

December 9, 2005

Mr. J. David Armstrong, Jr.
Chancellor
Division of Community Colleges and Workforce Education
Department of Education
1314 Florida Education Center
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0400

Dear Chancellor Armstrong:

Indian River Community College has been actively working with the city of Ft. Pierce in St. Lucie County, Florida, for several years to develop an educational facility specifically located and designed to serve an underserved population of economically and educationally disadvantaged citizens. These plans have recently accelerated due to the commitment of the Ft. Pierce Redevelopment Agency to assist in bringing the project to reality. The facility will be located within a larger project of the Ft. Pierce Redevelopment Agency referred to as the Human Development and Resources Centre. The college is proposing that part of the Centre be designated as a Special Purpose Center to provide much needed educational programs to these citizens.

Enclosed are two (2) copies of the Indian River Community College request for designation of the Human Resources and Development Centre, identified in the attached material, as a Special Purpose Center. Please include this request on the agenda for the next meeting of the State Board of Education. The proposal has been prepared according to the provisions of Section 1001.02(7)(e), Florida Statutes, and State Board of Education Rule 6A-14.0061 FAC.

Sincerely,

Edwin R. Massey, Ph. D.
President

/ah

cc: Ron Fahs, Director of Facilities Planning and Budgeting (FDOE)
Barry Kiem, Vice President of Administration and Finance
Karl Guettler, Dean of Auxiliary Services and Facility Planning
Jack Maxwell, Vice President of Academic Affairs

**REQUEST FOR ESTABLISHMENT
OF AN
INDIAN RIVER COMMUNITY COLLEGE
SPECIAL PURPOSE CENTER
IN THE PREDOMINANTLY MINORITY NORTHWEST
COMMUNITY
OF FORT PIERCE AS PART OF
THE HUMAN DEVELOPMENT AND RESOURCES CENTER
(HDRC)**

**Proposal to the Chancellor of the
Division of Community Colleges and Workforce Education
and the State Board of Education**

by

**Jack Maxwell, Ph.D.
Vice President of Academic Affairs**

**Indian River Community College
3209 Virginia Avenue
Fort Pierce, Florida 34981-5596
December 16, 2005**

Table of Contents

<u>Executive Summary</u>	1
<u>Requirement #1:</u> The proposed Special Purpose Center is a part of and consistent with the long-range master plan of the College	3
<u>Requirement #2:</u> The new instructional and support services are necessary to adequately serve the community college district.....	3
<u>Requirement #3:</u> Projected enrollments at the Special Purpose Center justify the need for this additional site	8
<u>Requirement #4:</u> Facilities at existing campuses are substantially complete and utilized	8
<u>Requirement #5:</u> The proposed expansion is in conjunction with the other educational agencies within the community college district and adjacent to the district	9
<u>Requirement #6:</u> Alternatives to the proposed expansion	9
Exceptions to the Criteria	10
Justification for Designation	10
Appendices	11
<u>Appendix A:</u> Indian River Community College Master Plan.....	11
<u>IRCC/HDRC Master Site Plan:</u>	12
<u>Appendix B:</u> Board of Trustees Approval.....	13
<u>Appendix C:</u> Letters of Support	16
<u>Appendix D:</u> Articulation Agreement with St. Lucie County School District	17
<u>Appendix E:</u> Indian River Community College Foundation Approval	23
<u>Appendix F:</u> Indian River Community College 42-year Lease for Human Development and Resources Center Property and Interlocal Agreement	25

Appendix G: Map of College and District with distances and Center Maps 26

Executive Summary

Purpose: The Indian River Community College (IRCC) Board of Trustees and Administration, with the financial support of the Fort Pierce Redevelopment Agency and the Indian River Community College Foundation, will plan, develop, and construct a Special Purpose Educational Center within the Human Development and Resources Center (HDRC) in the predominantly minority Northwest Community of Fort Pierce. The HDRC is being developed by the Fort Pierce Redevelopment Agency at the corner of 29th Street and Avenue D in Fort Pierce.

