

OCC eyes state for physical plant funds

By Tim Richard
staff writer

Chancellor R. Stephen Nicholson is looking for new revenues for Oakland Community College — probably from the state, possibly from property owners. But not from students.

"We must find resources equal to our opportunity," OCC's chief executive told the board of trustees last week as he outlined what has happened to the two-year college's fund supply over the last decade.

Nicholson talked chiefly about getting state aid for the physical plant. "We are not able to do what we want with buildings and grounds. We will have a program for the next 10 years," he said.

Unlike four-year colleges, community colleges get no state aid for construction. OCC has joined a small consortium of "urban" community colleges to seek a legislative change.

PROPERTY TAXES, as a percentage of college revenues, have risen while state aid suffered in the recession years. Currently, the state supplies \$12.6 million of OCC's \$41.6 million in operating revenues.

Trustee Earl Anderson, who has been on the board for 22 of OCC's 23 years of history, bluntly brought up the topic of a property tax rate increase.

"For going on 23 years, they (property owners) have been paying 1 mill. We should go after another 2 mills," Anderson began.

"June 8 (the date of the 1987 school election) will be on top of us like an avalanche. We ought to explain to the public, in no uncertain terms, why we need the money and what we're gonna do with it."

No one else reacted to Anderson's comments.

But no one disagreed, either.

THE GIST of Nicholson's presentation was that OCC's resources haven't risen as fast as the price index and enrollment.

"We have 26 percent fewer dollars per student, in constant dollars," Nicholson said.

Tuition isn't the place to look for significant increases, the chancellor went on. "Our local students are paying a great deal more than they did 10 years ago. State aid is where we are suffering most. We've had to put an increasing burden on our students."

He said OCC gets less per full-time equated student than almost any community college in the state — \$388 in the current fiscal year compared to \$1,415 for Macomb, \$1,454 for Schoolcraft, \$1,675 for Lansing and \$2,850 for Wayne County Community College.

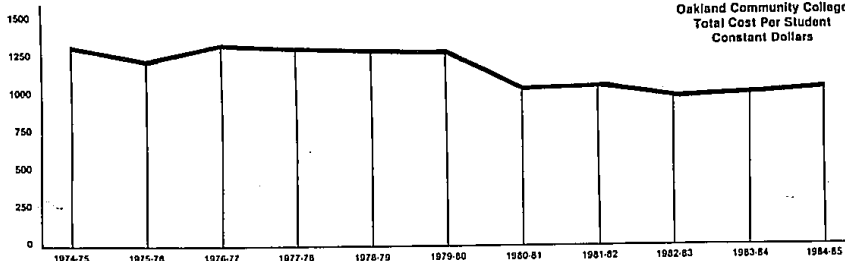
Nicholson indicated he would act soon because of the explosive industrial growth occurring in Oakland County — "\$3 billion is going in across the road from Auburn Hills Campus," he said, referring to the technology park.

"We'll have a one-time opportunity in the next few years. We need the money now. We still have an enormous unfulfilled population."

IN OTHER business, OCC trustees:

• Purchased 27 microcomputers from low bidder IBM for \$63,162, some \$10,000 below the budgeted estimate. A faculty-administration committee recommended the IBM personal computer be the college standard, as it is in industry.

• Heard representatives of AFSCME Local 2042 complain about the slow pace of contract negotiations. Local 2042 represents 208 "classified" personnel — secretaries, cashiers, paraprofessionals, au-



Despite economic recovery and the county's growing tax base, OCC's resources per student are failing to keep pace with the

price index, according to this chart from Chancellor R. Stephen Nicholson.

di-visual technicians, laboratory technicians. Their contract expired July 1.

"We are upset," said Sue Insley, who works in financial aids on the Orchard Ridge Campus in Farmington Hills.

"Staff morale is at an all-time low. The college is asking more work from fewer staff members. Our pay is 18 percent less than maintenance people. We deserve pay equity."

"We're asked by Dr. Nicholson to give more. I cannot give more," she said.

• Deviated from its usual fourth

Thursday meeting date by setting the next board meeting for Tuesday, Oct. 21. Meeting time is 8 p.m. in the 100-110 Student Center on the Highland Lakes Campus, 7350 Cooley Lake Road, Union Lake.

OCC lists open events

Coming events at the Highland Lakes Campus of Oakland Community College, 7350 Cooley Lake Road, Union Lake:

• Oct. 10 — Humorist Stan Midgley will present a 7:30 p.m. travelogue on the Canadian Rockies. Tickets are \$4. For senior citizens and large group discounts, call OCC at 360-3041.

• Oct. 17 — A five-week series on "Mastering Fun, Frolic and Education" begins at 8 p.m. It includes a wine-tasting evening, a program on how to throw a party, traveling with more fun and less anxiety, and how to survive holidays. Cost for all is \$30. Register at 360-3041.

• Oct. 28 — Workshop on "Franchising Opportunities and/or Hazards" at 7 p.m. in the Student Center, fee \$5. It is presented by the state attorney general's Consumer Protection Division. Call to register.

Special ed workshop set

Parents of handicapped children may attend a free workshop to help them plan special education for their child.

Sponsored by Citizens Alliance to Uphold Special Education, it will be held 7-10 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 16, in

the learning research room of Schwartzkopf Elementary School, 8401 Constitution, Sterling Heights. Co-sponsors are Utica School District and Hear for You, a parents group. Register by Oct. 10 by calling Diana Hallfield at 263-9713.

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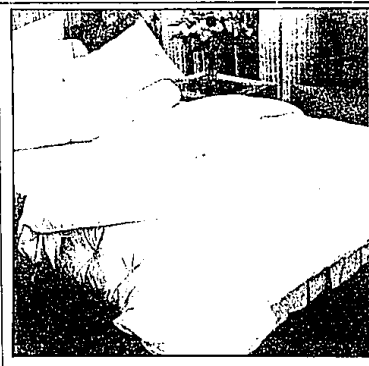
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