



The Community Standard

NEWS FROM THE ALABAMA COMMUNITY COLLEGE SYSTEM

Proration priorities: Core missions, existing jobs

We knew it was coming, but the word still casts a pall on the holidays: Proration.

Yesterday, after studying a grim revenue picture, Gov. Bob Riley was forced to declare across-the-board budget cuts of 12.5 percent in the Education Trust Fund (ETF).

Of the Rainy Day Fund approved last month by Alabama voters, half – or \$218 million – will be put immediately into the ETF, which means that the effective proration rate will be 9 percent.

Other state agencies – those funded through the General Fund – must cut their budgets by 10 percent. Gov. Riley ordered a hiring freeze that would reduce the non-ETF-funded

workforce by 3,000 state employees over the next year.

Chancellor Bradley Byrne's plan for budget-cutting in the Alabama Community College System centers around two main priorities:

- Preserve our core mission of academics, adult education and workforce development.
- Protect existing jobs.

A message from the Chancellor . . .

While this is a very difficult situation, I am confident that the Alabama Community College System can manage through these tough financial times.

What we do every day, our critical functions – academics, adult education and workforce development – remain essential to our state in order for Alabama to emerge from this economic downturn.

I know that the ACCS family will do its part to stand by the people of our state who need our services more than ever.

Bradley Byrne

Doing more with less

In ordering the proration, Gov. Riley asked the state's government leaders and public employees to do what most other Alabamians must do these days: "Figure out how to get by with less during these tough times."

The chancellor directed college presidents to revise FY09 budgets to reflect the 9 percent cut and submit them by Jan. 9. "As you prepare your budget, be mindful of the three core areas of our system's mission: academic transfer, adult education and workforce development," Byrne said to the presidents. "I ask that you do everything possible to avoid any type of reduction in force."

While stopping short of declaring a hiring freeze in the colleges, authorization must be received from the Department of Postsecondary Education prior to filling all positions.

A hiring freeze has been ordered at DPE, however, with the cost-cutting measures reaching all the way to the Chancellor's Office. The responsibilities of the retiring vice chancellor for finance will now be assumed by Chancellor Byrne and other executive and fiscal staff. Other critical positions will also be left unfilled as DPE staff work together to carry out the critical functions.

"Now, more than ever, we must help each other," Byrne said. "We must be creative and caring and keep our eyes on the prize. If we do that, we can absorb these cuts and carry out our mission with pride."