Need: The inner City of Fort Pierce, known as its Northwest Community, is a high poverty area. According to the census, this area is one of the most diverse in Florida (Hispanic, Black, Native American, Guatemalan, and Haitian), and 19,650 residents are migrant and seasonal farm workers who work only seven months a year harvesting citrus and vegetables. Unemployment in the region is one of the highest in the state: August 2004, 8.0%, compared to 4.6% in FL and 5.4% nationally. Almost one in four (**22.1%**) inner city Fort Pierce residents live below the poverty level, have larger than average families, are single parents, live in public or sub-standard housing, and **41%** of the residents 18 and over have less than a twelfth grade educational attainment level. Due to both a high drop out rate in area high schools and to the migration of uneducated new citizens, the target population of the Center will include groups of all ages.

Objective: To build a new Center that will serve the unmet needs of local citizens and provide an adequate facility to meet the present demands of the College's instructional and community programs. This facility will provide a much needed increase in educational programming for lower socio-economic individuals currently suffering from poverty, isolation, lack of educational attainment, and the resulting social problems from these causes.

Implementation: For its educationally disadvantaged, low income, and diverse target population, the Human Development and Resources Center Special Purpose Center will provide a complete range of educational services including educational counseling, financial aid assistance, registration, and course offerings. Courses of instruction will include Entrepreneurship, Computer Technology, Landscape Operations, Parenting, Certified Nursing Assistant, Child Development Associate Certificate, Dietetic Management and Supervision, Medical Assisting, Marketing, Administrative Assistant, Security Officer, Culinary Arts Apprenticeship, freshman level college courses, college preparatory instruction, and adult education in ABE, GED, and ESL.

The Fort Pierce Redevelopment Agency will give the College a 40-year lease (for \$1 per year) on approximately one-third of an acre within the HDRC upon which the facility will be constructed. (Appendix F) The HDRC will provide 100 paved parking spaces on the adjacent property within the HDRC to be used for the facility. The facility will be

funded through the IRCC Foundation using donations from the Fort Pierce Redevelopment Agency, area organizations, and matching funds from the Florida Legislature.

The establishment of this Center will make it possible for the residents of the Fort Pierce Northwest Community to access a higher educational facility and its services within an area where they are familiar, comfortable, and able to reach with minimal transportation.

**CRITERIA SPECIFIED TO ESTABLISH A SPECIAL PURPOSE CENTER
BY
FLORIDA STATUTE 1001.02(7) (E) AND
STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION RULE 6A-14.080**

Requirement #1: The proposed Special Purpose Center is a part of and consistent with the long-range master plan of the College

This proposal for a Special Purpose Center in the predominantly minority Northwest Community within Fort Pierce is a part of and consistent with the long-range master plan of Indian River Community College (Appendix A). This recent update of the College's master plan by the IRCC Board of Trustees (Appendix B) renews a commitment to "Increase its services to residents of the Northwest Fort Pierce community" and "To provide adult education opportunities and vocational training designed to assist community members in improving their economic opportunities." As such, the College is committed to increase learning opportunities for this very needful target population within a depressed area of the College's service district. Services will include educational counseling, financial aid assistance, registration, and course offerings.

Requirement #2: The new instructional and support services are necessary to adequately serve the community college district

Indian River Community College, authorized by the Florida Legislature in 1959, has grown in the past forty-six years from a one-building structure to the dominant educational and cultural center in the community. The College moved to its present campus on Virginia Avenue in 1963. The college operates Centers in Indian River County, Martin County, Okeechobee County, St. Lucie County, and St. Lucie West, also in St. Lucie County.

The College provides quality instruction and educational programs beginning with Adult Basic Education (ABE), English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), Adult High School, GED, then the Associate in Arts Degree, many Associate in Science and Associate in Applied Science Degrees, as well as a multitude of both college and clock hour certificate programs leading to high wage employment. Annually, over 35,000 students take course at the College.

The College is committed through its mission statement to "Equal access to a quality learning environment ... a wide range of educational opportunities ... and individualized

student services and comprehensive instructional programs.” As such, establishment and development of this Special Purpose Center is essential to the College mission statement.

