. I mean, you know of my standing with this institution. I haven't looked at it at arm's distance, and neither have you.

FREEHOLDER ROBERTSON: Well, that would be--

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: But it has nothing to do with being Democrat or Republican. That is not the nature or the essence of my question.

FREEHOLDER ROBERTSON: That would be something to take up with the individuals making those comments.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: I don't think it is worth taking up. I am just trying to make a point that it would seem to me that we are playing on a level field if we, at least perceptually, try to be nonpartisan in our appointments. I have said that with other boards. I said that when we were in the majority, Norman.

FREEHOLDER ROBERTSON: I agree with that, but there is a difference between being nonpartisan and being bipartisan.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Okay.

FREEHOLDER ROBERTSON: All right, I agree with you, especially if by nonpartisan you mean to pick the best people available; the best qualified to do the job.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Let me ask the question again: Why should I be any more-- If the President and the Board of Trustees are the main problems at this College, or were the main problems, and the President has resigned-- Now we are left with the Board of Trustees. You have assured me that we have Board members now who are not going to procrastinate on this plan; are going to put planning-- Planning is going to become an essential part of the Passaic County Community College right now.

What is different in the process of selecting the trustees now than a year ago, or two years ago, that should make me feel comfortable that, not only are we going to get a new dynamic President, but we are going to get a new dynamic nonpolitical Board of Trustees, that is not going to take orders from -- take your pick, Mr. Robertson? So, assure me, reassure me.

FREEHOLDER ROBERTSON: Oh, there is nothing with which to reassure you from the point of view of the process. The process is precisely the same, and it may be flawed. What I am suggesting to you is, the credentials of the individuals who were put on the Board are pretty good, and so far their track record has been that they have been responsive to what has been done on Middle States. They have put a tremendous amount of time into dealing with what are, at times, some very emotional issues, since they involve friendships, employment status, and things of that sort.

That is the only thing I can do to assure you; tell you that the nature of the crisis that has been precipitated by

the long inaction has focused attention on the importance of planning. I will give you one example of that: It seems to me-- One of the conclusions I drew when I read through the small team report, was that perhaps we should have a professional planner on board here at the College, on a full-time basis, to help chart the future of the College. Now, that had never really been done. That has been put into the budget for next year. That step has finally been taken, but I question the former Board and the administration as to why, in the time when there were reserves sufficient to do so, that step had not been taken?

This Board, from what I have been able to observe -- and I can only tell you from my observations -- seems to be sensitive to planning as an important issue, and seems to be willing to do the work necessary to put into place a plan. And -- this is one element you may or may not be getting today -- there is also, within the College itself, a planning committee that has been doing a great deal of work and has sought outside expert help, in terms of consultant help, to be able to put together the process that would help to satisfy Middle States' concerns. So, that process has gone out.

Can I give you long-range assurances on the future of the governance of the College? We'll see. Only time will tell on that. I sense that this Board of Trustees is going in a completely different direction than the former Board, and six of the eight Freeholder-appointed members are not now on the Board, who were there at the time the small team visited.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Who are new members, in other words?

FREEHOLDER ROBERTSON: Five of them are new, and there is one vacancy.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Oh, one vacancy.

FREEHOLDER ROBERTSON: But six of the eight Freeholder appointees are no longer on the Board.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Okay.

FREEHOLDER ROBERTSON: So there is at least a change, you know, in the personnel there.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: There's a change, yes.

FREEHOLDER ROBERTSON: That is correct.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Assemblyman Mecca?

ASSEMBLYMAN MECCA: Freeholder, I am convinced that you sincerely believe that the institution should survive and that education is your priority. I am concerned about us slipping back into the status quo, as Assemblyman Pascrell has indicated. I haven't really heard anything of a positive standpoint from you, either here today or in the press, that tells me that we are really going in the right direction here. It seems like we are bandaging a hemorrhage, taking care of a critical problem right now.

I was hoping to hear something, not just a repetition of the problems Mr. Wright brought up, but about what direction this College should go in; where you think success can be met. Does the Board of Chosen Freeholders have any kind of plan that can convince this Committee that after October 1 is met -- after that deadline is met and supposedly we succeed on October 1 -- that we will be on the right track?

FREEHOLDER ROBERTSON: Well, let me point out first of all, especially with all of the talk about the independence of boards-- I should point out first of all that that is not the role of the Freeholder Board, to chart the future of the College. That needs to be done by the Board of Trustees and by the College community as a whole. Therein lies the problem. My own view is, for instance, and this is a point that was brought up by the Vice Chancellor, what sorts of programs should be built into the curriculum? Well, one of the things that needs to be done is a good solid market survey of the needs of attracting students to the institution for this program or that? What effect that would have on the

possibility of an up-county campus? I have yet to see good market studies there, and yet studies have been commissioned by this institution which, in my opinion, were a waste of money.

But it all gets back to the same thing, Assemblyman; that is, there needs to be a process -- and this is the point that Middle States is making -- for sound planning at the institution. That is not the Freeholders' responsibility. That is the institution's responsibility and the Board of Trustees. If the Board of Trustees, which is the only link really, other than budgetary, between the Freeholders and the institution-- If the Board of Trustees fails to do its job, the only recourse that the Board of Freeholders has is to change the personnel on the Board of Trustees. It has, in fact, done that, in six out of eight cases. I think we are responding in that regard.

But I don't think you will hear, nor, frankly, should you hear, what the future of the College is from the Freeholder Board. The answer is, the College will put into place the leadership and the planning process by which that answer can ultimately be suggested.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Thank you, Freeholder Robertson, for taking the time -- your valuable time -- to be here.

FREEHOLDER ROBERTSON: My pleasure, Mr. Chairman.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: We hope we can reserve the right to call you back, if necessary.

FREEHOLDER ROBERTSON: Absolutely.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Okay, thank you.

The next two people to testify will be Freeholder DuHaime, and then Dan Lyons. Mr. DuHaime, welcome aboard. Thank you for taking the time to care about our College. We hope you will make your remarks brief and to the point; then, if there are any questions, we will go from there.

F R E E H O L D E R D I R. R I C H A R D A. D U H A I M E:
My remarks will be very brief, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for the opportunity. I am here in response to your letter and your invitation. I feel that Freeholder Robertson's report was very concise, and I will let that stand.

I just want to say one or two things. First, I hope our discussion here will not deteriorate into any kind of a political argument, or response, between you and me. I think this is something that is very important -- the College -- and to get into a debate, at this point in time, I don't think would be fruitful.

The Freeholders are responsible to 450,000 to 500,000 people in this county, and whether it be this College or the Vo-Tech school or the Mental Health Board or the Human Services Board or whatever board it may be, it is the Freeholders' responsibility to oversee every one of them. If something is going wrong with any one of them, it is the responsibility of the Board of Freeholders to respond to that.

That is exactly what the Freeholders did when the Middle States report came out. We never had any input, and never aspired to have any input into how this College is run. However, when Middle States came out and said, "You are deficient in three areas," or, in effect, "You are failing in three areas," it was then up to the Freeholders to respond to that.

We did so by removing five trustees who had been here during the period of time the Middle States report indicated, and then we responded to Chancellor Hollander's request for the resignation of the President, and other trustees as well. The Chancellor, in fact, wanted all trustees to resign, but we did not think that was appropriate or fair, in that five of the trustees had only been put on a month earlier.

That is why the Freeholders responded. It had nothing to do with politics. It had nothing to do with individuals.

All it had to do with was the health of this College, the county, the taxpayers who pay for this College, and the students who attend it, who are 3100 strong. We must make sure that they have a place to go. I believe now, with the resignation of the President, the major block to accreditation has been removed. I think that was a positive step forward. I believe the staff and the trustees will do what is necessary to make sure that this College receives its accreditation, and its license remains intact.

Questions?

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: On page 7 of his statement, President Wright said the following, and I would like your comment on it. David (referring to Committee Aide), would you please show Freeholder Director DuHaime page 7, the top paragraph? (Aide complies) This is part of President Wright's statement, which he read, starting with the word, "during," which is the second sentence there. Do you have it, Richard? (witness nods affirmatively)

"During the recent turmoil at Passaic County Community College, we were treated with several examples of individual Freeholders attempting to coerce individual trustees who obviously disagreed with them. This took the form of abusive language, embarrassing public statements, and, in one outrageous case, a trustee being summoned from an executive meeting by a Freeholder in a blatant attempt to coerce that trustee's position and to improperly influence the Board's decision."

Let me ask you about that: First of all, I wasn't at the meeting. Assemblyman Mecca wasn't at the meeting. Is this an exaggeration of what happened, or is this what happened, in your estimation?

FREEHOLDER DuHAIME: Obviously, you know as much about it as I do, because I wasn't at that meeting either.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Oh.

FREEHOLDER DuHAIME: I have never seen that happen. Again, we do not want to get out of what the main issue is. The main issue is the College. That has nothing to do with this. The President is extremely good at fogging issues. He has been doing it for a long time. It has nothing to do with the accreditation of the College.

ASSEMBLYMAN MECCA: May I, Mr. Chairman?

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Yeah, go ahead.

ASSEMBLYMAN MECCA: Mr. DuHaime, these are very serious accusations, and the President has taken to a public forum with them. That forum happens to be our Committee here today. That is something that we don't want to dwell on, but it is something that we cannot ignore.

If you read on -- and you probably heard his testimony when he was here -- he said examples like these have been going on for the 20 years that he has been associated with community colleges. So it is something that we are aware goes on. But he has taken particular attack on your Board of Freeholders, of which you are the Director. Perhaps you were not at one meeting--

I don't want to get off the topic of the College either, but I am concerned that this may have a lot to do with the College. I think it is our obligation to ask you whether any of this goes on, either with or without your knowledge? If it is not with your knowledge, you can tell us that. If you have no knowledge of it, tell us that. But it is important to us to know if this is going on here.

FREEHOLDER DuHAIME: Assemblyman Mecca, you know partisan politics as well as I do, and you know what goes on as well as I do. As far as this is concerned, I have absolutely no knowledge of it at all.

ASSEMBLYMAN MECCA: Thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Fine, good. That's all.

On that same page, Director DuHaime, at the bottom, President Wright attempts to sum up what he thinks are the two major points that came out in the Middle States report: "The point of the Middle States and BHE guidelines is:

"1) To raise the caliber of trustees who, as the title implies, should be charged with the public trust for colleges; and

"2) To see that academic decisions are insulated, insofar as possible, from the vagaries of other political needs and expediences."

As far as defining what we are concerned about now and in the future, would you at least agree that this is a condensation, a proper condensation and synopsis, of where we should be focusing?

FREEHOLDER DuHAIME: Assemblyman, I think that has already been done. I think we did raise the caliber of the trustees when we moved out the five and brought in the new five.

Let me just go back a short period of time, and talk to you about the Vo-Tech school. If you recall, about four or five years ago when the Vo-Tech school was in big trouble, there were all sorts of charges and accusations, and it was a serious situation. Many of the people over there were changed. Right now, the Vo-Tech school probably has the best reputation of all vo-tech schools in the State of New Jersey. That was done certainly without the influence of the Board of Freeholders, other than the fact that some of the members of the Board of Trustees there were changed. We feel the same thing is going to happen here at this College.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: And yet the process of how we get trustees has not changed.

FREEHOLDER DuHAIME: The process has not changed since you had a great deal of influence on the people who were put on Boards in 1985, '84, and '83.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Up until this moment, I think this meeting has been -- if I do say so myself -- run very fairly. I think we are trying to bring out-- I don't think you have any problems with that, do you?

FREEHOLDER DuHAIME: I think it has been run fairly, and I am trying to keep it that way.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: But I think that our--

FREEHOLDER DuHAIME: I don't want it to deteriorate.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: You had nothing to do with it. I think you made it clear, so you cannot be held responsible for what happened at a meeting you did not attend. But to quote the famous words of Norm Robertson, "We are not interested in personalities; we are interested in process." And I think we have a right to talk about process. Yes, you did talk about process.

