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School districts reconsider home school options

Funding concerns
for Home School
Option Program
leads to changes

Ellie Wilson
News Editor

School districts around Clackamas County have opted out of the Home School Option program, leading to a near-50 percent drop in home school student enrollment at Clackamas Community College.

The Home School Option program came into existence about 11 years ago. It provided home school students with the opportunity to take college classes. According to Advising and Counseling Chair Ellen Wolfson, now both "does" and "doesn't."

There are parents who wanted to have their children's home school supplemented with the college," said Wolfson. "So the program was born."

At its peak there were about 100 students registered per semester," said Davis.

Consisting of the Advising and Counseling Center. That number has since been cut to about 20.

The funding for the program split two ways: the home school student's school district paid Clackamas' tuition while the students covered the state reimbursed the schools for the money spent. The idea was that students could take a few classes at Clackamas while continuing the majority of their schoolwork at home.

However," said Wolfson, "the idea with the supplemental idea became almost full-time."

According to Davis, some people had gone to the state Department of Education about whether the use of funds was legal. The Department of Education sent out memos to the effect that there was a chance that the state could alter the way the program worked and the school districts might not be reimbursed for the money they were paying.

The state never came and prohibited what was going on," said Wolfson. "But the state was very vague." The funding with these uncertain-

tainties, many school districts pulled out.

"They didn't want to take the chance and end up holding the bag with all that tuition," said Davis. "They didn't know if the education department would cover it."

The program is still around, though its manner of operating has changed.

"Before, home school students weren't really registered through the school districts," said Wolfson.

Now they are registered with the five school districts that remain in the program and are given two options: go back to full-time home schooling, or work with the district in discussing alternatives. This keeps the students funneled through the school district. In the end, home school students can still come to Clackamas.

"We don't call it the 'Home School Option Program' anymore," said Wolfson. "[Now] it's under the High School Referral Program."

New programs have developed with the changes to the Home School Option program. One of these is the Gateway to College Program.

Gateway is a cohort of Clackamas. Twenty to 25 students take all their first terms together in preparation for beginning as college students on campus. The courses include math, writing, college success, etc.

"After some basic college classes," said Davis, "they are turned loose to take college-level courses."

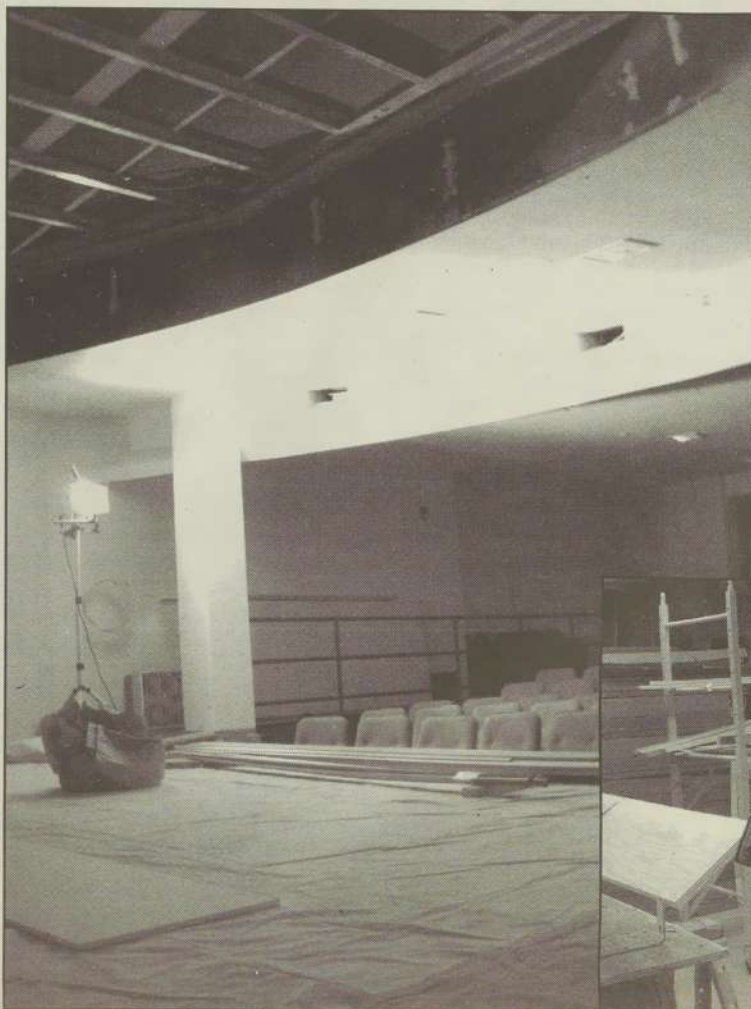
With this program students can earn a high school diploma and be set on their way to earn credits toward a degree. Gateway is a scholarship program, so tuition is paid for up to 12 credits and books are provided for free. However, students are expected to pay all fees that go along with their course work and college participation.