The inner city of Fort Pierce is an area roughly 40 sq. mi., encompassing the following zip codes:

Zip Codes	% Non-White	% Hispanic	% Black
34947	74.7	11.6	60.4
34950	77.1	18.1	55.3
34981	30.3	13.0	13.6
34982	21.1	11.1	7.5
34983	15.9	6.8	6.2

According to the census, this area is one of the most diverse in Florida (Hispanic, Black, Native American, Guatemalan, and Haitian), and 19,650 residents are migrant and seasonal farm workers who work only seven months a year harvesting citrus and vegetables. Unemployment in the region is one of the highest in the state: August 2004, 8.0%, compared to 4.6% in FL and 5.4% nationally. People in this area know the meaning of cyclical economic depression; it happens five months out of every year!

Almost one in four (**22.1%**) inner city Fort Pierce residents live below the poverty level, have larger than average families, are single parents, live in public or substandard housing, and **41%** of the residents 18 and over have less than a twelfth grade educational attainment level.

A. High Number and Percentage of Low-Income Families Residing in Target Area

Family Incomes for St. Lucie County		
	# of Low-Income Families	% of Low-Income Families
Less than \$10,000	3,367	6.2%
\$10,000 - \$14,999	2,621	4.8%
\$15,000 - \$19,999	3,284	6.0%
\$20,000 - \$24,999	3,846	7.1%
Total Low-Income Families	13,118	24.1%

Source: Fact Finder Census Bureau Summary File 3

In 2000, 24.1% of families (defined as four members) in St. Lucie County had incomes 150% below the poverty level, representing 13,118 families. In addition, the median family income for the County is \$41,381, compared to \$47,442 in Florida and \$52,273 in the United States.

B. High Number and Percentage of Individuals in Target Area with Education Completion Levels Below Baccalaureate Level

The vicious cycle of low educational aspiration and attainment is evident. Fact Finder Census 2004 data reveal that 115,886 or 84.9% of St. Lucie County adults age 25 and over do not have a baccalaureate degree. In the target area of Fort Pierce's inner city, 91.04% have not attained a baccalaureate degree. In other words, **nearly 9 out of every 10 adults** do not have a college degree in comparison to the national rate of 75.5%.

	City of Fort Pierce	St. Lucie County	Florida	Nation
Less than 5 th Grade	131 3.0%	2,771 2.0%	209,333 3.0%	4,007,472 2.2%
5 th – 8 th Grade	436 9.9%	6,419 4.7%	529,889 9.9%	9,748,005 5.3%
9 th – 12 th Grade	1,213 27.5%	21,273 15.6%	1,480,726 27.5%	21,960,148 12.1%
High School Grade	1,194 27.0%	44,627 32.7%	3,165,748 27.0%	52,168,981 28.6%
Some College	748 17.0%	31,216 22.9%	2,403,135 17.0%	38,351,595 21.1%
Associate Degree	231 6.6%	9,580 7.0%	773,486 5.2%	11,512,833 6.3%
Total 1 st Generation	3,953 91.04%	115,886 84.9%	89.6%	75.5%

In the target area of the City of Fort Pierce, approximately 72% are African American or other minorities and 28% are White, while the same statistics for St. Lucie County are 22% minorities, 78% White.

C. High School Student Dropout Rate in the Proposed Target Schools in the Preceding 3 Years

In all probability, the following reported dropout rates are higher than stated. School districts classify many dropouts as *stop outs* and do not factor in students who are not in school, but have never formally withdrawn.

Target School	Dropout Rate 2001-2002	Dropout Rate 2002-2003	Dropout Rate 2003-2004	Aggregate Dropout Rates
Westwood H.S.	20.7%	0.9%	3.0%	24.6%
Central H.S.	15.3%	1.8%	5.0%	22.1%
PSL High School	5.0%	3.5%	4.0%	12.5%
D. McCarty M.S.	*	5.1%	2.9%	8.0%
Forest Grove Middle School	*	4.7%	5.0%	9.7%
Southern Oaks Middle School	*	** +3.5%	2.8%	+.7%
Northport Middle School	*	+.7%	1.3%	.6%

Source: Survey 2 Data, FL DOE, 2001 - 2004

*Figures unavailable for 01-02 as students were in first year of middle school.

** + indicates an increase in enrollment due to re-districting.

Another indicator of higher-than-reported dropout rates is the fact that target high schools had an overall **average cumulative attrition rate of 52.7%** over a three-year period based on annual Survey 2 Data Reports, Florida Board of Education. Students who were enrolled in the 9th grade in 2000-01 were followed through 12th grade.

