

STATE BOARD FOR COMMUNITY COLLEGES AND OCCUPATIONAL EDUCATION
April 13, 2022

TOPIC: Arapahoe Community College's Health Program Integration and Annex Renovation

PRESENTED BY: Dr. Stephanie J. Fujii, President

RELATIONSHIP TO THE STRATEGIC PLAN:

- Transform the student experience
- Transform our own workforce experience
- Redefine our value proposition

EXPLANATION:

Background

In the FY 2021 Long Bill, the General Assembly approved ACC's capital construction request for the Health Program Integration and Annex Renovation project with a combination of \$8.364M in state General Funds and \$2.788M in institutional cash funds for a total appropriated cost of \$11,152,093.

ACC's Health Programs Integration and Annex Renovation will address the Emergency Medical Services, Nursing, Nurse Aid, Medical Assistant Program, and Physical Therapy Assistant classrooms, simulation centers, and labs which are currently 50% undersized for lab exercises and active learning. Active and simulated learning are educational models that bridge the gap between classroom learning and real-life experience. The annex planning will also include Health Information Technology, Mortuary Science, and Ophthalmic Technician to provide for a comprehensive health programs center. ACC proudly offers Bachelor of Applied Science (BAS) in Emergency Service Administration and Bachelor of Science (BSN) in Nursing degree programs.

Since the project's conception, there has been a COVID-19 pandemic lasting two-years at this point. The pandemic has presented our health-care heroes with an unprecedented challenge of surge after surge of peak caseload. The industry has suffered a 40% loss of doctors and nurses since March of 2020. In a recent search on [indeed.com](https://www.indeed.com) for healthcare postings in just the Denver metro area, there was over 29,500 openings!

The annex was constructed in 1977 and has had only minor renovations in the intervening 45-years. In addition to updating the academic areas, the renovation will address deferred maintenance, health and life safety code deficiencies including lack of ADA accessibility and not having an elevator within the building. The project provides for renovating 39,800 square feet of the 81,813 square foot annex building with 48% of the renovated space dedicated to health program educational space, with the remainder

as general and computer classrooms, faculty offices, and typical building support spaces.

ACC has engaged an architect/engineering team to lead our design efforts and is working to engage a Construction Manager/General Contractor (CM/GC) by the end of May 2022. We hope to commence preliminary construction activities during the Fall 2022 semester and to work towards completion by May 2024. Obtaining the following approvals from SBCCOE for additional spending authority in Spring 2022 would enable and facilitate adherence to timely completion of the project.

Impact of COVID on Healthcare Education

COVID put additional constraints on clinical opportunities for ACC's EMS, Nursing, and Physical Therapy students. These programs are working together to supplement and backfill the missing clinical opportunities for students caused by COVID. To address the limitations of clinical space, ACC seeks to increase and create more enhanced collaborative space at the college to ensure continued student learning. Examples of use include space where EMTs and Paramedic students can run a call in a house, on a street, or in a park or factory, treat and transport the patient in a simulated ambulance to a simulated Emergency Department where nursing students can receive the patients and continue care.

The project will provide space where nursing and paramedic students can work together in a hospital setting assessing and treating simulated patients. This would have a focus on high acuity / low frequency patients such as obstetrics and pediatrics. The response to COVID has removed much of this opportunity and a simulation center would help increase student confidence and proficiency.

Nurse education programs have successfully used simulations to mirror clinical setting for the practical applications of skill and knowledge of students' training. Multiple studies have shown well designed simulation enhances student experiences, facilitates critical thinking skills, increases patient safety, and in many instances is better than clinical experiences with actual patients for helping students learn procedures.

The project will allow for greater application of real-life learning not only for Nursing, but for other health care programs, such as EMS and Physical Therapy due to the increased capacity of the simulation center. ACC offers associate and bachelor degrees in Nursing and EMS. Student learning would continue and not be subject to delayed learning which occurred because of COVID. In addition, the space and enhanced simulation would also improve teaching and training for students in the college's Law Enforcement Academy and Criminal Justice programs.

New Opportunities

The first of two opportunities: Arapahoe County has provided ACC with an offer to be a sub-recipient for \$3.5M of their American Rescue Plan Act (“ARPA”) funds specifically designated as the Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (“SLFRF”). The grant designates the use of the funds ‘to create a Health Innovation Simulation Center that will expand critical programming to address and remedy acute healthcare industry workforce needs and shortages that have been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic (the “Center”). The Grant Funds shall be used to pay costs of construction of the Center.’

The addition of this \$3.5M of funds, if approved, will allow ACC to expand the renovation by an additional 12,000 square feet providing for an increase in health program space to have the potential to occupy an estimated 60% of the affected area. This is accomplished by expanding the second level of the building with a floor plate that covers a portion of the fitness center’s current two-story volume. The additional space will allow for greater capacity to train more cohorts of students in the medical programs thereby reducing the applicant waiting list and graduating, credentialing or re-credentialing more healthcare workers for our region.

The second opportunity: The State of Colorado is also a recipient of American Rescue Plan Act (“ARPA”) funds. This year the House and Senate leadership of the General Assembly established a process whereby an individual legislator(s) could submit a proposal for ARPA funding. This unprecedented process is outside the typical processes of the state budget. In response to a legislator’s request, ACC responded and provided information to the legislator who in turn submitted a request up to \$9.5M to be applied in alignment with the stated purpose of ‘development of training programs focusing on additional career pathways’ and requesting that funding be designated to increase healthcare student capacity through additional funding for ACC’s Health Innovation Simulation Center project. The college currently has more applicants than space to accommodate and train students. ACC can increase capacity through state-of-the-art simulation technology and larger training spaces.

The addition of \$9.5M, if provided through the special state legislative ARPA process in addition to the \$3.5M in ARPA funds through Arapahoe County, would allow ACC to further expand the renovation to an overall area of 104,133 overall square feet, with a 23,300 square foot addition. The increase in health program space allows ACC to educate and train more students with the potential to occupy an estimated 80% of the affected area.

The table below is a breakdown of the funding comparison from what is approved by the General Assembly and the potential additional monies.

Funding Source	Approved Funding	Revised Funding
State of Colorado Capital Construction Funds	\$8,364,000	\$8,364,000
ACC Reserve Funds	\$2,788,093	\$2,788,093
Arapahoe County's ARPA Funds		\$3,500,000
State of Colorado's ARPA Funds		\$9,500,000
Total Project Cost	\$11,152,093	\$24,152,093

ACC is requesting the Board approve additional cash spending authority of \$13,000,000 to facilitate the timing of required future cash spending authority approvals from the Colorado Commission on Higher Education and Capital Development Committee, which typically takes a few months. If efforts are not successful to secure the ARPA funds and subsequent external executive branch and legislative approvals, we will proceed with the project as originally funded. ACC will advise the Board of the success of the efforts at meetings following any milestone of progress being made.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the Board approve the additional cash spending authority of \$13,000,000 for the Arapahoe Community College's Health Program Integration and Annex Renovation raising the total spending authority to \$24,152,093. This would allow for the expansion of the healthcare careers educational space within the renovation project as outlined above as well as enable facilitation of the timing required for future cash spending authority approvals from the Colorado Commission on Higher Education and Capital Development Committee, which typically takes a few months.

Staff further recommends that the Board delegate signature authority to the System Vice Chancellor of Finance and Administration for all contractual and related documentation on the condition that all Board and State processes are followed.

If efforts to secure the ARPA funds and the subsequent external executive branch and legislative approvals fail, ACC will proceed with the project as originally funded. ACC will advise the Board of the success of efforts at meetings following any milestone of progress being made.