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## MEDIA RELEASE

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### ***Rio Hondo College Partners with El Rancho Unified to Open an Educational Center in Pico Rivera***

**WHITTIER** – Rio Hondo College is partnering with El Rancho Unified School District to open a Rio Hondo College Educational Center in Pico Rivera, bringing the promise of higher education closer to home for thousands of residents.

When completed in fall 2016, the \$1.3 million center will be the third satellite site established by the College since 2010. Other sites serve South Whittier and El Monte.

“Our mission at Rio Hondo is to support our community by providing access to college education opportunities,” said Superintendent/President Teresa Dreyfuss. “These centers are bringing that mission closer to home across our service area.”

The satellite sites circle Rio Hondo College’s hilltop campus, with Pico Rivera to the southwest, El Monte to the north and South Whittier to east.

The Pico Rivera center will sit on 2.4 acres at El Rancho Unified’s former adult school at 9426 Marjorie St., across the street from El Rancho High School. The College will upgrade seven buildings spanning 6,720 square feet to create a collegiate identity and integrate 21<sup>st</sup> century learning tools into six classrooms and an office. The site will include a shaded campus quad and 1.3 acres of parking.

Rio Hondo College’s Board of Trustees and El Rancho Unified’s Board of Education both unanimously approved the center in meetings this summer.

“Through our partnership with Rio Hondo College, we will continue to expand post-secondary opportunities for our students and school community, which will lead to more students being college and career ready,” El Rancho Unified Superintendent Martin Galindo said.

“Our partnership with Rio Hondo College is another step toward the transformation of El Rancho Unified School District into one that is second to none,” said Dr. Aurora Villon, President of the El Rancho Unified Board of Education.

## **MORE**

*Rio Hondo College, located in Whittier, California, is committed to the success of its diverse students and communities by providing dynamic educational opportunities and resources that lead to associate degrees, certificates, transfer, career and technical pathways, basic skills proficiency, and lifelong learning. For information on the College or its programs, please call 562-692-0921 or visit [www.riohondo.edu](http://www.riohondo.edu).*

“The satellite campus will increase the accessibility our students and the community have to a higher education and professional development. We look forward to a robust course offering that will complement our curriculum and give students the opportunity to earn college credit. This is another step toward preparing our students for a 21st century global society,” Villon said.

The satellite campuses help Rio Hondo reach students who otherwise might not be able to attend college.

“It’s highly rewarding to know that by creating campuses of convenience, we’re also delivering the promise of a higher education to a larger share of our community,” said Board of Trustees President Madeline Shapiro. “I’m also excited to be deepening our partnership with El Rancho Unified School District. Like us, I know they are dedicated to providing their students with every opportunity for success.”

The College began planning its satellite expansion in 2004, when voters passed Measure A, a facilities bond for upgrading College facilities. The South Whittier Education Center opened in August 2010. The El Monte Education Center opened in spring 2013.

“Pico Rivera residents will be well served by having our own satellite campus,” said Board of Trustees Vice President Vicky Santana, whose district includes the community. “We will transform a closed facility into a thriving educational facility. Satellite campuses make it convenient for students who are juggling multiple responsibilities to maintain their educational goals despite challenges with time or transportation, and at Rio Hondo, we put our students’ needs front and center.”

## **CAPTIONS**

**EDUCATIONAL CENTER1:** This conceptual design show the proposed Rio Hondo College Educational Center in Pico Review from the west. It shows plans for a shaded quad area for students and upgraded buildings.

**EDUCATIONAL CENTER2:** This conceptual design gives a street view of the proposed Rio Hondo College Educational Center in Pico Rivera. The site will offer 21<sup>st</sup> classroom technology in six classrooms.

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