



HARTNELLCOLLEGE

Willard Lewallen <wlewallen@hartnell.edu>

Dr. Lewallen announces retirement in September 2019

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Special Message from Hartnell College Superintendent/President



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Dear Hartnell College Community,

After 40 years as a professional in higher education, I am announcing my intention to retire as superintendent/president of the Hartnell Community College District, effective Sept. 30, 2019. Hartnell is about to begin its second 100 years, and I believe a new college leader should help chart that future.

Given the growing success of our students, the momentum of Measure T's \$167 million for new and modernized facilities, the anticipated seven-year renewal of our accreditation following an evaluation visit in March, and the launch of our new five-year Strategic Plan, this feels like the right time to pass the leadership reins.

The Governing Board will begin a search process immediately with the goal of having a new leader in place when I step down. Michele and I love the Salinas area, and we look forward to continuing to discover all it has to offer. We intend to remain involved in the community, and I likely will do some teaching and consulting, as well. Passion for education is a hard habit to break.

I believe all of us can sense the tremendous energy at Hartnell College – a shared confidence that we will continue moving from a college of excellence to one of pre-eminence as a result of unprecedented student achievement.

In recent months, many of you have heard me highlight a number of specific positive outcomes that should inspire both optimism and pride:

Since 2012, our students' completion of degrees has increased 159%, their completion of certificates of achievement has increased 231%, and student transfers to four-year institutions have increased 63%. We also have seen a 54% increase in attendance by local high school graduates, a 35% increase in full-time faculty positions, a 128% increase in the number of counselors, a 33% increase in support staff positions, and a fundraising plan that exceeded its goal by \$30 million.

In addition to stable financial operations that are the envy of most other districts, we have won national recognition as a top producer of minority student graduates, built strong alliances with industry and educational institutions at all levels, and established the first DREAMer Center (Mi CASA) in the California Community Colleges system to support undocumented students. Likewise, Hartnell has implemented numerous innovative academic and support programs, including CSin3, the Teacher Preparation Pathway, and Panther Learning Labs.

I am deeply grateful to the faculty, staff, and administrators who relentlessly focus on student success and institutional effectiveness. The Governing Board has embraced and supported those commitments. Together, we have demonstrated unprecedented innovation and creativity in transforming lives, improving quality of life, and strengthening families and communities.

Ultimately, it is our students who make Hartnell such a special place. They pursue an education with tremendous grit and determination – often against difficult personal backgrounds and challenges.

It has been my honor and privilege to serve those students, our communities, and

our employees. I look forward to our work together in the months ahead – and to an enduring legacy of success for Hartnell College.

Sincerely,



Dr. Willard Lewallen
Superintendent/President
Hartnell Community College District

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