The process is: If we are at "A," how do we get to "B"? How do we get trustees that are responsive, since they are part of the problem? That is not what Mecca and Pascrell say, or DuHaime says, although you have said that, since you changed the Board. But that is what the Middle States report says. The President and the Board of Trustees -- there is a problem there. They can't get their act together. That is my synopsis. I mean, you wouldn't disagree with my synopsis, would you?

FREEHOLDER DuHAIME: I wouldn't disagree with it; in fact, I agree with it. That is why we changed those numbers of trustees, and why we asked for the resignation of the President and the other trustees. We went along with that.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Do you think that--

FREEHOLDER DuHAIME: And, in fact, one of the trustees did also resign -- the Chairman of the Board.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Do you think this institution, right now, serves the needs of the students of Passaic County, given the fact that we should be doing more for the up-county people, and we all agree on that?

FREEHOLDER DuHAIME: I don't think it--

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Do you think it serves the people of this community?

FREEHOLDER DuHAIME: I think it--

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: The county community?

FREEHOLDER DuHAIME: I think it certainly can do more, and it must do more. It must be more responsive than it has been to all the people of this county. I think it is serving only a small portion of the county, unfortunately.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Joe?

ASSEMBLYMAN MECCA: Mr. DuHaime, you did not respond to Hollander's request -- to the Chancellor's request -- to eliminate the Board of Trustees. You had already done the replacement prior to the recommendation, correct?

FREEHOLDER DuHAIME: Yes, the first five were done right after the Middle States report came down. That was before Chancellor Hollander asked for the resignation of President Wright.

ASSEMBLYMAN MECCA: Okay. That process had not taken a week or two, it had taken several months, correct -- the replacement of the Board members?

FREEHOLDER DuHAIME: When we knew they were coming up, and when the report came it-- As you know, it is a damning report. It says, "You're failing." It is your peers saying to you-- If you are a lawyer, it is the people on the Bar saying, "You are a lousy lawyer," and that is exactly what happened here.

ASSEMBLYMAN MECCA: Yeah. Fortunately, we do not have that kind of a review. (laughter) You saw the five members coming up and you took what steps were necessary to get new members, but it had no real connection with this Middle States report--

FREEHOLDER DuHAIME: Yes, it did. It had a great deal--

ASSEMBLYMAN MECCA: Oh, it did?

FREEHOLDER DuHAIME: Yeah, absolutely.

ASSEMBLYMAN MECCA: All right. Let me get a time frame, because I misunderstood it. What I understood was that Chancellor Hollander had recommended removal of the entire Board of Trustees.

FREEHOLDER DuHAIME: But that came after.

ASSEMBLYMAN MECCA: All right. You indicated in your testimony that you had not done that; you did not take that recommendation because you had already just replaced five members.

FREEHOLDER DuHAIME: No. I didn't agree with all the trustees being removed, because there were five brand-new ones on there. This came about after Chancellor Hollander had asked for the resignation of President Wright and the Board of Trustees. This was after the Middle States report had come in, and it was after we had moved to remove those other five trustees--

ASSEMBLYMAN MECCA: I see.

FREEHOLDER DuHAIME: --that we had the opportunity.

ASSEMBLYMAN MECCA: Are you satisfied with the Board of Trustees now?

FREEHOLDER DuHAIME: I think, seeing their decisive action, I am pleased that they did what they did. I hope they will continue in a forward-moving fashion and will make sure that the accreditation process is accomplished. I'm sure that they will. I feel much more secure than I did before.

ASSEMBLYMAN MECCA: All right. You are talking about the fact that you are pleased with them?

FREEHOLDER DuHAIME: I am talking about the Board as it is now, yes.

ASSEMBLYMAN MECCA: All right, but the decisive reaction, or action as to the President?

FREEHOLDER DuHAIME: Yes.

ASSEMBLYMAN MECCA: Okay. Just one other thing: Can you comment on the question of space briefly, if you will? Just give us an idea of where you think the trustees should be going as far as the acquiring of space, moving of space, or whatever, for the benefit of the College.

FREEHOLDER DuHAIME: Well, just so you know, Assemblyman, it was just a year or two ago that we purchased the Public Service building across the street for the College and refurbished it, in response to a request from the President for the same lack of space reasons. We have -- and I think Freeholder Robertson said it very well -- had problems with the leadership of Paterson, as far as taking buildings off the tax rolls is concerned, and I can understand that.

ASSEMBLYMAN MECCA: It affects you at the county level, too, doesn't it?

FREEHOLDER DuHAIME: It affects us all.

ASSEMBLYMAN MECCA: Sure.

FREEHOLDER DuHAIME: Once you take away any kind of a building it hurts the taxpayers of that area, because you have taken away a viable piece of property. However, it is also very important for the community to have this institution. That is the reason why we are fighting so hard to keep it here, and fighting so hard to make sure that the small part that we play is done properly, and that this institution remain a viable part of our community for the next number of years. As long as the county is here, we want this institution to stay here.

ASSEMBLYMAN MECCA: Do we need more space?

FREEHOLDER DuHAIME: According to the President, we need more space. I am not an expert in that field. I will let the new President come in and make his assessment, and then come back to the Board of Freeholders for his recommendations.

ASSEMBLYMAN MECCA: Through the trustees?

FREEHOLDER DuHAIME: With the trustees.

ASSEMBLYMAN MECCA: Okay.

FREEHOLDER DuHAIME: Remember, the President sits with those trustees and is a very important part of that process at all times. He is at every meeting.

ASSEMBLYMAN MECCA: Thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Thank you, Mr. DuHaime.

FREEHOLDER DuHAIME: Thank you, and I hope your eye feels better, Mr. Chairman.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Thank you. The next witness will be Dan Lyons, faculty member. My God, Dan, do we go back? I can't believe it.

DANIEL L. LYONS: It is amazing how we have stayed so young. (laughter)

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: How you have stayed so young. Remember the handbox we opened up in -- how we took the crumbs off the table -- that this county had to accept?

MR. LYONS: Yeah, we have come a long way.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Welcome. Tell us why you are here.

MR. LYONS: Well, I would like to thank you for the invitation which was sent to me. I am responding to that invitation. I think what I have to say -- I have submitted a written statement; it is very brief -- doesn't add very much to the agenda as it has been up until now, but I will read it anyway.

As a result of the October visit and March report from the Middle States Accreditation Association, some very positive things are occurring at Passaic County Community College. It is unfortunate that it has taken a crisis, for institutional planning and outcomes assessment to become important issues at our College. It is not in the statement, but I might indicate that without the crisis, I don't think institutional planning and outcomes assessment would be as far along as it is right now.

During the past academic year, the College established a Planning Committee. Under the chairmanship of Professor Alison Chase, this committee is shaping specific goals and objectives for next year and is in the process of formulating a five-year plan with assessment dates and criteria. This planning model will be the basis for the acknowledgement of priorities and the allotment of resources at the College. The assessment criteria will act as a means to monitor outcomes. So, built into this model will be outcomes assessment, as well as planning.

In short, PCCC has done much to respond to the criticisms from Middle States regarding planning and assessment. The steps that have been taken should serve as an ongoing and long-term benefit to the College.

That is the end of the statement. I would say that the show cause order coming from Middle States-- I would say that the focus on planning that is transpiring here will answer the question -- will touch base with the issue of outcome assessment, and will also deal with the issue of governance. It is my feeling that everything begins with having a plan, which becomes the factor which determines the direction the College is moving into and where the College would like to be five years from now, one year from now, or whatever else.

Once everyone buys into that plan, once all sectors of the College community buy into the fact that we need this kind of institutional planning, then I think all the roles are clarified. Faculty does what it does; administrators do what they do. Everything is geared to-- The unifying effect of the plan goes from the trustees right down to the lowest level at the College; faculty, I guess that would be. Of course, I am only kidding.

In the context of it, I feel very optimistic that the responses taking place right now to the show cause order, in terms of a planning committee, an assessment outcomes

committee, and a show cause committee, are very appropriate. I don't think it will be from a lack of effort by the College community that the show cause order is not received positively -- or, rather, that the response to the show cause order is not received positively by Middle States.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: As one so deeply involved in the operations at this institution, Dan -- and I mean that in a positive sense -- you have just outlined a three-part simple process as to what is going on and what you hope to accomplish through this Committee. If it was so simple, and so clear, why couldn't we do this three years ago? What am I missing here, Dan?

MR. LYONS: Well, let me say this: We are all, right now, being educated on institutional planning. From the outside looking in, it appears to be a very simple process. It involves a change in the mindset so as to be thinking all the time in terms of what the implications are of doing this versus that.

So, right now, we are moving along. We are receiving an education in the process of institutional planning. I must again compliment Alison Chase for the work she has put into it. I would say it will take three years from now for this process to be really running as smoothly as we would want it to run.

It appears to be an easy task to say, "Let's start planning," and then start doing it. But it involves analyzing resource allotments, etc., etc., so it is more difficult. When you begin to build in things like assessment criteria that are measurable, and you begin to determine dates for those assessments of outcomes, I think you are then dealing with something that involves a lot of intricacies. So it is a difficult thing to do.

I would say, while it does not respond to your question directly, I think the called for strong professional

leadership that came from a couple of people today will facilitate the capability of the College to move forward in planning and outcomes assessment, and governance will fall into place as a result, as I see it.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: You followed this institution from its embryonic stages. You know the tough going we had back in '72, '73, '74, and '75, and there were those who said we would not survive '76. A lot of good memories.

We are not just here talking about a technical glitch. The faculty has stated publicly -- I mean, I am not revealing any secrets here -- that you do not have confidence in the President of this institution to do the job. Since you were so candid about the President, let me ask you this question: Do you have confidence in the Board of Trustees?

MR. LYONS: Well, I would say -- getting back to the issue of planning--

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: That is like the, "When did you stop beating your wife?" question, but go ahead.

MR. LYONS: I would say that the Board of Trustees -- the trustees who serve on this Board -- provide a service to the College. They may know little of what boards of higher education are supposed to be about. I think the directive coming from the leadership of the College -- the President and the high levels of administration-- From those sectors, the Board learns what its role is supposed to be. Perhaps part of the problem has been the fact that the Board has not been clearly made aware of what its role is, if there is some problem in terms of stepping over boundaries.

See, I think part of the problem is, without planning, no one knows what their role is, and everyone experiences the frustration of saying, "Shouldn't that be done over there?" Without planning it may not be something that is done. So someone jumps into the breach, and then someone else says, "Well, you're doing my job," or, "I'm doing your job." See,

that is why I feel very optimistic about the planning model, because it will clarify the roles of all the sectors of the College community.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: All right. Cutting through the bureaucracy, are we serving the students of Passaic County?

MR. LYONS: I would say that we have limitations on resources -- monetary resources, spatial resources, and, most importantly, human resources. So we have, for example, in our faculty, in what are traditional college subject areas, one faculty member per discipline, on the average. That makes it such that we are spread fairly thin, resource-wise. Spatially, or space-wise, we have some difficulties, particularly at points in the daytime-- In the daily calendar, there are times when we do not have enough space. There may be other times where we have as much space as you could need, because they are not popular hours for classes, or times when students can make it to class.

So, I would say, given our resource limitations, we are doing a fairly good job. I think we should continue to polish the apple right where we are, rather than be looking toward up-county, or whatever, at this point in time. That is my feeling.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Are you planning to stay?

MR. LYONS: Am I planning to stay at the College?

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Yeah.

MR. LYONS: Yes, I have every intention of staying here.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Thank you. I'm glad you're staying.