High School	9 th Gr. Population 2000-01	10 th Gr. Population 2001-02	11 th Gr. Population 2002-03	12 th Gr. Population 2003-04	Total Attrition Rate
Westwood High School	672	373	358	308	60.2%
Central High School	406	462	430	332	60.7%
Port St. Lucie High School	643	554	485	404	37.1%

D. Low Enrollment Rates in PSE by Target School Graduates, 3 Preceding Years

The enrollment rates in postsecondary programs by area graduates have fallen below the county and state averages for the three preceding years as shown below.

POSTSECONDARY ENROLLMENT RATES OF SCHOOLS SERVING TARGET AREA, 2002-2005

Target High Schools	# H.S. Diplomas 2002	02-03 PS Enroll. Rate	# H.S. Diplomas 2003	03-04 PS Enroll. Rate	# H.S. Diplomas 2004	04-05 PS Enroll. Rate
Central H.S.	275	40.4%	271	40.4 %	302	45.4%
Westwood High School	216	42.6%	203	39.5 %	204	46.6%
Pt. St. Lucie High School	259	55.0%	258	54.6 %	311	56.2%
St. Lucie County		62.7%		61.1%		63.3%
State Average		73.2%		71.9%		60.2%

Source: FL Dept. of Education, Readiness for College Reports; Survey 5 2005

When family income is factored in, national college-going rates are even more alarming. According to an article in the February 5, 2005, newspaper *USA Today*, only about one in 17 young people from the nation's poorest families, those earning **less than \$35,377** a year, can expect to earn a bachelor's degree by age 24. In St. Lucie County, 24.1% of the families earn **less than \$25,000**.

Indian River Community College has participated since October, 1998, with a group of community organizations in the effort to provide the minority community within Fort Pierce with a quality facility for the development of all citizens. As such, IRCC has a longstanding commitment to play a major role in the Human Development and Resources Center (HDRC), proposed for construction at 29th street and Avenue D in Fort Pierce. In particular, IRCC looks forward to partnering with the Human Development and Resources Center to increase its services to residents of the Northwest Fort Pierce community. IRCC anticipates providing not only adult education opportunities, but also providing vocational training designed to assist community members in improving their economic opportunities. As such, IRCC desires to request matching funds from the Florida Legislature which could double the amount of funding available through the City of Fort Pierce for construction of an educational facility as part of the HDRC.

The City of Fort Pierce has put aside \$2,500,000 in funds to be used toward construction of an educational facility within the HDRC complex. The City wishes to partner with IRCC for construction of the educational building and to do so in such a manner as to allow IRCC to request matching funds from the Florida Legislature in

order to increase the size and quality of the facility. Upon completion of the building, IRCC will be the major operating partner within the facility and will provide a wide range of educational programs based upon the need of the citizens.

Requirement #3: Projected enrollments at the Special Purpose Center justify the need for this additional site

The population within the Northwest Community of Fort Pierce and the lack of ability of many of the citizens of that Community to use the existing resources of Indian River Community College indicate that projected enrollments will be adequate to justify the new Special Purpose Center. It is estimated that the enrollment in one year will be over 500 students.

Actual and projected enrollments at the College campus and centers are given below:

	1 MAIN CAMPUS	2 CHASTAIN CENTER	3 MUELLER CENTER	4 ST LUCIE WEST CENTER	10 DIXON HENDRY CENTER	COLLEGE TOTAL
2001-02	6,349	1,661	1,502	1,078	642	11,232
2002-03	6,134	1,715	1,572	1,298	654	11,373
2003-04	6,401	1,828	1,640	1,427	678	11,974
2004-05	6,165	1,684	1,484	1,413	583	11,329
2005-06	6,820	1,768	1,565	1,530	611	12,294
2006-07	6,941	1,798	1,590	1,555	621	12,505
2007-08	7,058	1,824	1,616	1,579	630	12,707
2008-09	7,177	1,851	1,637	1,601	639	12,905
2009-10	7,298	1,878	1,660	1,624	648	13,108
2010-11	7,420	1,902	1,684	1,645	657	13,308

The new proposed Special Purpose Center will be to serve the unmet educational needs of the Northwest Community as discussed in "Requirement #2) response above.

