

March 17, 2008

Will Holcomb  
Chancellor for Division of Community Colleges  
Florida Department of Education  
325 W. Gaines Street  
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0400

Dear Will:

On behalf of the Hillsborough Community College District Board of Trustees, I am pleased to submit our request to have a site designated a Special Purpose Center. The site will be acquired for the specific purpose of housing the Business credit and certificate programs, Continuing Education and corporate training, and other entrepreneurial programs administered by our Brandon Campus. Increased enrollment at the campus has put a strain on available instructional space, thus making the establishment of this Special Purpose Center a critical need. We believe that establishing this Center in a location central to Hillsborough County and within the Brandon Campus area will significantly enhance access to adult and continuing education to district residents.

Enclosed please find our proposal, prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Division of Community Colleges and State Board of Education Rule 6A-14.0061 for campus and center designation.

If you have questions or need additional information regarding this request, please let me know. We appreciate your assistance in presenting this proposal in April so that we may proceed with the appropriate measures to acquire the property. As always, your cooperation and support is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Gwendolyn W. Stephenson, Ph.D.  
President

Enclosures

cc: Ron Fahs, DCC  
Carlos Soto, HCC  
Barbara Larson, HCC  
David Cabeceiras, HCC

## **PROPOSAL TO REQUEST DESIGNATION OF A SITE LOCATED NEAR IN THE BRANDON-RIVERVIEW AREA, HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY, FLORIDA AS A SPECIAL PURPOSE CENTER OF HILLSBOROUGH COMMUNITY COLLEGE**

In accordance with the State Board of Education Rule 6A-14.0061, FAC, the Hillsborough Community College District Board of Trustees desires to establish a new site in the Brandon-Riverview area and have it designated as a Special Purpose Center. The College has requested authority from the legislature to acquire approximately 4.26 acres of property located on the Northwest corner of Watson Road and Watson Road, approximately 9.3 miles southeast of the Brandon Campus. The opening of this Special Purpose Center in the heart of HCC's district will greatly improve the College's capacity to meet the increasing needs for continuing education of residents throughout Hillsborough County. The center will house multiple purpose facilities including general purpose classrooms and provide facilities for community gatherings such as public hearings, civic meetings and many other community related activities. The center will also serve as a community enhanced hurricane protection area (EHPA) for use during emergency evacuations. The following narrative explains how this request meets the criteria established by the State Board of Community Colleges for a Special Purpose Center.

### **A. Explain how the proposed campus, center or special purpose center is a part of and consistent with the long-range master plan of the college. Include a copy of that portion of the college long-range master plan, which apply.**

The special purpose center will be located at the Northwest corner of Watson Road and Watson Road located approximately 9.3 miles southeast of the Brandon Campus, Tampa, Florida (See Attachment A-1). The site is planned to be acquired from the owners using PECO funds available to the College by the State Legislature. This center will be located in the heart of a major new housing and commercial development, and will enhance our visibility and exposure to the community. The site is located within close proximity to major infrastructure such as interstate entranceways, major local roads and all necessary utilities.

This new special purpose center will enhance the College's ability to fulfill its vision of delivering education of the highest standards and enabling a diverse community of life-long learners to achieve their maximum potential in a global society. It will contribute to our Mission of empowering "students to excel through superior teaching and service in an innovative learning environment" resulting in the optimal success of each student.

The institutional goals adopted by the Board of Trustees serve to drive the College's strategic plan;

1. Advance student success through a focus on the achievement of learning outcomes for all students with the active involvement of all employees.
2. Foster partnerships with the local and global communities to position the College as a premier educational institution for college transfer, career workforce and economic development, lifelong learning, and community initiatives.

3. Enhance access, flexibility, and responsiveness to meet the changing educational needs of the students and the community.
4. Provide the necessary human, financial, physical, and technological resources to ensure a high-quality learning environment and an efficient organization.
5. Promote an institutional culture that values the individual; fosters diversity; and encourages professional development, action, creativity, and risk taking.
6. Continuously improve programs and services through a systematic and ongoing process of strategic planning, assessment, and review in which a “culture of evidence” guides our direction.

The plan allows the College to attain its mission, transform itself into the community college of the future, and make a strong commitment to reach out to all geographic areas of the county, as well as make a diligent effort to attract and serve an increasingly diverse population. The strategic plan focuses on continuing the development of the campus master plans for the College’s campuses. This Center is not only consistent with the College’s strategic plans, but an integral part of those plans. Establishing such a center assures the College’s involvement with the community planning process and reinforces the College’s commitment to meet the changing needs of the community. The Hillsborough County Planning Commission in its Our Community’s library report listed in the Provide Excellence in Education section “add more community college campuses” as one of its Objectives of the Future. Additionally, establishing the Center fits in well with The Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council’s Optional Subject Areas listed in their Goals of Future of the Region

**B. Justify that expanded or new instructional and support services are necessary to adequately serve the community college district.**

Located midway along the West Coast of Florida, Hillsborough County has 1,048 square miles of land and 24 square miles of inland water area for a total of 1,072 square miles. The unincorporated area encompasses 909 square miles, or more than 86 percent of the total county area, municipalities account for 163 square miles. The population Hillsborough County has grown at a annual consistent rate since 1995 (See Attachment A-2) with annual average of over 29,000 since 2000 (see Table 1, Hillsborough County Planning Commission estimates). The recent downturn in the housing market has slowed growth; however this is expected to be temporary. The Hillsborough County Planning Commission has predicted that the population will grow 12% by 2010 and 27% by the year 2020. According to information provided by the Greater Tampa Chamber of Commerce, the business climate in Tampa and Hillsborough County couldn't be better. In fact, our economy is one of the strongest in the country. We boast a healthy mix of businesses, from financial services and bioscience, to technology and international trade-to name but a few. In 2007 the Hillsborough County unemployment rate was 3.7% compared to averages of 3.8% for the State and a 4.6% for the country.