MR. LYONS: Thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN MECCA: Just one thing, Mr. Lyons: I heard in previous testimony, I think from-- One of the Freeholders mentioned bringing in a private consultant, or outside consultant for planning. I see you have a committee

already set up, and Professor Chase is heading that committee. You seem to have formulated some plans that you are satisfied with. Do you see any reason to bring in an outsider -- a consultant from the outside? If you do, why? If you do not, why not?

MR. LYONS: I would say that I am not the right person to ask that question of, but from what I can see, we are getting help in the form of consultants who deal with Professor Chase and help to advise her in the direction we should be moving at particular points in our sequence. I would not like to preempt someone else who is more in a position to answer that question, but I would say that Middle States tends to look most favorably on the idea that the College plans for itself. It reminds me of the old idea, "If I give a man a fish, he has food for today. If I teach him how to fish, he has food for the rest of his life."

I think Middle States has that concept; that they would like to see the colleges determine their own destiny by creating their own planning processes, as well as determining their own priorities, etc.

ASSEMBLYMAN MECCA: Thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Thank you, Assemblyman. Thank you very much, Dan.

Professor Richard Florio? We will have two more speakers after that -- Alison Chase, whom we have referred to, and Audrey Heyman -- which will conclude the hearing. This will be Professor Florio. Hi, Richard. Should I start singing, "Seems Like Old Times"?

P R O F E S S O R R I C H A R D F L O R I O: Speaking about going back a long way--

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Yeah, we sure do. It's good to see you.

PROFESSOR FLORIO: It's good to see you here also, Assemblyman Pascrell.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Cut through all of this mumbo-jumbo. Where are we here, in this institution?

PROFESSOR FLORIO: Well, of course, we do have a very serious show cause order here. I gave you a little statement. I would like to read some excerpts from it. In any case, it is a serious charge, and I say it is a serious charge because it is true. We certainly have not been responsive. We do not have proper outcomes measurements; we do not have proper planning; and as far as I can see, there certainly was a lot to be criticized about the governance of the institution.

But I do have some faith in this newly organized Board, and I certainly have faith in the internal planning committee chaired by Professor Chase. I think we will retain our accreditation. I don't say this is going to be an easy thing to do; it is not a given that we will retain that accreditation. But what I am concerned about is what happens afterward, because answering the show cause order is not the be-all and end-all -- as I said in my little memo here -- to our problems. We have important needs that have to be met.

The first among these is leadership. I think that has been our problem, probably, throughout the life of this College. We need a President with strong academic credentials. That is important to us as faculty. We want to be able to look up to that President. We want someone with good experience -- someone who has an idea of what college means; what it means to run a college; what it means to be a college; someone who understands the role of the faculty at a college. Some of what has been going on is a matter of faculty empowerment. Simply put, we didn't have much of it.

We need someone who is sensitive to student needs, of course, and we need stability. This institution has not been very stable. Stability can be provided in a number of ways. Certainly funding is always part of it. You need to get to that, right? But that funding has to be properly managed. We

don't want to be run as if we were a business, but we want to be run in a businesslike manner. That's for sure.

Stability can also be brought about by an administration that fosters and values loyalty, hard work, and commitment, and seeks to retain, not dismiss, or turn over, or reorganize again and again its valuable, able workers.

We certainly need freedom from political interference, but we must be very careful to distinguish political responsibility from political manipulation. We do not wish to become a haven for political patronage. On the other hand, we reject those who hide behind the word "autonomy," in order to insulate themselves from responsibility to their constituents.

Because faculty are often not the influence they once were at colleges -- once upon a time in history they were colleges; that is what the word means; because some management positions are often tied in with administration at the top; and because trustees often view faculty as merely another group of employers -- they often come from the business world, you know, as I did -- the leadership of a college may not be subject to change from within, reform, removal, what have you. This is why we had to ask for support from forces outside the College. At all levels we received that support. We talked to old friends, and even some old enemies. We worked with the ANJCCF -- the Association of New Jersey Community College Faculties -- to testify to the Chancellor of our problems; with the parent organization, the New Jersey Education Association, of course; and, to some degree, with the Passaic County educators as well.

As I say, we received that support. I think there is some evidence of it already. We welcomed it, and we thank those who helped us.

Now, what we are asking you, of course, is the other problem. We need your best wishes here, and we need the kind of statements -- the kind of moral suasion that we have been hearing. That is very important to us. It is very important

to hear that people from outside of this institution care about us and want to make us what we really could be. You know, we have had potential for a long time. We are kind of like Darryl Strawberry, you know. We are still waiting for him to hit that longest home run ever, but maybe he will, and maybe he won't. We have a lot of potential, but we have a lot of growing to do. That has been constantly inhibited -- stopped.

Now, we also, I think, are in search of a new Chancellor. And while we are very grateful to the current Chancellor for what he has done for the Passaic County Community College at this point -- eternally grateful, maybe-- Well, you know, reform is always a wonderful thing. But what we surely need is a Chancellor who has faith in our community college system; one who understands that we do, in this State, service over half -- at least some 52%, I think -- of the undergraduate college students in New Jersey.

Naturally, of course, we need improved State funding. You had to hear that, but there it was.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Surprising.

PROFESSOR FLORIO: Yeah, such a surprise. All of our community colleges do, but especially those which function in an urban setting. Our students are good people. They want, need, and deserve all the material advantages of their fellow students at more affluent schools, and, of course, we need your help in meeting those needs.

We intend to be around for a long time, Bill.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Good. I just want to make a commitment to you as, not only the Chairman of the Assembly Higher Education Committee, but, as you know, I serve on the Appropriations Committee. We have already made our feelings known to both Chairman Weiss and Chairman Watson that no longer will it be acceptable that the community colleges of this State be treated as second-class citizens. If you look at the cuts in education -- and, you know, we are facing a huge budget

problem -- you will see that county colleges, although they did not do well, did not do as badly as the other divisions of higher education. We have insisted on that, and we are still fighting that fight.

PROFESSOR FLORIO: I appreciate that.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Because when it affects Bergen County, it affects us doubly. People think we are all on the same level, which we are not, and it is unfair to us.

I like what you said about political interference. I think it is a fair statement. There is a difference, you know-- There are some "academicians" and "professionals" who hide behind this autonomy. They have all nasty things to say about politicians, until it is budget time. Then, all of a sudden, you know, we are not so bad, both on the county and the State levels. So, there is a good give and take that should be experienced.

However, I am sure you have read the Middle States report. It speaks for itself. Do you think that this institution, with the personnel who are in place right now, has the wherewithal to respond to the deficiencies that have been so outlined?

PROFESSOR FLORIO: With the current personnel we have?

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Yes.

PROFESSOR FLORIO: If you are speaking of those principal issues we have talked about today -- the planning and the outcomes measurement--

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Yes.

PROFESSOR FLORIO: --I would say, "Yes."

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Yes, we do?

PROFESSOR FLORIO: I would have to say, "Yes." If you are talking about some other things that this College needs in order to do well down the road, for example, the issue of space and the number of teaching faculty, these things are interrelated. Of course, I am surprised sometimes to hear that

people have awakened to this. I recall when reorganizations moved faculty out. That is one of the reasons we lack numbers of faculty, particularly in the College courses--

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Right.

PROFESSOR FLORIO: --those courses which you would normally think of that are present at every and any college.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: How many students, or what is the percentage of students at Passaic County Community College who are under the remediation plan?

PROFESSOR FLORIO: I don't have knowledge of that. Perhaps someone here can help me, but--

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Is it bigger than a bread box?

PROFESSOR FLORIO: It is certainly bigger than a bread box.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Is it more than 25%?

PROFESSOR FLORIO: I would guess that.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Is it less than 50%, do you think?

PROFESSOR FLORIO: I don't think so.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Is it safe to say that somewhere between 25% and 50% or 60% of the students who come into this institution are ill-prepared to be here?

PROFESSOR FLORIO: I would say so.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Why?

PROFESSOR FLORIO: Well, they often come without--

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: I mean, this is the real meat and potatoes of everything.

PROFESSOR FLORIO: Yeah, absolutely. You know, out there in the public school community, I mean, that is where it's at. Those are where the trenches are.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: And what are we doing about that? What are you doing at this institution to deal with the problem that most of the students coming to this institution are coming ill-prepared?

PROFESSOR FLORIO: Well, I would say there is no coordinated plan. There are some bits and pieces. As Mr. Lyons indicated, there are people who sometimes pick up the slack. For example: We have Phil Metz, one of our math teachers, who brings in Paterson teachers on a weekly basis to instruct them in ways of instructing their students.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Good.

PROFESSOR FLORIO: Those sorts of things happen. We have brought students from the various public schools in here to see what a college is like and to kind of encourage them to -- to plant the seed of going to college in their minds, and so forth.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Business as usual is no longer acceptable, Professor Florio, is that correct?

PROFESSOR FLORIO: I would agree.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Mr. Mecca?

ASSEMBLYMAN MECCA: Thank you for coming.

PROFESSOR FLORIO: Thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: We appreciate your time. Thank you.

May I now have Alison Chase, Coordinator of Planning. We have heard a lot about planning, Alison. Did you want to ask some questions?

P R O F E S S O R A L I S O N C H A S E: Well, let me-- I don't have a written statement, but I have some things that I can say as background information.

What we have been doing since I became involved in this, which was in October of 1989, is to develop and begin to put into place a process whereby PCCC will plan systematically and thoughtfully for both the long-term and the short-term, in a manner that is appropriate to an institution of higher education.

Now, I was asked to work on this in the fall. I did so on a part-time basis, while fulfilling my obligations as a

faculty member. This semester, I have been working on it full-time, on release-time from my faculty assignments.

We have done a number of things that I think would interest you, which I believe are very encouraging in terms of our meeting our Middle States -- or answering our Middle States show cause. First, and I think it is important that you know this, we requested from Middle States a recommendation as to a planning consultant who could help us. They suggested a Dr. Charlene Nunley, who has been assisting me and the College regularly throughout the spring semester. She has been enormously helpful. She was the recommendation of the Middle States staff, although she stresses that she is not a Middle States -- she does not belong to Middle States, and her recommendations are her own, not those of Middle States.

What we have done is put together an internal planning process that I think is very exciting. Middle States criticized us for not having a process that involved faculty, administration, staff, and students. We now have an internal planning committee that does this. Our meetings are open. We are, at this very moment, putting together a set of limited, short-term objectives for next year, as well as developing for Board review on June 25, a really detailed planning model as to how, over the next two to three years, we will implement a planning system here that will integrate goals and objectives with unit plans with budgeting with accountability.

So, by the time this is fully in place, it should be very much easier for everyone. That includes the Board, the Freeholders, and the State -- if it is so interested at that time -- to know who we are, what we intend to do, and whether or not we have done it; in other words, where the resources are going. I feel very encouraged and optimistic about this process. We have not had, up to this point, a systematic process along these lines, but we are well along in terms of developing it.

The short-term goals and objectives are really the first step in doing this. We need to be trained to write these kinds of objectives. We need to be trained to develop these kinds of assessment criteria. We are learning. My faculty role here is as a developmental educator. That means that I teach the students who are very underprepared. Readers who don't yet read at the eighth level are my students.

I happen to believe that institutions, as well as students, can develop. They can develop skills; they can develop expertise, and I really believe quite strongly that that is what we are doing. Over the next six months, our agenda as an internal planning committee will be to look at external factors, outside trends, demographics, immigration trends, economic trends in the county, county educational needs; look at the internal strengths and weaknesses of this institution, and make recommendations which will go through our President, or Acting President, to the Board of Trustees for their deliberation and action.

It is critical that the Board understands, that everyone understands, that this planning process must result in decisions. If it does not result in decisions and actions that can flow from decisions, we will all very soon lose heart. What we will be attempting to do over the next six months is make recommendations concerning appropriate missions for this College, just who it is we want to serve. That could very well include K through 8; it could very well include making outreach efforts in terms of literacy; it could very well include further efforts to attract people from other parts of the county. Those sorts of determinations are yet to be made as a result of this process.