As for those school districts that are still involved with what was the Home School Option Program, Wolfson says the old system is still working, though it is now channeled more through the high schools than before.

"It's still working, last I heard," said Wolfson. "It looked like it was going to be a huge change, and it has been. But we're still offering services to home school students."

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Ellen Wolfson
Advising and Counseling
Co-Chair



Adam J. Manley Clackamas Print

Carpenter James Winburn (BELOW) works in McLoughlin Hall in a room which will be ready by the end of the month. Once finished the space will be used to relieve crowding in class rooms and offices across the campus.



McLoughlin gets face-lift

Matt Olson
The Clackamas Print

The renovation in McLoughlin is nearing the end of phase one, and the Clackamas Technical Education Consortium (C-TEC) office, Campus Safety, the Workforce Investment Council of Clackamas County, and the Office Specialist Program plan to move into the remodeled space by the end of the month.

C-TEC Youth Services currently has their offices near the testing center in Roger Rook. "Because we're not [college] employees they're bumping us," said Michele Murphy, an eligibility specialist for C-TEC.

C-TEC itself is not a campus service, nor is it a CCC program. C-TEC is a program that works closely with Clackamas, other local schools and "community partners."

"This is our fifth move," said Murphy of the impending relocation. The program will get a larger space with the relocation; their current offices will be used by other departments in Roger Rook.

WICCO is also making a move from the Dye Learning Center.

Leslie Palmer, the administrative coordinator of WICCO, can say confidently that the move is a positive one.

"Our board meetings are in the Community Center," said Palmer complaining that walking "a block and a half in the wind and the rain," is not the greatest part of working in Dye.

The Office Specialist Program is a vocational program that Clackamas offers. Its purpose is to prepare students for an office job as quickly as possible.

Students that enroll spend seven hours a day in one room for two semesters being taught 12 different classes by Lynn Seaman.

"We are in a fairly cramped space, and with the remodel they have designed to meet [the needs of] this program."

The new lab and work space will be designed to hold 16 - 17 students comfortably. "It was part of the decision from the get-go," said Seaman, speaking of the new classroom.

Once all the moving is completed, the second phase of the renovation will begin. During phase two the bookstore will get a dramatic face-lift over the next couple months.

"Everything's going to be changed," said David Holcomb, head of the bookstore.



ROBERTSON

Former board member dies at 73

Former Clackamas Community College Board of Education member Bonnie L. Robertson died of cancer on Jan. 8. She was 73.

Robertson served on the College education board from 1981-2000 and served as chair. She was also a computer operations director for North Clackamas School District for 20 years.

Known by her colleagues as a strong advocate of students, she supported programs that would better opportunities and education. She was also very focused on keeping tuition affordable for the community.

She is survived by her son Kevin, his wife JoAnn and their two children Melissa and Dillon.

Remembrances can be made to the College Foundation.

-Compiled by Sam Krause, The Clackamas Print