



REGULAR MEETING AGENDA ITEM

TAB 8

May 7, 2009

Discussion Action

Topic

College Administrative Computer Applications “Go Forward” Update

Description

The State Board and College System, through the Strategic Technology Plan, recognize the need to have 21st century information technology administrative tools and services. These foundational administrative tools support college business operations and provide data for teaching and learning and student services operations. Although the current administrative tools have served the system well for decades, they are outdated and urgently need to be replaced. The current state of the administrative software and hardware threatens business continuity. This briefing describes the potential options that have been identified to transition our system’s administrative tools into the 21st century.

Key Questions

- What principles should be considered as the SBCTC Information Technology Division quickly stabilizes the current administrative computing systems?
- What principles should be considered as decisions are made to move the college system into the 21st century administrative tools and services?
- How should the system fund and sustain modern administrative tools and services?

Analysis

- Stabilizing the current administrative software and hardware is critical to maintaining business continuity and providing consistent service to students, faculty and staff.
- Moving to modern 21st century administrative tools and services is vital to meeting the goals of the Strategic Technology Plan.
- Purchase system-wide, centrally supported administrative software that saves money, supports teaching and learning and online student services, and simplifies staff training.
- Explore using state or vendor hosted systems to minimize or eliminate the need for customized, locally developed software and local server hosting.

Background Information

Washington’s 34 Community and Technical Colleges have a suite of administrative applications that provide a wide range of administrative functionality to the colleges. That core suite includes: Student Management System (SMS), Financial Management System (FMS), and

Personnel/Payroll Management System (PPMS). The administrative systems have been developed and maintained over about a twenty-five year period. The core administrative applications currently reside in a legacy environment hosted on Hewlett Packard HP3000 mini computers using the Image Database, custom COBOL applications, and third party products. The HP3000s, since 2003, are being maintained by third party vendors with used parts. Many “shadow systems” have been developed by colleges and “bolted onto” these HP3000s to compensate for the lack of functionality in the core administrative suite.

Outcomes

The Board will have an opportunity to discuss the immediate activities needed to maintain college business continuity and issues that support the long-term vision embedded in the Strategic Technology Plan.

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