We will be looking at programs service mix; in other words, what do you do to serve the people you have decided to serve? What is appropriate? We will be looking at our comparative advantage in terms of who the competition is for

students. From determinations concerning these areas, we will be setting long-range objectives for the College for Board approval. The Board role is critical here. We, as professionals within the College, will be doing our work. These will flow through the President, or Acting President, to the Board for their review, endorsement, or modification, but really for decisions. Flowing from those five-year objectives, we will go on to develop unit objectives, so that every area of this College is working to advance the College in the direction that has been set, really, by the Board.

That is what we are attempting to do. It is ambitious. You know, when you asked earlier, "Why wasn't this done earlier, it sounds like such common sense?"-- It does sound like common sense. It is common sense, but it requires a different approach, and we require training on this. We will continue to request the assistance of Dr. Nunley, who has been enormously helpful. It is her stance that -- as has been said earlier -- it is appropriate for an institution to set its own course, and that if you bring in an outsider to do the planning, you do not then develop as an institution in the ways that you need to.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Has the College timely filed an appeal of the decision of the Commission?

PROFESSOR CHASE: To my knowledge, we did not file an appeal of the decision. We did reply to it. The President wrote a letter of response. We will be filing our response to it. I believe our deadline--

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Will the College appeal the Commission's decision?

PROFESSOR CHASE: It was not my understanding that we were going to appeal it, but that we would, in fact, show cause as to why they should not remove our accreditation.

In terms of planning, I speak with some confidence that we will be able to demonstrate to Middle States that we

are clearly moving in the direction they want us to move. Not only are we moving in that direction, but that we believe it is an appropriate direction. It is not just externally imposed on us. And that we have taken a number of concrete steps to get there, so we won't be presenting them just with something we intend to do next year, but that we are doing now.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: So, at this time, the College has made a decision not to appeal the decision, as far as you know?

PROFESSOR CHASE: I would ask for collaboration. We have not appealed the decision. (indiscernible comment in response from unidentified speaker in audience)

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: That is correct, okay.

PROFESSOR CHASE: We intend to show cause as to why they should not do it.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: How long have you been at this institution?

PROFESSOR CHASE: Since 1982 as a part-time person; 1983 as a full-time faculty member.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: And you taught in what areas?

PROFESSOR CHASE: I taught in the basic skills.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: The basic skills area?

PROFESSOR CHASE: Yes. I teach the students who come in here very poorly prepared.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Now, you said beginning in October of 1989, you took the position of coordinator of planning. Is that--

PROFESSOR CHASE: I was asked to coordinate the planning process. At that time, I was already involved in teaching my courses for the semester. I said I would undertake to organize it on a part-time basis during the fall, and that I would be willing to work on it full-time in the spring semester. As was said earlier, we really needed to learn how to go about this. I needed to learn how to go about it. I am

now working on it full-time, and I expect to continue in this role so long as it is deemed appropriate.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: And you are moving to address the concerns that have been brought to our attention through Middle States. Are you intending to go out of the institution to get expertise and input from people outside of this institution?

PROFESSOR CHASE: Are you talking about within the county, or are you talking about--

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Within the county, within the planet, you know--

PROFESSOR CHASE: We have, in fact, by hiring Dr. Nunley to come in from Maryland as our planning consultant, and she is acting as a planning consultant. She is not doing the planning for us, but she is really giving us a great deal of advice and counsel as to how to proceed with it. In addition, I and another faculty member have gone to a series of seminars on strategic planning in higher education and are continuing to train ourselves in that kind of way. We do not, at this time, intend to bring in any other professionals, although we are exploring the possibility of bringing in -- in fact, it may be settled by now -- a very highly respected professional to assist us in outcomes assessment -- assessing quality.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Let me ask you this question, and you do not have to answer it.

PROFESSOR CHASE: Okay.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Do you agree with the assessment of Dan Lyons and Professor Florio that the faculty had lost confidence in the President? Do you agree with that statement?

PROFESSOR CHASE: I think the faculty had lost confidence in the President. Yes, I do agree.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Who recommended you for the position of coordinator of planning?

PROFESSOR CHASE: As I understand it, it came out of a group discussion. I was recommended for certain qualities that I seem to possess; an organized mind, an ability to write well, and the general abilities to get along with most people. Almost all of those are diminishing (laughter), I don't know, at least getting along with people. I would stress that I did not come to this with a planning background, but Middle States, and others, do seem to feel that it is appropriate for planning to come with a faculty lead.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: That's healthy.

PROFESSOR CHASE: And I am a quick learner.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: One of the things I have detected also, is that the faculty does not feel it is part of the governance of the institution. Will you go into that aspect of the planning process as well?

PROFESSOR CHASE: Well, it is important to understand that on this internal planning committee, if you count me as a faculty member on it -- although I am not presently teaching -- we have six faculty, five administrators, two staff members, and two students. So the balance is in favor of faculty on this committee. The planning process, as we go along, will have wide participation within the College. All the meetings are open. I mean, they are posted. So anyone who, in fact, wishes to participate in them, will be welcomed. We are attempting to get as much input as possible.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: So the crisis could be seen as an opportunity?

PROFESSOR CHASE: I see it as a very great opportunity, and I really personally believe that we will become a much stronger College as a result of this. I also believe, if you look for the silver lining, that Middle States scrutiny will encourage us to continue -- will make it mandatory that we continue in this process, which I believe is essential. I think we would be foolish to think that once we

show cause they are going to say, "Okay, everything is dandy. We'll see you in three years." What they will want, I believe -- and I don't have any inside track on this -- is continued evidence that we are moving along as we said we would, which will require us to do it, and I think that is positive. It will keep it in front of the minds of the Board of Trustees and certainly make it an institutional priority. So I think it is very positive, yes, I do.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Assemblyman Mecca?

ASSEMBLYMAN MECCA: I have no questions, but I thank you for coming forward. You didn't have a prepared statement, but your presentation was one of the best we have heard.

PROFESSOR CHASE: Thank you. Maybe it is because I am a fast talker that I got asked.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Alison, before you leave, would you provide the Committee with the following: Number one--

PROFESSOR CHASE: Certainly.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: --over the past three years, including this year, full-time equivalent students and broken down into full-time and part-time students.

PROFESSOR CHASE: Full-time enrollment? I don't have that information in front of me--

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Broken down into areas of interest.

PROFESSOR CHASE: Okay.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Number two, a breakdown of where the students of this institution come from. Number three, how many of the full-time and how many of the part-time students are in remediation?

PROFESSOR CHASE: Excuse me. I would just say, in terms of remediation, it depends on how you define that. We have, as you know, a large English as a Second Language Department.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: I don't consider that remediation, do you?

PROFESSOR CHASE: Some of them are, in fact, remedial students.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Then they will be so noted.

PROFESSOR CHASE: Okay.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Number four, the remediation numbers particularly-- I would like to see them over the past three or four years, so I can make a comparison of things. And finally, what courses we have and what courses, in your estimation, we are talking about incorporating in the institution?

PROFESSOR CHASE: All right, what courses we have, and what we are discussing adding. I would suggest that, at this particular point in our timing process -- at this moment in our planning process -- I would hesitate to make anything that could be construed as a recommendation about future programs.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Right.

PROFESSOR CHASE: I can give you a rundown on some of the things that have come up, but--

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Haven't we had, in the past five years, two needs assessments done in this county about what students, older and younger, are looking for in the Community College? Aren't there two reports floating around someplace that this institution--

PROFESSOR CHASE: We do have reports.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Reports that we paid a lot of money for.

PROFESSOR CHASE: We do have reports, yes.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Okay.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER FROM AUDIENCE: That was not the charge--

PROFESSOR CHASE: They were not needs assessments in terms of program needs. One of the things we are aware of,

however, is that within our existing resources, we do want to do a community needs assessment, and we are, in fact, exploring appropriate instruments to do that. It is a costly undertaking.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: At first blush, are we offering the courses best suited to our population?

PROFESSOR CHASE: Is this in my opinion?

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: At second blush.

PROFESSOR CHASE: My opinion is that the courses we are offering are appropriate. Yes, we are offering appropriate courses. The question is whether or not the ones we are offering at this time are the best use of limited resources. I don't know what we should add. I am not yet prepared to say. One of the things the internal planning committee will be attempting to do is to make hard decisions about what kind of program service mix is appropriate. That means: Do we want to maintain? Do we want to terminate? Do we want to strengthen? And what would we like to add?

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Is it possible, when this institution was going through propogandizing how the student body was shrinking in '86, '87, and '88, and then we kind of reversed it in '89-- Isn't it possible that part of the shrinking of the population was due to the fact that we did not have an internal planning process and were not keeping up with the needs of the people out there who would choose to go to your institution? Is that possible?

PROFESSOR CHASE: Quite frankly, I am a convert to planning. I think, yes, that is possible. I believe this makes sense -- this process in which we are now involved. I cannot speak to history; I was not involved in it at that time. I think, yes, it seems to me -- yes.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Thank you. We are very grateful. If you could please--

PROFESSOR CHASE: We will get you that.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: --give that material to David, one of our staff members-- David, you communicate, please, with Professor Chase, to see how we can get that to all members. Plus, before we get to Audrey Heyman, make sure that a copy of the hearing today will go to the Committee members, as well as the President, and will be available here at the Library, so that people can view it. There are no hidden reports. I want everyone to be able to see what was said today, including the testimony, of course.

All right, Audrey Heyman.

A U D R E Y H E Y M A N: I am Audrey Heyman, President of the Passaic County Community College Supportive Staff Association, which is affiliated with the NJEA, and which includes secretaries, custodians, maintenance employees, and security personnel at the College.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Will you wait for just one second, please? (technical difficulties with recorder) Would you mind starting again?

MS. HEYMAN: The Association represents approximately 80% of the employees here, which are secretaries, custodians, maintenance employees, and security personnel at the College.

Many of our employees are the sole support of their families, and some are single parents. Therefore, we are very concerned about the future of Passaic County Community College. Also, we are students here.

For the most part, the members of the Association and the officers have not been involved in the accreditation matter which the Assembly Higher Education Committee is looking at today. The members of the Association are ready and willing to help the College in any way we can.

Employee turnover has been a problem here at Passaic County Community College. The Association will continue to work to improve conditions here so that employees will be encouraged to continue as employees of the College.

I hope the work of this Committee will help the College retain its accreditation. The Passaic County Community College Supportive Staff Association is ready to help out in any way possible.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: You did a suburb job, Audrey. Relax.

Let me ask you some questions. I think they are simple questions, but, you know, they may not be. How do most people get their jobs at Passaic County Community College -- the people who are part of the supportive staff?

MS. HEYMAN: The jobs are usually advertised in the paper.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: They are advertised?

MS. HEYMAN: Some are.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: And then the people come in to be interviewed?

MS. HEYMAN: Yes, come in for an interview.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Then you are selected, or you are not selected?

MS. HEYMAN: Right.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: How long have you worked there?

MS. HEYMAN: Going on for two years.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Going on for two years, and you are already the President of this Association representing 80% of the employees? You've got power in your hands, Audrey. You've got more power than anyone sitting on that side of the table or this side of the table, whether you know it or not.

What are your perceptions-- I am a teacher, Audrey -- let's have a little conversation here -- a former teacher, a trustee at this institution, and I was on the Board of Ed. I find out more things from the people whom "we least expect" -- because we are all talking about things up here which sound lovely and charming, but when you are on the supportive staff, you are the first to go whenever there is a pinch.

MS. HEYMAN: Right.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: You are the least listened to, and it probably has a lot to do with respect. Okay? So, let's respectfully talk to one another for a second.