Hillsborough County's economy is one of the hottest in Florida. Prior to the recent slowdown, residential building had reached a 14-year high and commercial construction reached its highest dollar value in 12 years. Tampa enjoys a vibrant economy and a low cost of living. The ACCRA Cost of Living Index Second Quarter 2007, published by the Council for Community and Economic Research depicts Cost of Living Index for Tampa as being one of the lowest in the State.

Florida major City Cost of Living Index:

Cape Coral-Fort Myers, FL	102.7
Jacksonville, FL	99.4
Miami-Dade County, FL	116.3
Orlando, FL	103.0
Tampa, FL	98.6

Hillsborough County has approximately 804,095 employed people, and planners report that the number will increase to 922,000 by 2015. Also to boost a booming economy, Tampa ranks 3rd among all U.S. metro areas for low business costs; the cost of living still remains much lower than the national average; and Florida does not have personal income tax. Tampa Bay has also gained top recognition in several areas such as Mega Market of the Year, One of America's Best Places to Live and Work, and Least Expensive Large U.S. City for Business, just to name a few.

The programs to be offered at the Advantage Center include:

- Business credit and certificate programs
- Continuing Education
- Corporate training and other entrepreneurial programs

**Table 1**

	April 1st	April 1st	April 1 <sup>st</sup>	AVG. ANNUAL ABSOL. CHANGE	
	CENSUS 2000	2006	2007	2000-07	2006-07
JURISDICTION					
Total	998,948	1,172,970	1,204,750	29,400	31,780
City of Tampa	303,447	334,810	342,060	5,516	7,250
Unincorp. County	644,668	781,350	804,340	22,810	22,990
Plant City	29,915	33,300	34,250	619	950
Temple Terrace	20,918	23,510	24,100	455	590

Source: [theplanningcommission.org/library/onlinelibrary/](http://theplanningcommission.org/library/onlinelibrary/)

Population estimates are dated April 1 of each year and are released in the summertime, generally in the month of August.

Administration, library and learning resources, as well as specialized support services for the Advantage Center will be provided by the Brandon Campus.

**C. Document that the official fixed capital outlay student FTE enrollments have already achieved one thousand (1,000) full-time equivalent students at each existing campus and projected student enrollments are stable or increasing.**

The FTE enrollment at Hillsborough Community College has been stable in recent years but is projected to increase over the next several years with the expected rise in enrollment. For the year ending 2007-2008 the total College FTE is expected to be 16,967 of which 3,103 are from the Brandon Campus.

The history of FTE enrollment shows steady, positive enrollment growth over the past few years and is expected to continue. (See Attachment A-3)

**D. Certify that facilities at existing campuses, centers or special purpose centers (already established by the State Board of Community Colleges or by prior state action) are substantially complete or utilized.**

As part of the Five-Year Educational Plant Survey conducted in May of 2005, the College engaged architects to update master plans for all four campuses. The Brandon campus is located in a high traffic area and the master plan identified campus expansion plans to meet community needs. The Brandon Advantage Center will be located in the Bloomingdale area located in Riverview. Planned development in the area will benefit from the location of this convenient Brandon Center.

Campus Master Plans for the remaining campuses and centers indicate that all available property is needed to accommodate programs offered by the campuses. All four of the other special purpose centers are fully utilized or not geographically suitable for the planned programs.

**E. Provide documentation that the proposed campus or center is with the cooperation of other educational agencies within the community college district and adjacent to the district.**

The Brandon campus is located in the central part of Hillsborough County well away from any of the adjacent districts. The College plans to acquire approximately 4.26 acres of property located at the Northwest corner of Watson Road and Watson Road, approximately 9.3 miles southeast of the Brandon Campus, Tampa, Florida. With the opening of this Special Purpose Center the College will be positioned to meet the needs of residents throughout the Hillsborough County area. Programs to be conducted at the center do not conflict with those provided by other public education agencies within the College district. Local community

leaders and civic groups strongly support the Center and eagerly anticipate the educational programs and services it will provide.

**F. Evaluate alternatives to the proposed expansion, such as underutilized, vacant facilities, or the board of trustees considered leased facilities. Include a complete analysis of alternatives. Document that if there are projected facility needs for a new campus, center or special purpose center, what facilities are contemplated. What is the justification for such facilities and what are the projected costs.**

As discussed in Section “C” and “D” the Brandon Campus will experience challenges in accommodating the expected increase in FTE. Hillsborough County residents’ need for higher educational opportunities continues to grow at a fast pace and the campus will face greater challenges to meet this growing demand. With the establishment and development of the Center, the College will be well positioned to meet its goal of providing first class educational services to the entire Hillsborough County community for the foreseeable future.

## CONCLUSION

This request for approval by the State Board of Education to establish a Special Purpose Center of Hillsborough Community College is justified as detailed in this application. Establishment of a permanent College presence in the Riverview area has received enthusiastic support from community leaders and local government officials as seen by the attached correspondence.

A significant number of people desiring access to higher education have to commute significant distances in order to get the education they need.

Establishing this Center will allow for multi-functional spaces to accommodate classes, large banquet type activities for the community as well as a variety of college sponsored events.