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## LOUISIANA COMMUNITY & TECHNICAL COLLEGE SYSTEM

**TO:** Dr. Monty Sullivan  
LCTCS President

**FROM:** Dr. Paul Carlsen   
Chief Content Officer

**SUBJECT:** Student Referendum for Bossier Parish Community College

**DATE:** 11/30/2016

### FOR BOARD ACTION

**Recommendation:** Staff recommends that the Board authorize the Student Government Association of Bossier Parish Community College to conduct a referendum to assess a \$6 per credit hour student athletics fee on all students each semester, capped at 12 credit hours per semester, effective for the 2017 summer term.

**Background:** Bossier Parish Community College (BPCC) offers the following intercollegiate athletic programs: women's and men's basketball, softball, baseball, and women's and men's cross country. In addition, BPCC provides an intramural athletics program that is growing in popularity and promoting engagement beyond the student-athletes. Currently, a modest student fee is used, in part, to support these programs. However, the majority of support comes from BPCC contributing approximately \$1 million per year. BPCC cannot sustain this support long-term.

Understanding that budgets are tightening in significant ways, the Student Government Association (SGA) approached BPCC leaders about holding a referendum to approve a self-assessed student athletics fee of \$6 per credit hour each semester, capped at 12 credit hours per semester.

This is a student led initiative. As such, BPCC's SGA will educate students about the referendum, the goals of the proposed fee and the fiscal impact. The campaign will be led by the officers of the SGA and will include a plan of sharing information via BPCC's website and Communication Center. The referendum will be discussed at SGA meetings and a special information session for students may be held, if deemed necessary. Every effort will be made to collect votes from a majority of the student body.

BPCC has provided all necessary documentation as required by LCTCS Policy #2.012, Student Referenda.

**Ballot Language:** The ballot language to BPCC students is proposed as follows:

Do you approve of the creation of a \$6.00 per credit hour student athletics fee to provide means for intercollegiate and intramural athletic activities and events?

If approved, this fee will provide financial support for the six intercollegiate teams that compete in Region XIV of the National Junior College Athletic Association:

- Cavalier Baseball
- Cavalier Basketball
- Cavalier Cross Country
- Lady Cavalier Basketball
- Lady Cavalier Cross Country
- Lady Cavalier Softball

Additionally, the fee will support intramural activities and events such as 3-on-3 basketball, flag football, softball home run derbies, volleyball tournaments, and much more.

The fee will be charged to all Bossier Parish Community College students and will be assessed during the fall, spring, and summer semesters. The fees collected will be managed by the Bossier Parish Community College Office of Student Life.

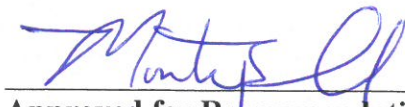
\_\_\_\_\_ YES, I support the \$6.00 per credit hour student athletics fee.

\_\_\_\_\_ NO, I do not support the \$6.00 per credit hour student athletics fee.

**History of Prior Actions:** N/A

**Fiscal Impact:** \$825,000 per year in new resources to support intercollegiate and intramural athletics that would have come from BPCC's operating budget.

**Benefits to the System:** If approved, this initiative will provide BPCC students with an opportunity to sustain the intercollegiate athletic and intramural athletic programs with restricted student fees.



Approved for Recommendation to the Board  
Dr. Monty Sullivan, President

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Bossier Parish Community College**  
**Referendum for "Student Athletics Fee"**  
**Request for approval from LCTCS Board of Supervisors**

***1. Explanation of the reason for the referendum:***

Robust athletic programs offer a host of benefits to students, the College, and the broader community. However, a challenging fiscal environment in Louisiana is threatening to bring about an end to these programs. The intercollegiate athletic programs at Bossier Parish Community College (BPCC) include Women's and Men's Basketball, Softball, Baseball, and Women's and Men's Cross Country. In addition, the College provides an intramural athletics program that is growing in popularity and promoting engagement beyond the student-athletes. For many students, the athletic programs provide a more complete college experience and a sense of community where such can be hard to create.

Most BPCC students are adults with other personal and job responsibilities that prohibit them from spending additional time on campus. As a commuter campus, we do not offer on-campus housing and this further isolates students from one another. However, a basketball, baseball or softball game is the perfect venue for bringing students, faculty and community residents together to cheer on a common cause. Sports also offer an educational opportunity to students, providing life-learning lessons on the field that they may or may not be able to discover in the classroom. Sports underscore the value of hard work, persistence and good sportsmanship through both the wins and losses. Athletics provide the fundamental value that hard work, drive and pushing to the limit will help you attain goals you may never thought previously you could achieve. Those lessons carry forward into all aspects of the student's personal and professional life long after their time at BPCC comes to an end.