What is your perception about things here, generally speaking? I don't want you to get into specifics, but what do you see? What do you perceive?

MS. HEYMAN: I think the College is doing a good job for the students. You should hear some of the students. When they heard the school was going to close -- and they just heard that--

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Yeah?

MS. HEYMAN: --they were very upset about it.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Right.

MS. HEYMAN: Because some can't afford to go to other colleges.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Right.

MS. HEYMAN: Some have children; some are sick and not able; transportation-- There are a lot of things this school is doing for a lot of kids around here.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: I'm glad you said that. That is important. In other words, there is a good base of students who feel the institution is necessary--

MS. HEYMAN: Right.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: --and hopefully it can get its act together to stay on board. You heard from the Department of Higher Education that the agenda is to keep it open. I mean, you didn't hear anything different than I heard.

MS. HEYMAN: Right.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: So, there is no attempt to merge this with Bergen County Community College. There is no attempt to merge it with Essex County Community College. There is an attempt to keep us as an entity. One of the alternatives discussed by the Chancellor in the past has been that maybe we should have a closer relationship with William Paterson

College; maybe we should have a closer relationship with Bergen County Community College. But regardless of those recommendations, Audrey, we are going to have an institution here, aren't we?

MS. HEYMAN: Yes.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: You are convinced of that?

MS. HEYMAN: Yes.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: See, I feel good hearing that from you, rather than from the Department of Higher Education.

MS. HEYMAN: Well, I hope so. (laughter)

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Because it's us who started this institution. Higher Ed didn't want us here. The Freeholders didn't want us here. The City of Paterson-- Most of the officials at the time didn't want us here. But, we're here.

So, when you say there is a good esprit de corps, I am confident, and I can take this back to Trenton. I can take this back to the Appropriations Committee. I am going to fight for every dime for this institution. I am going to do my part -- everything that is humanly possible, Audrey -- and I know you are going to do yours. I have a strong feeling that we are going to continue, but that does not mean-- We know we have to respond to the deficiencies which Middle States says we have. I'm sure you would want that. We don't want to just be an institution that people walk through. We want to be an institution of excellence, and we were. I don't know what has happened in the last four or five years. We slipped, but the students have not given up on the institution, have they, Audrey?

MS. HEYMAN: No. I have talked to a lot of people outside the school, and they have talked about how good the school was for their children, because they did go here at one time.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Did you ever notice about this institution, Audrey, that it is one of the very few buildings in this city that -- off the record -- never has any graffiti on it? Did it ever strike you that the court buildings, the jail, schools-- This institution, in the middle of town, in the middle of where most people in this county wouldn't even travel, Audrey--

MS. HEYMAN: Right.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Let's say it the way it is, Audrey; don't hold back on me. But there is no graffiti on the buildings. Why do you think that is the case? I mean, do we have a gun turret? Do we have a patrol? What are we doing here? Is it invisible ink they are using on the buildings? What is the reason, Audrey?

MS. HEYMAN: Because the students who go here are concerned, and they appreciate the school being here.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Don't mess with this school?

MS. HEYMAN: Right.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: No politician can mess with this school? No Chancellor can? No Assemblyman can? Nobody can mess with this institution? There is a lesson here. Why are we missing the lesson, Audrey? Why don't people look at this institution, and say, "There has to be a reason why the community protects the institution." I mean, it's not perfect, and it is never going to be. It is never going to be perfect.

I thank you for taking the time to come forward, and for sharing with us, you know, your thoughts and your perceptions. They are important to me personally, and they are important to this Committee. I want you to know that. Are you relaxed now?

MS. HEYMAN: A little.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Then let me ask you this: Do you have anything more to say?

MS. HEYMAN: No. I just think you should listen to the little man, as well as the -- like you say -- the higher ups.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: I'm sorry no students testified today. If we had had this hearing at the time we wanted to have it, there would have been students.

Assemblyman Mecca?

ASSEMBLYMAN MECCA: Thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Ladies and gentlemen, we will bring this hearing to a close. Is it time to close, Stan? (affirmative response from audience) Thank you.

We will close the hearing. We will have a report. It is not unlikely that we will be back to issue some statements. We are going to look at this very carefully. I want you to know that the Chairman will be in touch with the Department of Higher Education. I want to know what the Department is doing for this institution right now. I also want to know how the Department is assisting the institution in obtaining a new President, and we are going to have some things to say about how trustees are selected to this institution, because I do not feel -- I can only speak for myself now -- confident that the process is any different now than it was three or four years ago. I do not feel at all confident. And if need be, I will have to discuss how they were selected, but we will get to that bridge. Rome was not conquered in a day.

Joe, do you have any final comments?

ASSEMBLYMAN MECCA: Nothing, thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Does any staff member have anything to say? (no response) Thank you very much for taking your time and your efforts. Hopefully, the institution will be the better for it. Thank you, Audrey.

MS. HEYMAN: Thank you.

(HEARING CONCLUDED)



APPENDIX

New Jersey State Library

GOVERNING BOARD

The governing board is the legally constituted body that serves the public interest by seeing that the institution is what it is intended to be, that it fulfills its announced mission and goals, and ensures its continuity. To this end, a board appoints a chief executive officer, develops broad institutional policy, provides advice on major issues, and strives to conserve, develop and enhance the institution's resources. The board, functioning always as a collective body, is entrusted with stewardship of the institution's property and assets, but more importantly, it is charged with upholding the institution's reason for being—its educational mission. A manifestation of board responsibility is its willingness regularly and continuously to assess its own effectiveness as a part of the institution's ongoing self-study and planning activities.

The governing board controls and supports an institution's plans and operation, but it does not manage or meddle in the day-to-day affairs of the institution. Many different structures and procedures characterize the governing boards of American institutions of higher education, and members may be elected or appointed in accord with each institution's charter and/or by-laws. A board's effectiveness depends not on adherence to any particular pattern, but rather on a clear understanding and acceptance of its function. Whatever the title—trustees, governors, regents, or otherwise—a board is central to the effective functioning of an educational institution. Always its advocate, and if necessary, its defender, the board is ultimately responsible for the institution's integrity and quality.

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GOVERNING BOARD

In addition to their primary responsibility for ensuring the quality of teaching and learning, governing boards necessarily deal with many matters such as approving degree programs; confirming appointment of major academic and administrative officers; establishing personnel policies and procedures; evaluating the chief executive officer and administration; setting salary schedules; conducting or directing the conduct of collective bargaining negotiations; encouraging research; overseeing intercollegiate athletics; approving statutes and by-laws. They receive through the chief executive officer periodic reports of committees, auditors, and staff; they approve the awarding of degrees. Above all, it is the board's responsibility to ensure continuous institutional assessment and planning.

A board should be large enough for effective division of labor, yet not cumbersome. Members should represent different points of view, interests, and experiences as well as diversity in age, race, ethnicity, and gender. Terms should be long enough to provide experience and continuity but not continuous reelection or reappointment. Rotation is desirable and even necessary since periodic turnover in membership fosters new vigor and new ideas. Board members ought to withdraw voluntarily when they become unable to carry out their responsibilities.

The institution should establish that the chief executive officer is either a voting or non-voting member of the board but never its chair, and that such officer must have full and easy access to the governing board. It may be necessary in some instances to create committees or specially appointed bodies which can study particular matters in detail.

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Individual competence and willingness to serve unselfishly are primary factors in selection of board members. They believe in the institution they serve, but except for the institution's chief executive officer, who may be a board member, they are normally not employed by the institution or in any position to gain financially from it. They are its impartial governors and simultaneously its loyal interpreters and supporters. They undertake their office with a sense of responsibility and readiness to become acquainted with the institution in more than a superficial way. They must be responsive to the needs and interests of the institution's constituencies, aware of the specialized nature of educational problems, and especially sensitive to any conflicts of interest. They must accept responsibility for the total institution, be it a single campus or a complex of undergraduate, graduate, and professional schools, institutes, hospitals, or research centers.

The board should have clearly stated authority commensurate with its responsibilities defined in by-laws which carefully set forth its purposes and its mode of operation. In the hands and authority of the board are not only the approval and publication of the mission and goals but also the general plan and structure of the institution and provision of the support necessary for its facilities and personnel. The extent to which a board is aware of and accepts its responsibilities, and its effectiveness in performing its functions, is critically important to an institution's very existence. Clearly defined channels for communication with the institution's administration, faculty, and students, as well as with the public, are essential.

Guidelines for the Selection of Trustees of the County Colleges,of the Community College Commissions, and of theCommunity College Coordinating AgencyCriteria for Appointment and Reappointment

1. Members of the boards of trustees should be representatives of the broad public interest. They should be individuals who have demonstrated leadership in public affairs, have distinguished themselves in some field of endeavor in either the public or the private sector, and have an interest in higher education as well as the commitment to serve in an active board role.
2. Appointments should reflect a balance of age, occupations, interests, and racial backgrounds, as the presence of various points of view will assist the colleges in carrying out the purposes for which they are intended. Individuals shall be selected, as far as may be practicable, on the basis of their knowledge of, or interest or experience in, problems of higher education and without regard to political belief or affiliation. Recognizing that all the qualities for representation on the boards as listed by the Commission to Study the Mission, Financing, and Governance of the County Colleges in its report, Excellence and the Open Door, cannot be found in any one individual or be included on every board, they should be carefully included in the deliberations of the trustee search committees, the county appointing authorities, and by the Board of Higher Education as they consider individual appointments.

These qualities are:

- a) broad knowledge of traditions, practices, and trends in higher education (such as academic freedom) and an understanding of the issues and problems confronting its future;
- b) background in corporate or governmental planning;
- c) familiarity with contemporary corporate accounting and auditing practices;
- d) experience related to developing and evaluating personnel policies and procedures, including contract negotiations;
- e) successful fund raising for charitable and nonprofit organizations;
- f) distinguished service as a volunteer for a nonprofit agency;
- g) experience in an administrative or supervisory capacity in human resource training and development;
- h) graduation from the college;
- i) employment in a capacity within the county which provides considerable contact with a geographically and ethnically diverse population;

- j) experience in physical planning and construction;
 - k) orientation in an area of financial responsibility, such as banking;
 - l) successful operation of a small business enterprise; and
 - m) legal training and experience.¹
3. To insure that the governance of the institutions benefits from new points of view, it is suggested that trustees be limited to three full four-year terms of consecutive service. It is suggested that individuals appointed to fill vacated positions for partial terms be restricted to serving not more than 15 consecutive years. It is further suggested that persons who were appointed as original members of the Boards, as they were initially constituted, to staggered terms of one, two, three, or four years, may be reappointed to three additional consecutive four-year terms of service. Trustees completing the maximum number of terms would be eligible for reappointment after a two-year interval.
 4. The requirement of the statute that each board contain at least two women is regarded only as a minimum. Efforts should be made to increase the representation beyond two.
 5. The possibility of conflict of interest will be reviewed in connection with any prospective nominees of the Board of Higher Education. Where there is a question, the matter will be referred to the New Jersey Executive Committee on Ethical Standards before an appointment is made.
 6. The selection of the chairman of a board is the right and duty of that board. However, it is suggested that an individual board chairman should serve a maximum of four consecutive one-year terms.

Procedures

1. At least six months before the terms of serving members are due to expire, the Board of Higher Education Committee on Trustees will ask the board chairman of the college commission, or agency to indicate whether the trustees appointed by the Board of Higher Education desire to be reappointed and whether their service has been such that they should be reappointed. Records of attendance at board meetings of these members should be included in these replies. If vacancies are anticipated due to expiring terms or resignations, the chairman will be asked to indicate the type of individual needed to complement the membership, including the possible need for a potential chairman, and to suggest any appropriate individuals who may be known to them.

County trustee search committees and county appointing authorities should include these steps in their procedures for the reappointment of trustees appointed and reappointed by the counties.