Requirement #4: Facilities at existing campuses are substantially complete and utilized

The campus and centers of Indian River Community College are essentially complete with the exception of facilities for unique purposes such as Homeland Security.

Requirement #5: The proposed expansion is in conjunction with the other educational agencies within the community college district and adjacent to the district

Indian River Community College (IRCC) has a strong partnership with the St. Lucie County School District as well as the School Districts of the other counties served by IRCC, namely Martin, Okeechobee, and Indian River. The College has with each of these districts an Inter-Institutional Articulation Agreement governing access and acceptance of accelerated programs including Dual Enrollment, AP and IB instruction. Additionally, the College has with all its area Districts articulation agreements and strong working partnerships supporting Tech Prep, preparing many students for admission into college level and postsecondary vocational programs. St. Lucie County School District has additionally provided space within the Northwest Community in Fort Pierce in older instructional facilities of the district for provision of college services. This partnership has demonstrated the readiness of local citizens to use educational services through the College when they are available within the Northwest Community.

Strong support for the establishment of this new Special Purpose Center has come from the Superintendent of the St. Lucie County School District. Additionally, letters of support have been provided from the President of each of the community colleges whose districts are contiguous with that of IRCC. (Appendix C) Cooperative nature of IRCC/St. Lucie School district relationship is demonstrated through the Inter-institutional Articulated Acceleration Agreement. (Appendix D)

Requirement #6: Alternatives to the proposed expansion

The data provided in response to "Requirement #2" above demonstrate the strong need for a College Special Purpose Center located within the predominantly minority Northwest Community of Fort Pierce. After several years of use of old, unused, and inadequate facilities provided through the St. Lucie County School District, the College has reviewed facilities in the Northwest community. The College has found that there are no vacant facilities of a size or condition to adequately serve the needs of the Northwest Community.

Due to this unavailability of facilities, the Fort Pierce Redevelopment Agency has agreed to partner with Indian River Community College to jointly construct such a facility as part of the Agency's Human Development and Resources Center (HDRC). The Agency will provide Indian River Community College a 40 year lease on property within the HDRC and \$2,500,000 toward construction of the facility, a 20,000 square foot building with instructional classrooms and labs along with supporting office spaces.

Exceptions to the Criteria

This facility will allow the underserved students and adults within the Northwest Community of Fort Pierce to more readily receive the educational services they need. The living conditions of the low socio-economic, educationally disadvantaged population within the Northwest Community preclude many of these persons from traveling out of their community into an unfamiliar area to receive much needed educational advancement. This lack of educational counseling, financial aid assistance, and access to educational programming will be resolved for most members of the community through the development of this Center.

JUSTIFICATION FOR DESIGNATION

Programmatic Needs of the area Citizens within the Northwest Community have many challenges brought upon them by their living conditions inherent upon persons of low socio-economic status who are educational disadvantaged. As such, many citizens within the community either cannot or will not leave their community during their non-work time to seek educational services. Due to the lack of an adequate facility, the College cannot currently provide the citizens with sufficient educational services to alleviate the effects of poverty and the many corresponding problems from which the citizens suffer. In the response to "Requirement #2" above, much data was provided demonstrating the current unmet needs.

Geographic Consideration As discussed above, citizens within the Northwest Community have many challenges brought upon them by their living conditions inherent upon persons of low socio-economic status who are educational disadvantaged. Although the distance between the HDRC site and the College Main Campus is only 2.6 miles, the transition from the Northwest Community to the environment of the College Main Campus is insurmountable for many of the Northwest Community citizens. Map of College District with distances from Main Campus is attached. (Attachment G)

APPENDIX A

EXCERPT FROM IRCC MASTER PLAN

The Special Purpose Center in the predominantly minority Northwest Community within Fort Pierce is a part of and consistent with the long-range master plan of Indian River Community College. This recent update of the College's master plan renews a commitment to increase its services to residents of the Northwest Fort Pierce Community and to provide adult education opportunities and vocational training designed to assist community members in improving their economic opportunities. As such, the College is committed to increase learning opportunities for this very needful target population within a depressed area of the College's service district. Services will include educational counseling, financial aid assistance, registration, and course offerings.