

Appendix K
Problem Statements

New Frontiers/MCC Joint Task Force Final Report

Problem Statements

Background: Three independent things are conspiring to make things more difficult:

- New Frontiers membership is experiencing an enrollment increase to almost 500 members;
- The College is experiencing an enrollment drop with increased financial pressures and has placed an increased emphasis on strictly enforcing financial policies; and
- New Frontiers is the only College program supporting the MCC Mission of Lifelong Learning. College resources supporting Lifelong Learning have been reduced in recent years and might be further reduced.

1. **Problem Statement:** MCCCDC Policies are designed to hold a “board approved employee” responsible for petty cash disbursements even though the board approved employee has little or nothing to do with the actual expenditure of the cash.
2. **Problem Statement:** College resources supporting Lifelong Learning have been reduced in recent years and might be further reduced.
3. **Problem Statement:** The financial policies are not designed to react quickly to unforeseen needs, i.e., decorations for a social event tomorrow. (Should have been foreseen but was not)
4. **Problem Statement:** One of the major functions of New Frontiers is to provide social activities often involving food. MCCCDC financial policies are designed to discourage social activities and the expenditure of money on food.
5. **Problem Statement:** Increasing NFLL membership results in more classes scheduled.
6. **Problem Statement:** Increasing NFLL membership results in larger-scale events which require more strict purchasing transactions.
7. **Problem Statement:** MCC income from NFLL registrations (approx. \$9,400) does not match MCC expenses (over \$28,000) for supporting NFLL activities.
8. **Problem Statement:** MCC staff members are investing increasing time in managing/reacting to NFLL transactions, with no accompanying increase in staff.
9. **Problem Statement:** Transaction errors are produced by NFLL volunteers who lack procedural information, misunderstand it, or contravene it.

New Frontiers/MCC Joint Task Force Final Report

10. **Problem Statement:** NFLL lacks an annual volunteer training program based on a written MCC procedures manual.
11. **Problem Statement:** NFLL officers do not have access to one purchasing procedure, a purchasing credit card.
12. **Problem Statement:** There is a lack of clarity in MCCCCD/MCC rules and process for NF members obtaining payment for NF expense.
13. **Problem Statement:** Sometimes there are mixed messages from MCC/CE staff about MCCCCD/MCC rules and process and projected timeline to obtain money to support NF programs and events.
14. **Problem Statement:** volunteer NF Council members are not aware of written MCCCCD/MCC financial procedures. There is no orientation easily available from MCC/CE staff.
15. **Problem Statement:** Sometimes there is a lack of collaborative planning between MCC/CE staff and NF that would anticipate NF expense requests.
16. **Problem Statement:** There is a perception of lack of communication between MCC/CE staff and NF.
17. **Problem Statement:** There is a need to better define what MCC staff does to support New Frontiers and what New Frontiers Council and volunteer leadership can do to improve processes and reduce employee staff actions.
18. **Problem Statement:** There are times when more than one of the five New Frontiers committees needs a petty cash fund at the same time. Current policy only allows one petty cash fund to be out for a department at a time. Exceptions have been made for two funds at one time under special circumstances.
19. **Problem Statement:** The Office of Workforce and Community Partnerships has multiple projects and competing priorities so it is sometimes not able to provide full staff support to New Frontiers volunteers at the time they are asking for assistance. The staff is stretched quite thin.
20. **Problem Statement:** The New Frontiers liaison's role is to mediate between New Frontiers volunteers and the College's Fiscal Office and District Office. This process can be time consuming, lengthy and difficult to understand and can sometimes cause friction between the various units, staff and NF members.