Excellence and the Open Door: An Essential Partnership, a report of the Commission to Study the Mission, Financing, and Governance of the County Colleges of the State of New Jersey, Vol. 1 (March 1979): p.32.

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2. The Board of Higher Education Committee on Trustees should meet with sufficient regularity to assure that the needs of the particular college boards are examined thoroughly and vacancies filled promptly so that the boards can be maintained at full membership. The county trustee search committees should follow the same practice.
 3. So that the composition of the Boards can be properly maintained, the chairman and the president or executive director have the responsibility to inform the Board of Higher Education Committee on Trustees, the county trustee search committee, and the county appointing authority of anticipated and actual vacancies. They have the additional responsibility of informing both appointing authorities of new appointments made by either authority, and such notice should include biographical information on the individuals concerned.
 4. The Board of Higher Education Committee on Trustees will actively and regularly seek nominations from a wide variety of sources, including other members of the Board of Higher Education, local board members, appropriate organizations, and other individuals who might be aware of persons who could contribute to the county colleges. The Committee will maintain files of potential appointees for consideration as vacancies arise.

County trustee search committees should follow this procedure as well.

January 22, 1982

BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION

**Report to the
Faculty, Administration, Trustees, Students
of
Passaic County Community College
by
An Evaluation Team Representing the
Commission on Higher Education
of the
Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools**

Prepared after study of the institution's Periodic Review Report and a visit to the College on October 19-20, 1989.

The members of the Team:

O. Mervene Couch: Deputy Vice President for Executive Affairs and Academic Management
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4200 Connecticut Avenue, N.W.
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City University of New York Central
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Thomas D. Sepe: Dean of Instruction, Dundalk Community
College, 7200 Sollers Point Road
Dundalk, Maryland 21221

Working with the Team:

Clinton Moore: Assistant Director, Office of Community
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20 West State Street, Trenton, New
Jersey 08625

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New Jersey Department of Higher Education
20 West State Street, Trenton, New
Jersey 08625

This report represents the views of the evaluation team as interpreted by the Chair; it goes directly to the institution before being considered by the Commission. It is a confidential document prepared as an educational service for the benefit of the institution. All comments in the report are made in good faith, in an effort to assist Passaic County Community College. This report is based solely on an educational evaluation of the institution, and of the manner in which it appears to be carrying out its educational objectives.

Date when instruction began: 1971

Year of first graduating class: 1973

President: Dr. Kenneth E. Wright

Chief Academic Officer: Dean Rosalie Hojegian

Chair of the Board of Trustees: Mr. Severin Palydowycz

Introduction

Passaic County Community College opened in 1971 with an initial academic focus on Liberal Arts and transfer programs. In 1975, the College added career programs to its curricular offerings and initiated a complete reorganization. In June 1984, the College revised its mission statement,

clearly stating its purposes as follows: "Passaic County Community College's mission is to promote individual growth, and community development by providing the residents of Passaic County the opportunity to obtain any or all of the following: general education, career education, continuing education and community services."

The College is governed by an eleven member Board of Trustees, eight of whom are chosen by the Freeholders of the County government, two appointed by the State Board of Higher Education*, and one representative of the previous graduating class (alumni representative). The College President serves as an ex-officio non-voting member and Secretary to the Board of Trustees.

Between 1983 (the date of its last accreditation visit) and October 1989, the College has made a noble effort to address several issues or concerns through administrative reorganization, a redefinition of administrative roles and responsibilities, a development of goals and objectives consistent with its revised (1984) mission statement, and a greater participatory governance system.

With the above background, the members of the Middle States Association's visiting team, in response to the Association's "very serious concerns about planning and outcomes assessment at Passaic Community College embarked upon a very intensive fact-finding and assessment visit. Specifically, the team sought to determine the College's response and progress towards addressing these issues. In addition to a thorough review of the College's Periodic Review Report and a September 1, 1989 update of that report, the team was privy to reports submitted to the Board of Trustees' Planning Committee and minutes of the Planning Committee (July 25, July 31, 1989), Board Resolution 6A dated September 25, 1989, numerous College documents related to the Periodic Review Report, relevant New Jersey Department of Higher Education and Middle States Association documents.

*By New Jersey statute, the county superintendent of schools serves on the Board of Trustees of all county community colleges.

These, coupled with individual and group interviews with administrators, faculty, students, one freeholder, members of the Board of Trustees and a review the MSA standards for accreditation enabled the team to present the following report to the College.

Standards for Accreditation

While each standard for accreditation has significance in evaluating an institution for accreditation purposes, several specific ones are important for the focus and emphases on institutional planning and institutional outcomes assessment. These are:

- "clearly stated mission, goals and objectives appropriate to the institution's resources and the needs of its constituents;
- "persistent attention to the relation between goals and outcomes;
- "a governing board actively fulfilling its responsibilities of policy and resource development; and,
- "perceptive, imaginative, and on-going institutional self-study and planning procedures aimed at intensifying effectiveness in high education."

Using these standards within the context of the Association's Characteristics of Excellence in Higher Education, we make the following observations and recommendations:

Mission, Goals and Objectives: After the 1984 revision of its mission statement, the College specified a set of goals and objectives that it identified as charting the course of the College for the next five years. Adopted in 1986 by the College's Academic Council, these were submitted to the Board of Trustees by the College President. No action was taken by the Board until September 25, 1989.

Although clearly stated, the team believes the goals and objectives may be too ambitious. The team also questions whether all of the goals and objectives are appropriate to the institution's resources. For example, the goal to become a "truly county-wide institution," and the objective that gives the *highest* (italics added) priority to pursue and plan the development of an up-county facility, may be less appropriate for the available resources of Passaic County Community College in 1989 than when initially proposed. Moreover, the lack of timely action by the Board, the passage of time and the changing conditions within the College have conspired to make a reexamination of the these goals and objectives necessary in the light of the College's 1989 realities. Therefore, we recommend

- that the College reexamine its goals and objectives and establish priority objectives that it believes it can achieve and support by with the fiscal and personnel resources of the College.

Persistent attention to the relation between goals and outcomes: One characteristic of excellence articulated by MSA is a multi-dimensional plan for assessing outcomes based on goals that uses qualitative and quantitative measures. Outcomes assessment should be not only in terms of knowledge gained, but in terms of the degree to which student's attitudes, social and ethical values, interests and commitment to scholarship change as a result of the institution's curricular and co-curricular programs. The lack of qualitative measures in non-academic areas results in guess-work when assessing institutional effectiveness in counseling, advising, or assessing the impact of an institution on the quality of students' lives.

Passaic County Community College has not addressed the directive to develop and implement a comprehensive program of outcome measures. Perhaps the obvious reason is the very fact that there is a relationship between goals and outcomes and until September 25, there was no official response to the College's goals. This lack of responsiveness underscores the precarious situation the administrative leadership and the Board have allowed to persist in spite of MSA's not too subtle communications with the College.

Nevertheless, the need to assess the outcomes of its current activities and the failure to broaden the range of outcome data it collects has hampered the ability of those charged with the development of a five-year plan to document the College's strengths and weaknesses. Moreover, the data collected through alumni/graduate surveys, academic program review, graduate writing examinations, and college placement examinations have been neither communicated widely nor used for planning purposes or decision-making. Information about graduates' satisfaction with courses or programs of study has not been analyzed to determine program expansion, revision or termination. Too often, the team found reports on institutional surveys simply describe the purpose or report the results without any attempt to analyze the results and make use of the analytical data. Program measures required for a uniform systematic institution-wide program review are lacking.

The Colleges' mission statement, and its goals and objectives suggest that the College serves students and others in the county who have personal goals and motives that do not involve completing a degree. A multi-dimensional assessment plan must place some weight on this kind of student goal attainment. Retention and attrition studies must consider these limited personal goals if an effective and useful outcome assessment plan is to emerge. In view of the above, the team recommends

- that Passaic County Community College develop a multi-dimensional outcome assessment plan that;
 1. identifies constituent groups who have goals that do not lead to a degree and that will assess the College's effectiveness in meeting these goals;
 2. collects and aggregates data on a student basis, program level and on an institution-wide level.

(The "graduate writing examination" is one assessment tool currently in use in the College to determine writing skill development prior to graduation. Although used to assess student performance, aggregated at the program-level, this information could be used to improve the program teaching techniques that address writing deficiencies. Aggregated at an institutional level over several years the College could gain an insight into the effectiveness of its institutional approach to writing skills);

- that the data gathered for outcomes assessment be analyzed and distributed to all units involved in developing the College's Five-Year Plan.

Currently, the College engages in an academic review process whereby units establish short-term goals and objectives and an annual assessment process is used to determine the attainment of these goals. Through this process the faculty has managed to up-date or revise academic programs and curricular offerings, to standardize course syllabi and to revise course titles and descriptions. Lacking in this process are (1) the means whereby program goals are set in a planning context and tied to institutional goals, (2) the communication of test, survey, interview data, program costs, and follow-up studies to influence decisions, and (3) institutionally agreed upon standards for program review. The team recommends

- that the goals and objectives of the academic and support units in the College be directly related to institutional goals;
- that the College agree upon college-wide standards for systematically measuring the quality of all academic programs in concert with faculty-approved specific standards appropriate to the programs.

Within a well developed planning context, the team believes this type of program outcome assessment will better allow the college to determine their program strengths and weaknesses.

The Governing Board and Its Responsibilities: From discussions with administrators, some members of the Board of Trustees, and faculty, from correspondence and other documents related to the internal operations of the Board, it is clear that more pro-active, decisive, harmonious, and visionary leadership would have greatly assisted the College to recognize the need for planning and to embrace an institutional planning process long before this critical juncture in the life of the College.

The long unacceptable delay by the Board of Trustees in addressing the issue of planning has forced the College

to implement informally and unofficially goals submitted to the Board of Trustees three years ago. A tremendous amount of energy and time has been expended writing or responding to acrimonious, invective, intimidating and somewhat threatening correspondence. This type of correspondence has only served to exacerbate the College's planning problems and has created a climate whereby serious policy issues survive only after a horrendous verbal assault, if indeed they survive at all.

Moreover, evidence suggests that the Board of Trustees has confused its role with that of its hired administrators. The Characteristics of Excellence state that "the governing board controls and supports but it does not manage or meddle in the day-to-day affairs of the institution." It also describes a Board as "the legally constituted body that serves that public interest by seeing that the institution is what it is intended to be and that it fulfills its announced mission and goals and ensures its continuity." It further states "In the hands and authority of the Board are the approved and publication of the mission and goals, as well as the general plan for the institution." The lengthy delay in addressing goals and the absence of a plan do not suggest a responsible commitment to the College or to the community and citizens the College serves.

One expects the Board to be an advocate and a defender of the College and to recognize that it is ultimately responsible for the institution's integrity and quality. In its policy making role, the Board must move decisively to insure the viability of the institution. We do not believe this has been the case with the Board of Trustees of Passaic County Community College in helping the College to address the Middle States Association's concerns on the issues of planning and outcomes.

Evidence suggests that the team's view of the Board is shared by others in the College and even some Board members. Indeed, actions by the Board suggest an effort to correct some of the conditions described above. The Passaic County Community College Retreat July 14-15, 1989, held with the President a freeholder and the Board of Trustees, representatives of the New Jersey State Department of Community Colleges and the Middle States Association, is one such effort. Growing out of this retreat, hopefully other efforts

toward corrective actions will reach fruition. Toward these ends, the team endorses the retreats "action items for the future." Specifically, we recommend

- that the Board develop a formal "presidential evaluation structure" to evaluate the performance of chief executive officer of the College.
- that the Board of Trustees seek professional assistance in developing a governing board orientation program for all new members of the Board of Trustees.
- that the Board not only examine the way in which it conducts its business but also through its by-laws or rules set forth procedures and material requirements for its public meetings.
- that the Board leave the day-to-day management, execution and implementation of College policies to its employed College administrators.

