

Sale of KCSM TV

For the last several years, the KCSM TV General Manager and the staff in the San Mateo County Community College District have worked diligently to try to eliminate a \$1 million annual operating deficit of KCSM TV. To date, all efforts undertaken to raise additional revenue and reduce expenditures in order to make KCSM TV self sufficient have not been successful.

As most are aware, public colleges and universities have been hard hit by the budget crisis in California. Our own District lost \$25 million over the past three years and we are anticipating more cuts this year and next. In response, our Board adopted a “Core Values” statement that is guiding our budget decisions. With extremely tight resources, the Board has decreed that the Colleges must concentrate on serving transfer and career/technical students, as well as basic skills students who are preparing for college-level work. Because KCSM TV does not serve many of those students and because of its large operating deficit, the College District can no longer afford to operate the station.

KCSM FM is not affected by this decision and will continue to operate as JAZZ 91.1.

The College District Board has held numerous public discussions about KCSM TV over the past several years, including eight public in-depth Study Sessions and Information Reports on this topic. The Board has been very transparent with respect to its concerns about the ongoing viability of KCSM TV, and has thoroughly reviewed all options—all in full view of the public.

There is no doubt that KCSM-TV provides a valuable service to the public and the Board has made it clear that selling the station license is a last resort. It is important to note that KCSM TV’s deficit is funded by the College District’s general operating funds, which otherwise would be used to educate students. A \$1 million KCSM TV deficit translates to approximately 200 course sections or 7,000 classroom seats. Sadly, we are confronted with making very difficult choices and we must give the highest priority to those activities that serve students in transfer, career/technical or basic skills courses in order to fulfill our primary mission.

A Request for Proposal for the sale of KCSM-TV was released on December 7, 2011 with bids due on February 14, 2012.