

KBOR – September 10 CSSC Report

Good morning. My name is Becki Bohnenblust. I am currently the Kansas State University Classified Senate President, and I'm here today on behalf of the Classified and Support Staff Council, otherwise known as CSSC. With me this morning are a number of members representing their senates & employees from other Regents Universities which are a part of our council. We appreciate the opportunity in allowing us to share interests and concerns with you. I want to apologize up front, as I'm not a very polished speaker and at times am blunt, but I speak from my heart.

Since our last report was given in January, we informed as many legislators as we could during two separate visits to Topeka regarding our resolution & position paper -- which the main issues were funding the longevity bonus and pay plans. I believe we made an impact. By the end of the 2010 Legislative Session, the longevity bonus for eligible employees was funded and most importantly, financial support for the pay plans was continued. I can tell you, from across the State of Kansas, the recipients of the pay increases have been most appreciative, thankful and blessed. These classified employees know that with the economic times as they are, it would have been easy for the Legislature to cut this funding.

Why, you might ask, is it critical to work together in not only promoting higher education, but to continue to support funding the pay plan set forth by the Compensation Oversight Commission? According to the 2009 Workforce Report, the classified and support staff working at Regents Institutions has an average of 13 years of service and account for 51% of the workforce. These employees are the glue holding their campuses together allowing things to run smoothly, the ones who bleed their school colors, and come from surrounding communities. They are the people who interact and create bonds with the students by being on the front lines.

Classified and Support Staff enroll students in classes, advise and certify future teachers, schedule appointments, listen to concerns, answer the phones, clean classrooms, cook and feed students, provide security & medical treatment, keep our campus grounds looking spectacular along with general maintenance of the facilities. They are the biggest fans who buy tickets to the athletic events whether their school is winning or losing. Yet the average salary is just over \$31,000. Why would an employee do so much for so little pay? It was best said by the K-State Athletics Director, John Currie. "Our classified employees are often unsung heroes of a students experience at K-State. Whether creatively finding ways to stretch dollars for more impact, volunteering personal time to counsel a student club or activity, or just greeting visitors with a warm K-State smile, classified employees show their

loyalty and dedication everyday.” I believe this to be true of classified and support staff at all the Regents Universities. They are loyal and dedicated to higher education, have a strong work ethic and want to make a positive difference in the lives of others. Generally speaking, they are passionate about what they do.

I feel it is important to remind everyone what classified and support staff do for you and why they bring value to each Regents University. There are many economic hurdles yet to overcome and we are willing to do our part. Is it to much to ask in return for your support of our issues?

Currently the CSSC is setting priorities and will be meeting on October 25 on the K-State campus to draft our collective resolution and position paper to present to you at the January 2011 meeting. I look forward to giving you an updated report at that time.

Are there any questions? (answer if possible or communicate back with staff)

Thank you for your time.