

Santa Monica College  
**Collegewide Benefits**  
**Minutes of the Meeting**  
**April 4, 2006**

Present

Pat Brown, Co-Chair  
Sandi Burnett, Co-Chair  
Lenore Banders  
Al DeSalles  
Peter Geltner  
Mitra Moassessi  
Ana Rojas

Absent

Jeanette Goolsby  
Marvin Martinez

Guests

Anne Clifford, Fickewirth & Associates  
Teri Gaulke

Assistants

Letty Kilian, Staff Assistant  
Mimi Vaval, Resource Staff Assistant

Co-chair Sandi Burnett called the meeting to order at 9:40 a.m. and moved to Old Business on the agenda - the Blue Cross Response to the RFP as presented by Anne Clifford.

Reports and Discussions

**Blue Cross Response to RFP**

Consultant Anne Clifford distributed the Blue Cross' PPO and HMO Comparison Summary to the Committee. The rates include the costs of \$9/per person per month and 3% of the premium for the administration of the medical benefits and commission.

- AETNA will quote in May
- CIGNA declined to quote as they no longer are in the business of underwriting schools
- Health Net will provide a quote by April 15
- Pacific Care will provide a quote by April 15
- The Blue Cross Comparison Summary is not inclusive of the retirees; it covers active and early retirees only; Anne Clifford will provide the supplemental to Medicare for the retirees once it is received by Fickewirth
- Medical providers and the networks are the same with the Blue Cross PPO as our current PERS Blue Cross PPO
- Co-chair Burnett asked whether a PPO from Blue Cross may be combined with another carrier's HMO plan. Anne Clifford will inquire and inform us.
- Anne Clifford strongly advised that the District find out if Kaiser will offer the same medical plan to the District as our current PERS plan and what the cost will be for 2007.

**Spring Benefits Forum Update**

The Spring Benefits Forum, although not well attended, was informative and engaging with questions from those in attendance. It was decided that the Health Benefit Forum notes be included in the April 4<sup>th</sup> Minutes.

**Health Benefits Forum**  
Thursday, March 30, 2006  
Business 111 (B-111)

1. A decision-making timeline requires that the District decide by June 30, 2006 whether to disengage from CalPERS for the 2007 year to decrease costs while maintaining the quality of coverage. To assist with the timeline process, the Collegewide Benefits Committee has submitted an RFP (request for proposal) to several health insurance carriers with professional consultation by Anne Clifford of Fickewirth and Associates. The other carriers will consider a profile of the District employees and retirees based on the District's census report, and a profile of our current health care benefits. Essentially, the current health plan is serving as the RFP. The District can obtain health benefits with Kaiser equal to the existing plan with Kaiser at a rate equal or less than the current PERS rate; therefore, it was not necessary to include Kaiser in the RFP.

- The RFP includes full-time faculty and administrators, full-time classified staff, and retirees
- Included in the RFP is the administration of prescription drug benefits
- Adjunct faculty benefits are not included in this RFP as their benefits will not be changed
- The Committee is only looking at the health care benefits; (The CalPERS pension is not under discussion.)
- Carriers who received the RFP are: BlueCross, Aetna, CIGNA, HealthNet, and Pacific Care
- If the District leaves CalPERS, there will be a five-year waiting period to reapply to CalPERS
- The cost of the administration of health benefits is covered by CalPERS which includes all of the retirees must also be calculated when considering the total cost of any change.

2. Keeping a copy of your own medical records is very important; the law states that you are entitled to a copy of your records when requested

3. A CalPERS packet containing a statement of an employee's health plan and dependents covered under the health plan is mailed home to all employees each August. All should notify the Benefits Office if any of the information does not reflect their current family coverage. For example, if a dependent has married or moved from the household and is no longer eligible for benefits. A form must be completed which officially documents such changes.

All employees should become familiar with their EOC (Explanation of Coverage) which is also included in the CalPERS packet.

4. Employees separating from the District will receive a letter from the District informing them of their health insurance

options and protection under COBRA. COBRA, CAL-COBRA, and HIPAA are health insurance options available to employees who leave their employment; lose their employment; or lose employer coverage. COBRA increases an employee's ability to maintain continuous health coverage. COBRA limits the use of pre-existing condition exclusions. COBRA guarantees the same health plan coverage provided while employed. Any employee with group health insurance (full-time faculty, qualifying part-time faculty, classified employees) is eligible for COBRA. Spouses and dependents covered by the employer group health insurance are also eligible for COBRA.

HIPAA guarantees the employee the choice of at least two individual coverage options and that the employee will be eligible, regardless of any medical condition. In order to be eligible for HIPAA, an employee must have had 18 continuous months of health insurance. An employee must no longer be eligible for COBRA continuation coverage to qualify for HIPAA protections. An employee must apply for individual insurance coverage within 63 days after losing group (COBRA) insurance.

**March 2, 2006 Minutes** (reviewed)

**March 23, 2006 Minutes** (reviewed)

Motion was made by Mitra Moassessi and seconded by Anna Rojas to approve the March 2<sup>nd</sup> and March 23<sup>rd</sup> Minutes. **Unanimously approved.**

**Retirement Benefits Workshop for Classified**

A Retirement Benefits Workshop for classified staff is scheduled for Friday, April 28, 2006 from 12 noon to 1 p.m. in Business 111 (B-111).

**Benefits Committee and Leadership Forum**

A meeting to meet with Superintendent Dr. Tsang, Deputy Superintendent Tom Donner, and the District union representatives to discuss the response from health insurance carriers to the RFP will be scheduled. Consultant Anne Clifford will be invited to attend the meeting.

**LA Times Article on Medical Health Benefits**

Co-Chair Burnett requested that an informative and important article on medical health benefits dated April 4, 2006, be posted on the Committee's website.

Adjournment: 11:05 a.m.

The next meeting of the Collegewide Benefits Committee will be held on Thursday, April 20, 2006 from 9:30 - 11:00 a.m. in the Library Curriculum Development Room (downstairs room 193).