

Nebraska's university and state college systems recently announced that if the Unicameral's Appropriations Committee won't increase their funding, they will ask for a range of tuition, fees, housing, and meal increases of 5-7.5 percent.

At his Mid-Plains Community College Board of Governors meeting in February, President Ryan Purdy told the Board that while the state's community colleges were not part of the university/state college appropriation increase, he had led a discussion among senior leadership as to whether MPCC could freeze tuition, fees, housing and meals for the 2013-14 academic year.

At that time, he also told the Board that several other community colleges in the state were also considering freezes of their own. However, as the five other community colleges have indicated during the past few weeks, all will increase their rates next year.

That won't be the case at MPCC. Mid-Plains Community College, with campuses in McCook, North Platte, Broken Bow, Ogallala, Valentine and Imperial, will honor its promise and will not only freeze tuition, but also not increase its associated fees, housing, and meal plans for the 2013-14 academic year.

"For the past five years, we have not increased our local property tax levy," Purdy said. "We have maintained our budget within the valuations increases from our 18 county service area."

"We know our local taxpayers appreciate us not raising our levy, however, we felt that it was time to help our students – if we could make the numbers work," he added.

While county valuations are not reported until August and the college budget won't be finalized and approved until mid-September, it was important to make the decision to freeze rates so that those making plans to attend college next fall will have accurate figures to work with.

"Our per-credit hour tuition and fees for Nebraska and states that border our service area and western Nebraska is \$92. The approximate cost for a full 15-hour load is roughly \$2,760 per year. Our housing and meal plans are roughly two-thirds the costs of one of the state colleges or at one of the schools in the university system. If they do raise their rates by the amounts that they are predicting, attending the first two years with us at either McCook or North Platte makes even more sense," he said.

For more detailed information, please call (800) 658-4348 for McCook Community College or (800) 658-4308 ext. 3601 for North Platte Community College or www.mpcc.edu for both colleges.