

**Blue River Precision Driving Center Training Initiative
Metropolitan Community College-Kansas City**

SCOPE OF PROJECT

Metropolitan Community College-Kansas City (MCC) is a five campus system serving over 43,000 students annually. The Blue River campus serves more than 6,000 students annually in Independence, Missouri in Eastern Jackson County. MCC is investing \$18.5 million to develop a model Precision Driving Center (PDC) to address regional workforce development demands. In addition to offering training for truck drivers, the PDC will also train public safety officers attending MCC's Public Safety Training Institute and bus drivers in the bi-state area.

Accordingly, MCC-Blue River formed a strategic partnership with the Owner Operator Independent Drivers Association Foundation, Inc. (OOIDA) to develop a comprehensive training program to increase safety in the industry and the number of trained drivers. The program will train entry level tractor-trailer drivers and prepare current transportation industry employees to purchase their own truck/business. OOIDA currently collaborates with MCC to provide a Business Management Seminar and will consult on curriculum development, provide referrals of students to the program and serve on an advisory board for the initiative.

PDC capacity building activities occurring now include convening of an Advisory Board, construction of a precision driving track facility and purchase of major equipment. **MCC requests DOT funding to support start-up activities of curriculum development, instruction, and student recruitment to include marketing costs and student scholarships in year two of this three-year project.**

The entry-level tractor-trailer driver training program is designed to help students obtain a CDL and will meet or exceed all state and federal requirements for licensure. It will be offered as a credit certificate option or for non-credit and will follow guidelines established by the Professional Truck Driver Institute. Basic CDL curriculum will include 148 hours of total instruction with at least 44 of those hours behind-the-wheel (BTW) time. By the program's third year, CDL classroom-based courses will be available on-line. Five basic units of the curriculum will be provided:

UNIT	DESCRIPTION
Basic Operation	Classroom & range BTW, vehicle control operation, backing & shifting.
Driving	Classroom & BTW, Visual search, communication, speed & management.
Adv. Driving	Hazard perception, night operation, extreme conditions & emergency maneuvers.
Systems	Basic vehicle mechanics & addressing malfunctions that may occur on the road.
Non-Vehicle	Life on the road, dealing with environmental hazards, regulations & documentation.

Enrolled students will receive career counseling with educational options for progressive career laddering. A logistics management program certificate and AAS degree program are currently available on-line to provide students with entry-level skills in warehousing, logistics and transportation management. Coupled with the CDL curriculum, future students may choose an owner/operator independent driver management certificate. Each phase of education will provide additional credit hours toward AAS degree completion.

Strategic partners also include: area Workforce Investment Councils, KC SmartPort, area transit authorities, City of Independence Fire & Police Departments, Independence and Blue Springs, MO, School Districts, University of Central Missouri.

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PURPOSE

The Commercial Driver License certificate program will prepare students for freight transportation work in the third largest trucking center in the nation to meet regional workforce training needs, especially those in Jackson County Missouri which is economically distressed, and will reduce the severity and the number of crashes involving CMVs on US roadways.

Meeting Workforce Training Needs: Metropolitan Community College – Kansas City is expanding its capacity for tractor-trailer driver training and is offering progressive career laddering opportunities to address the current regional training demand of 2,142¹ annual openings for certified licensed truck drivers and anticipated growth in regional transportation industries. At the intersection of the transcontinental and NAFTA trade corridors, Kansas City is a center for manufacturing, warehousing and distribution and is one of the nation's fastest growing intermodal transportation hubs. In fact, three new intermodal facilities are currently under construction while market demand for distribution space is growing.² Currently, Kansas City is also the number one rail center in the nation with the largest amount of tonnage passing through and it is the third largest truck center. According to KC SmartPort, a non-profit investor based organization, *"Kansas City's U.S. Customs Port processes more than \$9 billion worth of goods each year."* They predict that *"the KC area's Gross Regional Product will increase by \$870 million in 10 years."*

Current economic projections show a growth of 11% for the coming year in demand for truck drivers in Kansas City with continued expansion expected in this high-growth/high-demand industry.³ KC SmartPort is working with public and private entities to develop an efficient system to attract shipping companies as competition intensifies in global shipping. For example, Kansas City is currently the proposed site of the first inland Mexican Customs Facility. The Lazaro Cardenas to KC Corridor is a new international transportation route that will move Asian freight shipments arriving at the Port of Lazaro Cardenas (in the Gulf of California) by rail directly to Kansas City for an inland customs check thereby reducing cross-border delays.

Economically Distressed Area: Economic development is critically important for Jackson County, MO, where income levels are below the national average. According to the U.S. Census 2000, more than 26% of the population in Independence, MO, where the project is located, and the neighboring cities of Kansas City and Raytown live at or below 150% of the poverty level.

