



Dr. R. Scott Ralls, President

PRESS RELEASE

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State Board of Community Colleges Approves Admissions Policy

Dr. Sharon Morrissey Named New Chief Academic Officer

RALEIGH – The State Board of Community Colleges today approved an [admissions policy](#) that would allow undocumented immigrants to attend North Carolina community colleges. The Board voted 16 to one to admit undocumented immigrants if they meet the following requirements:

- Must be a graduate of a U.S. high school
- Must pay out-of-state tuition, totaling \$7,700 per academic year
- May not displace a North Carolina or U.S. resident from a class or program

The policy must now go through the [administrative rules process](#) as outlined in North Carolina Administrative Code, Title 23. That process usually takes 6 to 12 months. Until the new policy becomes law, the current admissions standard of not admitting undocumented immigrants, which went into effective May 2008, remains in place.

“This is not a policy the Board came to lightly or without contemplation and study, but with today’s vote, North Carolina is a step closer to having a consistent admissions policy for undocumented immigrants among its public higher education institutions,” said Hilda Pinnix-Ragland, Board Chair.

“Once the administrative rules process is completed, our community colleges will be able to cease the back-and-forth of the last eight years, and these students, who are striving for a better future, will have access to a seamless educational pathway from K-12 and beyond.”

Dr. R. Scott Ralls, President of the NC Community College System, said in his [report to the Board](#): “You all came to your decision today after hearing concerns expressed from thoughtful individuals on both sides of this difficult issue, and this new policy places more restrictions on the admission of undocumented immigrants than those in several other states. But, in my opinion, it is a policy that is the right thing to do because it maintains that all-important hope for students who were brought to our

country as minors and who are graduates of our high schools. It keeps the path to a better life clearly in view.”

In other business, the Board unanimously voted to accept the Personnel Committee’s recommendation of Dr. Sharon Morrissey, currently President of Richmond Community College, to become the System’s next Senior Vice President and Chief Academic Officer, a position that will be left vacant by the retirement of Dr. Delores Parker. Dr. Morrissey, who will assume her new role on March 1, 2010, has served 10 years in academic, instructional and student-support services positions at community colleges, first as Vice President of Academic and Student Services at Fayetteville Tech and then as Vice President of Instructional Services at Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College. Additionally, she has served as Acting Vice President for Academic and Student Services, as well as Associate Vice President for Academic and Student Services in the System Office.

“The Personnel Committee believes Dr. Morrissey’s leadership as will be a catalyst for continued and future success in North Carolina Community Colleges’ Academic Programs and Student Services,” said Dr. Linwood Powell, committee chair. “And we are grateful for the excellent service of Dr. Delores Parker, who has given her professional life to our colleges and who never accepted anything less than the best from anyone who walked through the open doors.”

The next meeting of the State Board of Community Colleges will be during the Board’s annual planning meeting scheduled to begin October 14 at Fayetteville Technical Community College, with various committee meetings on October 15 and the full Board convening October 16.

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