Planning: "Institutional goals and objectives provide the foundation for sound institutional planning." However, goals and objectives should not be confused with an institutional plan. On March 6, 1989, the Commission's action letter stated "The campus planning process as described in the PRR is rudimentary at best." The team believes this description, while a generous one, is adequate for the Passaic County Community College planning process as of the date of the team's visit.

Planning is minimally a matter of prudent management. For Passaic County Community College it is a matter of survival. Many in the College, including the top administration, have clearly demonstrated by their efforts an understanding of the significance of planning to the educational viability of the College. Yet others, over a three-year period, have permitted the College to continue to be buffeted about by external economic, demographic, political and historical forces rather than exercise leadership in determining the College's future through planning. The "feverish" activity on the part of the Board between July and October 1989 is in marked contrast to the unresponsiveness of the Board over a five-year period to the planning concerns of the Middle States Association.

The Periodic Review Report carefully addressed recommendations from a previous evaluation but of necessity produced

only a limited statement on planning. The September 1 update is best described as a "compliance" report constructed by a limited number of individuals with the objective of patching together a variety of on-going activities and events to create and present a picture of systematic planning.

In creating a "sound foundation" for planning the College was well within the bounds of sound planning principles to begin with its goals and objectives. The fact that these were allowed to languish without action until September 25 (1989) permitted no opportunity for the College to move forward in establishing an institutional planning process or to complete a five-year plan. The team learned that until three weeks before the visit there was no single individual or group responsible for coordinating the planning process. Until September 25 there was nothing to be coordinated in the way of planning. On that date however, the Board of Trustees by resolution directed the President "to so marshal institutional resources and to direct appropriate staff to recommend by January 23, 1990, a comprehensive planning process for the Board's intentions." The Board further instructed that " a completed five-year plan will be proposed and delivered to the Board on or before its regular April 23, 1990 meeting..."

The team's assessment of the planning process and the results of planning at Passaic County Community College is as follows:

- a realistic assessment of the institution's resources has not been undertaken;
- planning has not involved the various constituencies in the College;
- there has been no comprehensive approach to planning;
- no planning priorities and no analysis of budget implications for planning purposes exist;
- the College currently lacks a person with the expertise for planning; and

- there is a tendency to confuse short-term operational planning or annual management oriented processes with long-range planning.

While the College has a number of initiatives that may be promising (i.e., COEP) these represent separate disconnected activities undertaken without the benefit of an institutional planning context.

The team believes that there is a direct relationship between an institution's planning and its viability. Planning must include an organized assessment of the College's internal and external needs. It must include all constituent groups in the College. In response to the Commission action-letter, it must have primarily an institutional focus rather than a fragmented unit focus. It must be a process that recognizes the traditional responsibility of faculty for academic and program standards, and program development. In view of the above, the team recommends:

- that the College secure the professional services of one well versed in planning to conduct training sessions in institutional strategic planning for administrators, faculty, staff and Board members as soon as possible;
- that the College develop a comprehensive planning process that involves representatives of all constituent groups;
- that the plan that emerges from the process be one that is a comprehensive institutional plan that provides direction to the College over the next five years;
- that the College devise a means in its comprehensive planning process and in the plan that is developed to keep the Board, administrators, faculty, and when appropriate the students and community apprised of its progress in developing and implementing the plan; and
- that the Board of Trustees and the freeholders use their influence to make the community aware of the need to fill Board vacancies with those

sensitive to the importance of Passaic County Community College for those currently being served and to the College's potential in meeting the educational needs of those it has yet to serve.

Passaic County Community College faces some significant challenges and decisions in its immediate future. In meeting these challenges, more than compliance with MSA's standards is needed. A cooperative Board dedicated to charting the best path possible for the College is the minimum requirement. Next, before one can decide what one must do, one must know confidently what one is and what one can realistically accomplish at this stage in the College's development. Issues must be examined and the alternative courses of action carefully explored based on substantive documentation. To move forward in achieving these stages in planning, the Board of Trustees the administrators, the faculty and students must come together as a unified entity in the interest of post-secondary education in Passaic County.

Record- 5-20-90

PCCC runs out of excuses

A painful, emotional battle for control of Passaic County Community College ended last week with the forced resignation of the president, Kenneth Wright. Now that the fireworks are over, college and county leaders must patch up their differences and get the troubled institution moving forward again.

The Paterson-based college has accomplished much to boast about. While college enrollment nationwide is declining, enrollment at PCCC is up 20 percent over the last two years. Two-thirds of its 3,100 students are blacks, Hispanics, or other minorities — people who in general are less likely than whites to get a college education. Many students at PCCC say the college is their only chance to earn a ticket out of the numbing despair pervading Passaic County's most depressed neighborhoods.

Still, the college has had problems managing its success. A report last year by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools, the organization that oversees college accreditation, concluded that PCCC suffers from a lack of vision and an inability to assess its own

strengths and weaknesses. The group noted that the college took five years to ratify a long-range plan for growth drafted by administrators in 1984. When the college didn't respond to the Middle States report, the organization threatened to withdraw its accreditation.

Middle States didn't blame Mr. Wright for the college's difficulties. Instead, the organization pointed a finger at the PCCC board of trustees, a sleepy assemblage burdened with more than its share of political hacks. But that wasn't the way the freeholders, who appoint the trustees, saw things. Led by Freeholder-Director Richard A. DuHaime, county leaders pushed for Mr. Wright's ouster.

Mr. DuHaime and his colleagues got their wish: Mr. Wright agreed to step down as president early next month. It's not quite the moment of triumph that Mr. DuHaime portrays. It means the freeholders and trustees have no more excuses. The burden is now squarely on their shoulders to prove they're serious about giving Passaic County the first-rate college it deserves.

COMMISSION ON HIGHER EDUCATION

3624 Market Street/ Philadelphia, PA 19104/ Tel (215) 662-5606/ Fax (215) 662-5950

March 16, 1990

Dr. Kenneth Wright
Office of the President
Passaic County Community College
College Boulevard
Paterson, New Jersey 07509

Dear President Wright:

At its sessions on February 28-March 1, 1990, the Commission on Higher Education acted to require Passaic County Community College to show cause, by no later than October 1, 1990, why its accreditation should not be removed. If the College takes no action in response to this letter, its accreditation will be removed with no further notice, as of October 1, 1990.

In light of the findings of the special team that visited the College in October 1989, the Commission finds no evidence to allay its ongoing serious concerns about the College's progress in the areas of institutional planning and outcomes assessment. These concerns are also linked to larger issues of overall institutional operation, effectiveness, and financial and educational viability.

These matters were brought to the College's attention by the Commission when it deferred, on March 6, 1989, its consideration of the College's Periodic Review Report, pending the results of a small team visit. The four members of the team, with three New Jersey Department of Higher Education officials, and a Commission staff member, visited the College October 19-20, 1989.

Standards for accreditation, as stated in Characteristics of Excellence in Higher Education and applicable to the Commission's concerns, include: (1) clearly stated mission, goals and objectives appropriate to the institution's resources and the needs of its constituents; (2) persistent attention to the relation between goals and outcomes; (3) a governing board actively fulfilling its responsibilities of policy and resource development; and (4) perceptive, imaginative, and ongoing institutional self-study and planning procedures, aimed at intensifying the institution's effectiveness in higher education.

The following criteria from Characteristics of Excellence are relative to the most significant areas in which the College is perceived by the Commission as no longer meeting the standards for Middle States accreditation:



The Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools is a non-profit association serving elementary, secondary and higher education institutions through programs of self-study, evaluation and accreditation, and other developmental services.

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1. "Institutional goals and objectives must provide the foundation for sound institutional planning. The nature and quality of such planning--both short and long-range--are among the basic indicators of institutional strength. . . . Planning activities should involve various constituencies in the continuous development of an institution. . . . At its best, institutional planning stimulates imaginative and creative proposals and approaches for strengthening the institution and enhancing its educational effectiveness, and includes means for implementing the plan. Continuous self-study is an essential ingredient of such planning in a regular and systematic program of internal institutional research."
2. The criteria of adequate and sound institutional planning are "realistic assessment of the institution's resources and reexamination of working assumptions; opportunities for constituent participation; utilization of adequate data and awareness of their implications; and comprehensiveness." Further, "provisions for follow through and evaluating the results of planning should be built into the process."
3. With regard to outcomes and institutional effectiveness, "[t]he deciding factor in assessing the effectiveness of any institution is evidence of the extent to which it achieves its goals and objectives. The necessity of seeking such evidence continually is inescapable; one of the primary hallmarks of faculty, administration, and governing boards is the skill with which they raise questions about institutional effectiveness, seek answers, and significantly improve procedures in the light of their findings. The approaches need be neither elaborate nor solely dependent on mechanical means, but they should be thorough, persistent and self-sustaining. An institution should be able to demonstrate that the information obtained is used as a basis for on-going self-renewal."
4. "Outcomes studies, if they are to be most productive, should accumulate useful data for institutional research and development. They can be directed at the fiscal and planning aspects of an institution as well as at its educational programs. A measure of an institution's sophistication is its use of data generated through the self-study process and its application to sound planning and resource allocation."

The team's report noted the "noble effort" made by the College since its last accreditation visit in 1983, in administration reorganization, redefinition of administrative roles and responsibilities, development of goals and objectives consistent with a revised (1984) mission statement, and greater participation in its governance system. However, the report clearly establishes

Dr. Kenneth Wright
March 16, 1990 - Page 3

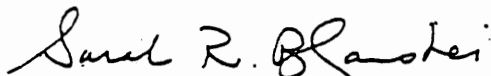
that the College has made little progress in addressing the Commission's concerns regarding planning and outcomes assessment.

There has been no comprehensive approach to planning. Planning has not involved the various constituencies of the College. The College has done little to develop and implement a coordinated, comprehensive program of outcome measures. Indeed, until recently, little action has been taken on the proposed revision of the College's stated goals. Based on the team's findings, the Commission views the College as having failed to respond satisfactorily to the Commission's long-standing concerns, communicated in the past to the College.

Please be assured of the continuing interest of the Commission in the well-being of Passaic County Community College. Dr. John Erickson, Associate Director, will contact you shortly to discuss the Commission's assisting the College to respond to this decision. Meanwhile, the Commission urges the College to formulate actions in response to the findings detailed in the report of the team visit in October 1989, and carefully to review the efforts of the College to comply with the standards set forth in Characteristics of Excellence.

Attached is a copy of the Commission's Review and Appeals Procedure, adopted pursuant to Article IV of the Association's By-Laws, effective December 4, 1987. These procedures are based upon Article IX of the By-Laws, in effect prior to December 1987. Please note that, if you desire to do so, you may file an appeal from the Commission's decision with the Commission's Executive Committee within thirty days of receipt of this letter.

Sincerely yours,



Sarah Blanshei
Chair

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CHANCELLOR'S REPORT

TO THE

BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION

April 27, 1990

Reverend Robert E. Harahan is Appointed Rector/Dean of the Immaculate Conception Seminary/School of Theology at Seton Hall University

Reverend Robert E. Harahan has been appointed rector of Immaculate Conception Seminary/School of Theology at Seton Hall University by Archbishop Theodore E. McCarrick of Newark. The appointment was announced by Monsignor Richard M. Liddy, acting chancellor of Seton Hall University, who in consultation with the Archbishop, appointed Father Harahan dean of the School.

Father Harahan is an assistant professor of moral theology, chair of the pastoral/moral theology department and director of admissions at Immaculate Conception Seminary. He also serves on the Formation Team of the Seminary.

Father Harahan was appointed to succeed Monsignor Liddy, who left the post in January to serve as acting chancellor. Liddy's five-year term as rector/dean was due to expire in June.