Increase safety on US roads: Safety on US roadways will be improved by upgrading job skills with enhanced operator safety training and retaining skilled drivers. MCC has a commitment to not only assist adult workers to upgrade job skills and advance in their careers, but to also offer educational opportunities for personal growth which positively influences worker turnover rates. As such, students enrolled in CDL training will be provided career counseling with educational options for progressive career laddering. A logistics management program certificate and Associate of Applied Science Degree (AAS) are currently available on-line to provide students with skills in warehousing, logistics and transportation management. Coupled with the CDL curriculum, future students may choose an owner/operator independent driver management certificate. Each phase of education will provide students with additional credit hours toward AAS degree completion.

¹ Data provided by Missouri Economic Research and Information Center (MERIC).

² KC SmartPort April E-News, *"The Market for Distribution Center Space in KC Changes"*.

³ Data provided by Missouri Economic Research and Information Center (MERIC).

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Metropolitan Community College-Kansas City**

GOALS

Goal 1:

To expand the number of CDL holders possessing enhanced operator safety training in order to further reduce the severity and the number of crashes on US roads involving CMVs.

Rationale: MCC and the Owner Operator Independent Driver Association (OOIDA) agree that quality training for new drivers and retention of skilled drivers are critical to improve driver safety. Affordable Commercial Driver License training will increase the number of truck drivers with improved skills and therefore, positively affect safety. MCC and OOIDA assure affordability by providing scholarships for tuition and by pricing tuition at half competitor rates. In addition, quality CDL training offered with progressive career laddering and unique personal growth opportunities will improve retention of skilled, safe drivers.

Goal 2:

To enhance regional and local economic development by providing workforce training opportunity for qualified individuals to become CMV operators. The economically distressed county of Jackson County Missouri will especially benefit.

Rationale: With a long history of being a national distribution hub, Kansas City is currently expanding its transportation capacity to meet increased national and international demand. Metropolitan Community College and OOIDA are collaborating to provide work force development in the trucking industry which is identified as a critical need by KC SmartPort, a non-profit investor based organization that serves as a regional planning board to guide development of Kansas City's manufacturing, warehousing and distribution industries. The Blue River campus of Metropolitan Community College is a workforce and economic development resource for the cities of Independence, Raytown and Kansas City, Missouri where 26% of the population live at or below 150% of the poverty level.

Goal 3:

Develop & implement a self-sustaining model CDL training program.

Rational: The Precision Driving Center Training Initiative will become self-sustaining in three-years by achieving capacity enrollment. Strategic industry partners comprise an advisory board to ensure long-term sustainability of benefits for national highway safety, regional and national economic development and the truck drivers themselves.

**Blue River Precision Driving Center Training Initiative
Metropolitan Community College-Kansas City**

OBJECTIVES (with timeline)

Department of Transportation CMV funds will be spent on start-up and training activities in Year Two of a three year project to develop the Precision Driving Center Training Initiative. The Initiative is projected to become self-sustaining after three years when full enrollment will be achieved. **Year One Activities (July 1, 2006 to June 30, 2007):** Construction of the PDC track and acquisition of equipment will be completed by July, 2007. The advisory board is convened. **Year Two Activities (July 1, 2007 to June 30, 2008):** Faculty and staff hired. Marketing activities are started up. CDL classes will convene September 1, 2007. **Year Three Activities (July 1, 2008 – June 30, 2009):** Marketing activities. Enrollment in CDL classes increases. Program evaluation activities are in place.

OBJECTIVES and ACTIVITIES FOR JULY 1, 2007 – JUNE 30, 2008

Objectives	Activities	Time line	Implementation Strategies
1. Establish Formal membership of Advisory Board and integrate strategic partners into implementation activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Formally invite additional members. ▪ Maintain quarterly meeting schedule. ▪ Establish Memorandums of Understanding with partners. 	Accomplished Ongoing Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Establish broad representation from transportation industry to ensure full PDC utilization.
2. Hire faculty & staff.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Work through MCC's HR policy & resources to hire all positions. 	Quarter 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Collaborate with Adv Board find qualified faculty and staff.
3. CDL A & B truck driving curricula will be developed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Consult with OOIDA to research & develop curricula to meet licensure, certificate & industry requirements. 	Quarters 1 & 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ OOIDA Director has experience developing curriculum for the Professional Truck Driver Institute of America.
4. Recruit CDL students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop marketing materials and strategies 	Quarter 1 - ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Adv Board will have resources and knowledge to reach targeted students.
5. CDL program is operational.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Initiate CDL classes (8/07) 	Quarter 2 – ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Adv Board will bring resources and knowledge to ensure that all capacity challenges are resolved.
6. Conduct student evaluation follow-up 6 months & 1 year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop program evaluation tools and implement evaluation plan. 	Quarter 4 and ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Conduct evaluation to determine achievement of outcomes.
7. Complete DOT grant reporting & close-out requirements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Complete all required progress & financial status reports. 	Quarter 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Maintain compliance with the program officer.

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DETAILED BUDGET

Development of the MCC - Blue River Precision Driving Center is \$18.5 million, of which an amount of \$16.4 million in leveraged funds is projected. The Driving Center will serve students in the new MCC CDL program as well as students of MCC's Public Safety Institute. Leveraged funds include: \$15.4 from local, county and state governments and MCC for construction of the facility; \$833,100 in program revenue in years two and three, \$40,000 for Full Employment Council support and assessment, and \$138,269 in-kind administrative participation of MCC-Blue River leadership.

