Community colleges get buildings

An almost incredible boost in Nevada tax revenue has become reality with a flick of President Nixon's pen—and it's all earmarked for education.

A combination of new state and federal laws permits the state to levy an annual $200 fee per slot machine. Operators of the machines can use the state fee as a credit toward the federal $250 fee per machine.

Gaming officials predict about $7.5 million will become available next July, and perhaps even more if any of the five major casinos now in the planning stages become operative by that time. The anticipated revenue from the new fee amounts to about 75 per cent of what Nevada already receives from slot machines through the tax on gross win.

The first $5 million per year of the new revenue is earmarked for capital improvements in the University of Nevada System, with the three community colleges having priority for the first three projects in the first year. All money over $5 million goes to the public school system.

The last legislature, anticipating possible passage of the federal legislation, decreed construction of community college instructional buildings in Elko, Western Nevada and Clark County as the first use of the new money.

Earmarked for the three colleges was $1,899,000 for Clark County, $1,330,000 for Western Nevada and $719,000 for Elko. The balance of about $1 million is available for other university system construction needs as determined by the Board of Regents.

Elko already has a campus site on the site of the city's old golf course. Western Nevada Community College has 200 acres of state land northwest of Carson City which was made available by the last legislature, and an alternate site is being investigated in Washoe County. The city of North Las Vegas has offered land for the Clark County college, and an alternate site is being studied on Bureau of Land Management property at West Charleston and Jones in Las Vegas.

A public hearing has been set for 2 p.m. Jan. 21 to discuss selection of a site for Western Nevada's college. The meeting will be at the college's administrative office in the old civic auditorium at Carson City.

The Board of Regents is expected to pick sites for the new buildings and nominate architects early in 1972 so construction can get underway as soon as possible.
Donnelly discusses problems, rewards

The following is from a report to the Board of Regents by President Donnelly:

The challenges, problems, and rewards in developing a community college system are many. Two overriding tenets provide the basis for our philosophy - quality and service.

The Community College Division strives for quality programs designed at many different levels. It is not an imitation of universities but a college of higher education with its own goals and purposes and eager to achieve excellence in terms of its own objectives.

The community college represents the only avenue to education beyond high school for many young people, and adults as well. The colleges offer a wide range of learning experiences to students who present a likewise wide range of interests, objectives and capabilities.

These programs of a wide nature represent the desire on the part of the community colleges to serve the needs of the people of the state as well as the individual desires of students. A community college cannot be all things to all people but it can be many things to many people and it seeks to serve students by providing study and training at a high level to meet their needs, interests, abilities and aspirations.

Some of the challenges that the community colleges in Nevada face are:

1. Providing adequate library service and learning resources for the students.
2. Continuing emphasis upon vocational-technical programs despite their high costs.
3. Ascertainment and predicting community needs in vocational-technical areas and relating these needs to student desires which frequently conflict with community needs.
4. Providing developmental services to assist students in preparing for high level technical programs.
5. Continuing to offer classes in widely scattered locations to serve all people and at the same time raise the average class size.
6. Keeping abreast of needed changes in vocational-technical programs and remaining flexible enough to meet these changes.
7. Maintaining a proper balance between full-time and part-time faculty especially so as to be able to provide adequate supervision and assistance to the part-time staff.
8. Acquainting the public with the functions, purposes, offerings and unique features of the community colleges.
9. Establishing and maintaining proper business procedures in order to ensure the maximum use of our resources.
10. Providing an adequate and comprehensive student activity program.
11. Evaluation of programs, courses and faculty without the experience of graduation, students being placed on jobs, or success of students transferring to universities.

Colleges moving normally toward accreditation

The three community colleges all are making normal progress toward full accreditation by the Northwest Association of Secondary and Higher Schools.

Elko Community College has been accepted as a candidate for accreditation. Clark County and Western Nevada Community Colleges have been accorded correspondent status.

Correspondent status is the first step toward accreditation and indicates that the college intends to work toward accreditation, that it has provided evidence of sound planning, that the resources to implement the plans appear to be adequate, and that the institution would seem to have the potential for attaining accreditation within a reasonable time.

Candidate status means a college is actively engaged in the process of accreditation, and appears to be offering its students, on at least a minimally satisfactory level, the educational opportunities implied in its objectives.

Colleges must be in operation at least a year in order to apply for candidacy. Colleges must have their own facilities in order to apply for accreditation. Plans are for Clark County and Western Nevada colleges to apply for candidate status next May and for Elko to apply for accreditation in the spring of 1973.

Three community colleges serve 1,740 students

Nevada's three community colleges served 1,740 students during the fall semester. An even higher headcount enrollment is expected in the spring semester.

The full-time equivalent student enrollment in the three schools during the fall was 686.

Elko Community College had a headcount enrollment of 494, or 209 full-time equivalent students. Clark County Community College's headcount enrollment was 402, or 163 full-time equivalent. (There were another 139 headcount students at the Skill Center, with a full-time equivalent student enrollment of 104). Western Nevada Community College had the largest enrollment, with a headcount total of 705 and a full-time equivalent student total of 210.

Problems, rewards (cont.)

12. Maintaining good articulation with the universities and secondary schools so that students will continue to benefit.
13. Getting scholarships and loan funds so that no student is deprived of a community college education because of lack of funds.

We are confident that with continued community, Board of Regents, legislative and gubernatorial support the community colleges in Nevada will meet these challenges and provide rewards to individual students and to the people of the state. Many Nevadans can thus find their niche in society where they can fulfill their ambitions and contribute to the well being of society.