Understanding that budgets are tightening in significant ways, the Student Government Association (SGA) at BPCC approached College leaders about holding a referendum that sought to approve a self-assessed student athletics fee. These student leaders understand that in addition to the many benefits athletic programs offer to schools and communities as a whole, participation in sports at BPCC also provides a host of advantages to the students. These advantages include: more time for student athletes to play rather than sitting on the bench at a university; scholarships for student athletes; quality athletic programs combined with excellent coaching that promote talent development; opportunities for transfer to a four-year university to continue playing and earn a bachelors degree; and opportunities for enhanced engagement through sporting activities provided via the intramural program.

Currently, a modest student activities fee is used, in part, to support the athletic programs. However, the College contributes approximately one million dollars per year to support these programs. The current student activities fee also supports more than thirty student clubs and/or organizations as well as several College-wide events for the benefit of the entire student body. In order to continue to provide the students of BPCC with diverse, high quality, educational sporting opportunities, the SGA requests an opportunity to hold a student referendum on the implementation of a \$6.00 per credit hour, self-assessed, student athletics fee, to be assessed on all students each fall, spring, and summer term. Following the current cap on tuition at 12 credit hours, the student athletics fee would also be capped.

The College's administration believes that providing students with these kinds of engagement opportunities outside of the classroom will aid in efforts to increase enrollment while improving retention and graduation rates.

**2. Exact language of the referendum as it will appear on a ballot:**

Ballot Language

Student Athletics Fee

Do you approve of the creation of a \$6.00 per credit hour student athletics fee to provide means for intercollegiate and intramural athletic activities and events?

If approved, this fee will provide financial support for the six intercollegiate teams that compete in Region XIV of the National Junior College Athletic Association:

- Cavalier Baseball
- Cavalier Basketball
- Cavalier Cross Country
- Lady Cavalier Basketball
- Lady Cavalier Cross Country
- Lady Cavalier Softball

Additionally, the fee will support intramural activities and events such as 3-on-3 basketball, flag football, softball home run derbies, volleyball tournaments, and much more.

The fee will be charged to all Bossier Parish Community College students and will be assessed during the fall, spring, and summer semesters. The fees collected will be managed by the Bossier Parish Community College Office of Student Life.

\_\_\_\_ YES, I support the \$6.00 per credit hour student athletics fee.

\_\_\_\_ NO, I do not support the \$6.00 per credit hour student athletics fee.

**3. Explanation of efforts to educate students on the referendum issue:**

The Student Government Association will educate the student body about the referendum, the goals of the proposed fee and the fiscal impact to the students. The campaign will be led by the officers of the Student Government Association and include a plan of sharing information via the College's website and social media outlets. Information will also be communicated via student email, Canvas, and the Cavalier Communication Center (C3). The referendum will also be discussed at SGA meetings and a special information session for students may be held, if deemed necessary.

**4. Anticipated voter turnout:**

Every effort will be made to collect votes from greater than 50% of the student body.

**5. Fiscal impact of the referendum:**

The student activity fee will generate approximately **\$825,000** per year in additional resources to support intercollegiate and intramural athletics and the engagement, retention, and graduation of BPCC students.

**6. Explanation of the appeal process for appealing the referendum result:**

Appeals can be submitted to the Director of Student Life within two weeks of the vote to determine if the vote was valid, with final appeal to the Vice Chancellor for Student Services to determine if a second vote is necessary.

***7. Certification by the Chancellor indicating support of the item:***

The referendum proposal has the full approval and support of Bossier Parish Community College Chancellor, Dr. Rick Bateman, Jr. He believes that intercollegiate and intramural athletics enhance college life and bring more students to BPCC. He understands that athletics programs are an integral part of the education BPCC offers. He has argued that sports are educational in the best sense of the word because they teach the participant and the observer new truths about testing oneself and others, about the enduring values of challenge and response, about teamwork, about discipline and perseverance. Above all, athletics drive home a fundamental lesson: goals worth achieving will be attained only through effort, hard work and sacrifice, and sometimes even those will not be enough to overcome the obstacles life places in our path.