Community Colleges

Passaic County Community College Middle States Accreditation

As you know, Passaic County Freeholder Director Richard A. DuHaime recently called for the resignations of all appointed members of the Passaic County Community College Board of Trustees who were serving at the time of the visit of the Middle States Association team in October 1989, and of the president of Passaic County Community College. The freeholders' action was based upon an earlier report of the Middle States team. I confirmed a similar conversation I had had with the President. Subsequently, the college received an Action Letter from the Commission on Higher Education of the Middle States Association requiring the college to show cause why its accreditation should not be removed. On March 27, the Faculty Association of the college petitioned the Board of Trustees to insist on the immediate resignation of the president. According to the college, however, the trustees decided to postpone a decision on whether to request the president's resignation and to spend several months evaluating the president's performance. On March 29, President Wright announced his intention to remain in his position. On April 9, Trustee Severin Palydowycz submitted his resignation to the Board of Chosen Freeholders.

In keeping with our accustomed cooperation with Middle States and the licensure responsibilities of the Board of Higher Education, Department staff accompanied a representative of the Middle States Association to the college on April 9 and 10 and met with trustees and members of the college staff. We will continue to work closely with Middle States in this matter.

On April 12, at the invitation of the Freeholder Director, I met with representatives of the Passaic County Board of Chosen Freeholders and representatives of the Board of Trustees, and President Wright. At that meeting, I expressed my concerns about the credibility of the college's present leadership and the effect that lack of credibility could have on students' confidence in the college. I urged trustees to consider whether new presidential leadership might be in the best interests of the community.

Subsequently, Assemblyman William J. Pascrell, Jr., 35th District, informed me of his intention to conduct public hearings in Passaic County on the future of Passaic County Community College.

On April 16, I learned that President Wright had addressed the Council of County Colleges in a lengthy letter alleging conduct by Department staff raising "issues of treatment of confidential Middle States information, autonomy of governing boards....availability of due process on matters of employment...." and "agreements with the Council about process." I have written to the Council stating the facts about the Department's handling of information relative to Passaic County Community College and setting forth my position that confidentiality of communications between the Chancellor and individual presidents on matters of grave institutional concern such as potential loss of accreditation and lack of presidential credibility is essential to the exercise of statewide educational leadership by the Board of Higher Education.

I continue to have grave concerns about the stability of the institution and am prepared to take any appropriate measures to assure the strengthening of the college's leadership. I will monitor this situation closely and will keep you informed.

Hudson County Community College Fact-Finding Team

The members of the Department Fact-Finding Team that will be visiting Hudson County Community College, beginning Wednesday, April 11, 1990, include the following: Leonard T. Grant (Chair), Independent College Fund of New York; Jerome Contee, Assistant Director, Office of Institutional Relations; Gene Hutchins, Director, Accounting Operations; Brett Lief, Deputy Assistant Chancellor, Office of Student Assistance; Anthony Lutkus, Director, Basic Skills; David Scheatzle, Assistant Director, Management Compliance and Paul Snyder, Assistant Director of Program Review. Additionally, Grey Dimenna, Director of Governmental Affairs, and staff of the Office of Community Colleges will provide technical assistance and coordination for the team. Gayl Mazuco, Deputy Attorney General, will serve as counsel to the team.

Pursuant to the March 16, 1990, resolution of the Board of Higher Education and under its statutory authority, the team has been charged to:

determine the efficacy of all procedures employed at the college and to make specific recommendations on the steps required for the correction of deficiencies where they exist. In addition, the team will assess the status of the institution and make a recommendation to me regarding whether the licensure of the institution should be removed. Specifically, the work of the team would include:

1. reviewing the operation of the college as it relates to concerns expressed by the Commission on Higher Education and the college's adherence to state statutes and regulations.



RECEIVED APR 30 1990

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION
CN 542
TRENTON, NEW JERSEY 08626

OFFICE OF THE CHANCELLOR

April 26, 1990

Mr. Kenneth E. Wright
President
Passaic County Community College
College Boulevard
Paterson, New Jersey 07509

Dear Ken:

As you are aware, Freeholder DuHaine brought together several Passaic Board of Trustee members and freeholders on April 12 to discuss the immediate concerns of the Middle States Association in order to preserve Passaic County Community College's accreditation. Although you were present at that meeting I want to share with you, once again, the remarks and concerns I expressed to the freeholders and board members.

As I have indicated, my obligation is and has been to assure the continued accreditation of Passaic County Community College. The significance of the MSA show cause action and its implications for the institution are a serious issue for all of us.

The major findings of the MSA review team which led to PCCC's being issued a show cause order, indicate deficiencies in areas of institutional planning and outcomes assessment. Among these deficiencies, the team found that:

- "a realistic assessment of the institution's resources has not been undertaken;
- planning has not involved the various constituencies in the College;
- there has been no comprehensive approach to planning;
- no planning priorities and no analysis of budget implications for planning purposes exist;
- the College currently lacks a person with the expertise for planning; and

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- there is a tendency to confuse short-term operational planning or annual management-oriented processes with long-range planning."

The MSA action letter identified these deficiencies as "linked to larger issues of institutional operations, effectiveness, and financial and educational viability." These deficiencies are symptomatic of a breakdown in governance and institutional leadership.

This serious action of a show cause order places the burden of proof on PCCC to show cause why accreditation should not be removed. It is equally important that PCCC counter the possible adverse effect this show cause order may have on students' and others' confidence in the continuing opportunities for access to quality community college education in Passaic County.

As you know, the Board of Higher Education ordinarily accepts MSA accreditation of an institution as sufficient grounds for continuance of its licensure. The Department has established an agreement with MSA stipulating the policies and procedures the Department adheres to for the accreditation and licensure process. This includes acknowledgement of the confidential nature of MSA reports and action letters until such time as the institution chooses to publicly discuss and distribute these materials. In the case of PCCC, it is my understanding that the MSA team report was discussed and distributed to the Board of Trustees, Freeholders, press and DHE staff at the February 2-3, 1990, Board of Trustees retreat. The Department received a copy of the MSA action letter, dated March 16, 1990, from the Passaic County Freeholder Office on March 26, 1990. The institution made both documents public prior to sharing the materials with the Department.

As a result of the October 1989, Middle States team report, the Board of Chosen Freeholders and the Faculty Association of the college expressed no confidence in present leadership at the institution. The Faculty Association, in the interest of a healthy, academically sound and independent college, showed great courage in urging the Board of Trustees to insist on the immediate resignation of the president. The Middle States show cause order is of such significance and raises such serious questions about the viability of an institution of higher education, that it is not unusual, regardless of individual competency, to expect the chief executive to step aside. That is a difficult decision for any individual, but very often it is a decision that is in the best interest of the institution.

I believe that PCCC has a strong faculty committed to providing the best education possible to students. The student body is highly motivated for higher education. The viability of this college is of vital importance to the citizens of Passaic County, and especially to its urban constituents. Faculty, students and county citizens deserve effective leadership.

The most critical issue now facing the PCCC community and the Department is what to do to assure that PCCC maintains its accreditation. At the meeting on April 12, I emphasized that the Board of Trustees has the authority and responsibility to take whatever action it deemed necessary to maintain the institution's accreditation, to make critical decisions and generate the fiscal and other resources the College needs to survive, and to re-establish institutional and administrative credibility in the eyes of the PCCC

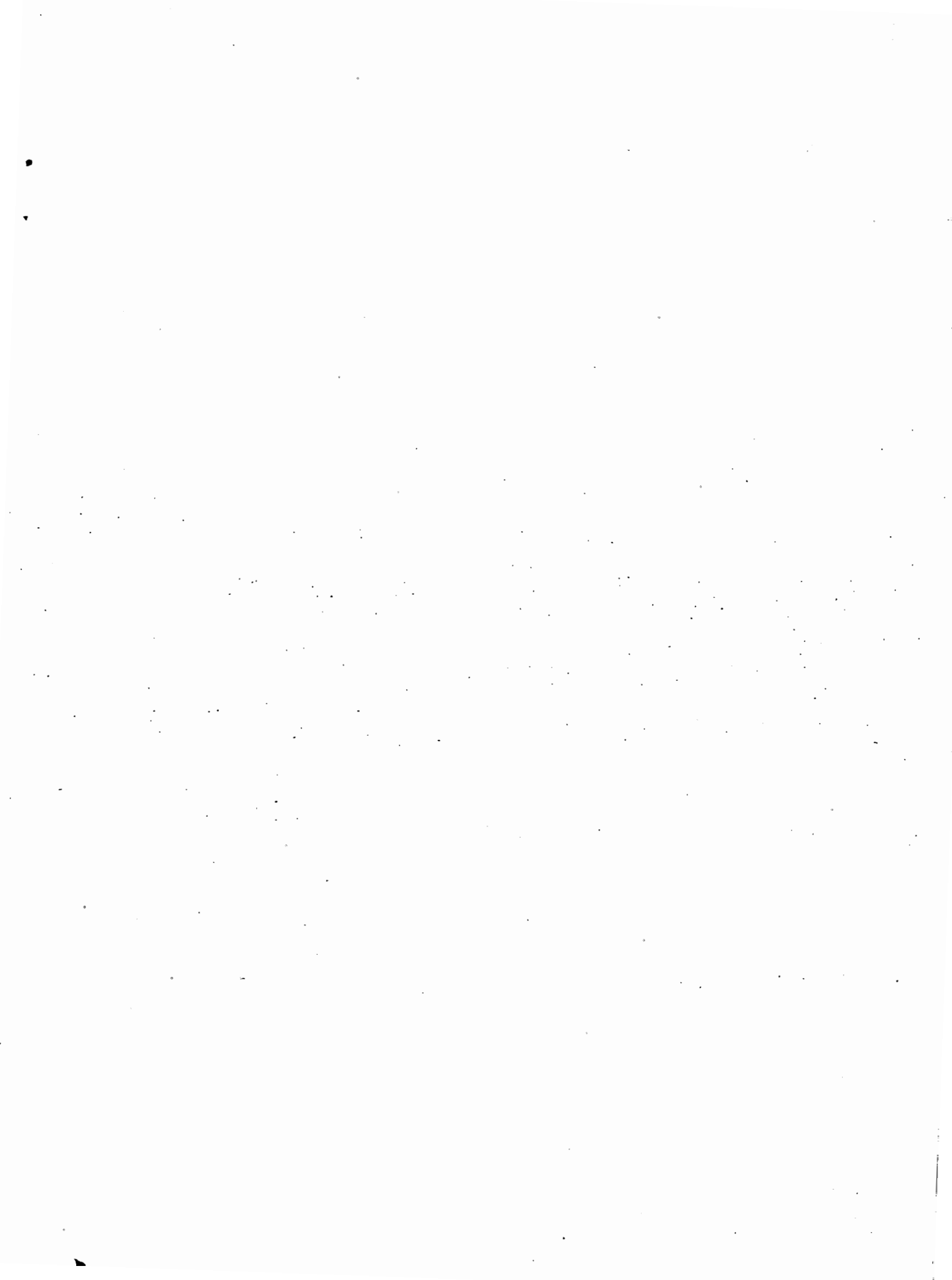
community and constituents. The significance of the MSA show cause action and its implications for the institution are of serious import to all of us. The time for responding to MSA concerns about planning and outcomes is also the time for renewal of a strong leadership team that can make critical decisions and generate the fiscal and other resources necessary to preserve the institution's accreditation, viability, and institutional and administrative credibility.

Sincerely,

Ted (P.H.)

T. Edward Hollander
Chancellor

- c William Pascrell, Jr., Assemblyman ✓
- Members, Passaic County Community College Board of Trustees
- Richard Du Haine, Freeholder Chair
- Passaic County Board of Chosen Freeholders



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