New Frontiers/MCC Joint Task Force Final Report

21. **Problem Statement:** The Petty Cash policies require transparency, planning, and multiple approvals at three levels. The procedures are cumbersome and take up too much staff time from too many staff and often take too long to achieve.
22. **Problem Statement:** It is unclear whether or not, as a matter of policy, the College's Lifelong Learning program (New Frontiers) should be 100% financially self-supporting from Membership dues or whether NF should be supported in some part with College dollars.
23. **Problem Statement:** Unforeseen events sometimes happen that call for a quick financial response. Current policies and practices do not allow for a quick nor easy response to such needs.
24. **Problem Statement:** New Frontiers volunteer leaders often do not understand MCC financial policies and procedures due to turnover and lack of mandated training sessions.
25. **Problem Statement:** Space allotment for New Frontiers needs to be defined rather than expected. (Outside resources for the NF needs to be a responsibility of the NF organization.)
26. **Problem Statement:** New Frontiers has not been paying for some of the "hard costs" of the partnership such as postage (\$3,000 this year) since 2002. As the college cannot afford to carry these costs, an additional transfer of funds will need to take place annually or the postage costs should be incurred outside of the institution.
27. **Problem Statement:** New Frontiers has a detailed monthly financial report that will no longer have MCC staff to help reconcile each month. New Frontiers volunteer leadership will have to transfer and translate the financial documents for their board and membership.
28. **Problem Statement:** As of July 1, 2013, Due to increased job responsibilities, Scott Olson will be assigned to other tasks in the MCC Cashiers office and will no longer be able to provide fiscal support to New Frontiers.
29. **Problem Statement:** Enrollment processes, classroom usage, facilitators needs and scheduling have become increasingly problematic.
30. **Problem Statement:** New Frontiers Volunteer Facilitator Training needs to be required.
31. **Problem Statement:** New Frontiers Volunteer Leader Training needs to be required.
32. **Problem Statement:** NF Volunteer Facilitators are unaware of the MEID and password requirement on every computer on any of the MCC campuses. Currently most facilitators

New Frontiers/MCC Joint Task Force Final Report

are asking MCC Staff (Continuing Education as well as staff at Southern and Dobson and Red Mountain) to log them into the computers. We have numerous complaints from Southern & Dobson Staff and IT regarding this situation. Some Facilitators have become frustrated regarding the issue.

33. **Problem Statement:** NF Volunteer Facilitators continue to ask staff in the BP building at Dobson campus to use their department microphone even when the microphone at DTC is already reserved for them.
34. **Problem Statement:** We have spoken to many facilitators over the past semester regarding the use of computers, programs, LCD projectors, microphones, etc. and have instructed them to make an appointment with IT and Media Services (or DTC staff at DTC campus, preferably a week before their scheduled class) if they are unsure of how to use the technology. That has not seemed to work.
35. **Problem Statement:** NF volunteer facilitators are not aware of the copy code required for the copy machine or how to use the copy machine.
36. **Problem Statement:** Facilitator responsibility requires them to make calls to those on the rosters either to remind members of class or to call those on the wait list. Several members are unaware that they were responsible for making the calls and then irritated that our staff would not provide that service to them.
37. **Problem Statement:** Enrollment issues with Non-members/Un-registered members coming to classes which both breaches the policies for liability but also for membership. MCC staff received complaints/phone calls from volunteer facilitators who said that a number of non-members were invited by NF members to attend classes with them. This creates a problem for classes that have a limited number of seats or those who are full. We have also had a number of members who were placed on a wait-list and who told us that they didn't care and they would attend anyway. Again, this causes problems.
38. **Problem Statement:** Class Scheduling -This past year we have had trouble with scheduling classes at the appropriate times and campuses. There must be more collaboration between NF and MCC when planning schedules to assure that classrooms are easy to obtain, easy to keep and are the proper size when booked the first time.
39. **Problem Statement:** Because room set-ups are determined by fire codes, rooms cannot be rearranged. Our rooms are set-up for student/member safety. We are very lucky to have

New Frontiers/MCC Joint Task Force Final Report

had brand new paint/carpet installed in all of the classrooms and repeated movement of tables it causing ugly snags. We would like to keep our carpet in the best shape possible! We continue to find rooms are DTC rearranged and not put back for use by later classes.

40. **Problem Statement:** New Frontiers volunteer leaders sometimes have unrealistic expectations for Office of Workforce and Community Partnerships staff (MCC staff does not work as employees of New Frontiers).
41. **Problem Statement:** New Frontiers growth and use of College facilities has increased dramatically in the past two years requiring additional classrooms and meeting space. This challenge for space has become time consuming for staff and uses facilities that are not being used for other college program and revenue generating activities.
42. **Problem Statement:** Space classroom allotment for New Frontiers needs to be defined rather than expected. (Outside resources for NF space and programming needs to be a responsibility of the NF organization.)
43. **Problem Statement:** MCC and the District as a whole are experiencing a severe downturn in enrollment for the third year in a row while New Frontiers enrollment is up. Therefore, with reduced revenue, staff and programs are challenged to do more with less. Operating dollars are down and the Office of Workforce and Community Partnerships needs to create new revenue streams through non-credit programs.
44. **Problem Statement:** This new focus (#43 above) for the Office of Workforce and Community Development will be using staff and resources currently dedicated to New Frontiers leaving New Frontiers with even less support than currently exists.
45. **Problem Statement:** New Frontiers has a detailed monthly financial report for their committee chairs who have responsibility for managing the budget that will no longer have MCC staff to help reconcile.
46. **Problem Statement:** Misunderstanding/miscommunications of situations sometimes occurs.
47. **Problem Statement:** New Frontiers dollars are treated as public dollars irrespective of whether they have come from membership dues or taxpayer funds.
48. **Problem Statement:** The College and the District have policies regarding gifting of public resources to private self-sustaining and self-governing organizations. (Devoting Public Resources to a Public Purpose.... "Depletion of public funds by giving advantages to special interests or engaging in non-public enterprises.") which might be interpreted as preventing support for New Frontiers.
49. **Problem Statement:** New Frontiers volunteer leaders often do not understand MCC

New Frontiers/MCC Joint Task Force Final Report

financial policies and procedures due to turnover and lack of mandated training sessions.