An operating budget of \$2.1 million over three years is estimated, of which 55% will be resources dedicated to the CDL program as determined by enrollment ratios for the overall program. Federal funds requested include \$75,000 for 27 CDL student scholarships plus \$90,632 for CDL program operating expenses in Year Two. (Year Three will have increased enrollment and therefore, increased staffing. It is anticipated that the program will be self-sustaining.)

Salaries = \$71,158 Federal plus \$22,946 Match: The following personnel will either be hired or have workloads reassigned to ensure MCC-Blue River's capabilities to meet the demands of the start-up and ongoing activities of the CDL program:

- Program Director, (.75 FTE for full program, .41 FTE for CDL program), \$22,946 salary is MCC match. Manage start-up functions, develop contracts with vendors, users.
- Program Coordinator (1 FTE for full program, .55 FTE for CDL program), \$23,382 salary is Federal. Responsible for day-to-day operations.
- Administrative Assistant (1 FTE for full program, .55 FTE for CDL program), \$15,117 salary is Federal. Primary point of contact for students, agencies, users.
- Driver Center Faculty (1 FTE for full program, .55 FTE for CDL program), \$18,983 salary is Federal. Develop and teach CDL curriculum. Responsible for all classroom, lab and Behind The Wheel instruction.
- Driver Center Faculty (.5 FTE for full program, .28 FTE for CDL program), \$13,676 salary is Federal. Develop and teach CDL curriculum. Responsible for classroom, lab and BTW instruction.

Fringe Benefits = \$14,474 Federal plus \$18,462 Match: Fringe benefits of \$32,936, or 35% of salaries, cover standard benefits such as medical, dental, life insurance and retirement.

Other = \$80,000 Federal: This portion of the budget will cover scholarships (\$75,000 for 27 students) and \$5,000 for marketing expenses to include marketing materials and activities.

Budget Summary:

	Federal Funds	Match	Total
Total Direct Charges	\$165,632	\$41,408	\$207,040
Total Indirect Charges 5%	\$ 8,282	\$ 2,070	\$ 10,352
Grand Total	\$173,914	\$43,478	\$217,392
Percent total budget	80%	20%	100%

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NUMBER OF DRIVERS TO BE TRAINED

In 2007, MCC expects to enroll 78 students in CDL classes. By 2009, MCC expects the CDL program to be fully operational with enrollment at 250, at which point the CDL program will be self-sustaining.

Federal funds requested include \$75,000 for 27 CDL student scholarships for Fall 2007.

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COST PER STUDENT

At \$2,800 per student, tuition for CDL certification is estimated at less than one half of a private training program offered in the Kansas City Area.

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MONITORING AND EVALUATION PLAN

The Precision Driving Center Training Initiative is a project within the development of Metropolitan Community College's (MCC) development of its new Precision Driving Center. A Strategic Partnership, led by MCC Chancellor Jackie Snyder, MCC-Blue River campus President Malcolm Wilson and designated industry representatives oversees the development and ongoing operations of the Precision Driving Center. This Partnership is identifying best practices, troubleshooting potential barriers, reviewing accomplishments and as appropriate, making mid-course corrections that may be necessary due to unforeseen challenges and/or opportunities.

Lead Administrator, Associate Dean Cheryl Carpenter-Davis, manages Partnership functions and communications. A Partnership Advisory Board is established to consult and participate in all functions of the project, including nomination of key personnel, curriculum development, marketing, recruitment, placement strategies, and when appropriate, will hire qualified graduates. Tom Weakely, director of operations, Owner-Operator Independent Drivers Association, serves on this advisory board. He is chief advisor in the development of CDL curriculum and progressive career ladder training opportunities for transportation employees.

After each semester, the MCC Office of Institutional Research, Evaluation and Assessment, in collaboration with Blue River campus career placement staff and faculty, will conduct a "Graduate Follow-Up Survey." The methodology for this survey includes a mailed survey followed by phone contact with program/certificate completers to obtain information regarding their placement and retention status. As this survey is conducted bi-annually, career placement, retention, and wage data will be timely and completed within the time frame of this grant. Also, employer surveys and interviews are conducted by the MCC Office of Institutional Research, Evaluation and Assessment on an annual basis to determine if the graduate was competent to perform entry level driving activities and meet the expectations of the employer. Data will be used by the Advisory Board to determine what program changes if any need to be made in order to accomplish goals and achieve objectives.

The outcomes developed for this grant are based on historical data collected by MCC's Research Office. The proportions presented are consistent with the placement, retention and wage data collected in previous years. An additional survey will be developed and implemented to determine the rates of employment retention. Since the CDL "A" and CDL "B" licensing program is new, no historical data is available. However, given the workforce need, Metropolitan Community College is confident that the proportions presented in the outcome measures presented are achievable and appropriate in the context of the institution's ability to meet the capacity challenges.