50. **Problem Statement:** Unforeseen events sometimes happen that call for a quick financial response. Current policies and practices do not allow for a quick nor easy response to such needs.
51. **Problem Statement:** It is unclear whether or not, as a matter of College policy, the College's Lifelong Learning program (New Frontiers) should be 100% financially self-supporting from Membership dues or whether it should be supported in some part with College dollars.
52. **Problem Statement:** New Frontiers has not been paying for some of the "hard costs" of the partnership such as postage since 2002 (\$3,000 this year). As the college cannot afford to carry these costs, an additional transfer of funds will need to take place annually for these postage costs.
53. **Problem Statement:** Policies and Practices are not the same. District or College Policies are not able to be changed by our group but can be recommended for change to the College Administration and the Governing Board; however, practices that may cause financial concerns can be changed.

Vendor practices issues:

54. **Problem Statement:** Delayed payment - Invoices are paid late due to not being sent directly to District Accounts Payable Office rather than MCC office.
55. **Problem Statement:** Contracting for social events costing more than \$2,500 (No Choice, if vendor requires an agreement)
56. **Problem Statement:** Committee members signing catering or facility rental agreements when only MCCC has contractual signing authority
57. **Problem Statement:** Committee members acting as vendors point of contact
58. **Problem Statement:** Members making the decision to purchase without processing properly through system
59. **Problem Statement:** NF committee members wanting to stay involved in the vendor payment process
60. **Problem Statement:** Committee members stating incorrect information to vendors

Process Practices Issues:

61. **Problem Statement:** Delayed payment - Invoices are paid late due to no Purchase Order

New Frontiers/MCC Joint Task Force Final Report

number on the invoice with Open PO's .

62. **Problem Statement:** Official Function forms require high level signatures from administrators who may not be available on short notice.
63. **Problem Statement:** NF volunteers are frequently not aware of District purchasing guidelines, especially in regards to advance authorization.
64. **Problem Statement:** District purchasing processes require MCC employees to conduct transactions on behalf of NF.
65. **Problem Statement:** MCCCCD Board rules designed to protect public dollars spent by academic departments applied to volunteer run student organization serving its members
66. **Problem Statement:** Cumbersome Petty Cash methods of making small purchases making the ability to act quickly to take advantage of sales or special deals
67. **Problem Statement:** Inability to be reimbursed for NF purchases (Vendors & Employees Only)
68. **Problem Statement:** Students (members) cannot handle "college" funds

Problems from NFLL perspective:

69. **Problem Statement:** Not being able to react to an immediate need. There will always be unforeseen situations that could be easily solved by an immediate expenditure or reimbursement. There is seemingly no way to accomplish this.
70. **Problem Statement:** Some rules don't seem to be followed or understood within MCC: Recently a situation came up about using a credit card to pay for a petty cash purchase.
71. **Problem Statement:** There was a recommendation last year to allow 3 open petty cash requests at one time, but nothing seems to have been done about it. (Or was the decision just not conveyed?)
72. **Problem Statement:** Problems seem to have occurred that could have been prevented with better instructions, written procedures, or more careful review.
73. **Problem Statement:** A recent purchase order was re-written because the final amount exceeded the amount on the original P.O.
74. **Problem Statement:** There is no one place for NFLL volunteer leaders to find a complete set of rules for requisitioning money.

New Frontiers/MCC Joint Task Force Final Report

75. **Problem Statement:** It is sometimes easier to pay for something personally than to get payment through NFLL.

Problems from MCC perspective:

76. **Problem Statement:** NFLL members do not understand the rules and sometimes act independently.

77. **Problem Statement:** Information on requests is sometimes not complete.

78. **Problem Statement:** NFLL members do not allow enough time.

Problems from a taxpayer perspective:

79. **Problem Statement:** My perception is that MCC may err on the side of caution to assure that no money is spent improperly. It may not be placing enough emphasis on an efficient system. Both situations can be costly.