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### **Howard College Fall Enrollment Looking Strong**

**BIG SPRING** – As a strong start to the funding base year, Howard College is pleased to see yet another increase in the preliminary Fall 08 enrollment numbers.

After the 12<sup>th</sup> class day, non-certified total enrollment for the Fall 2008 semester tallied in at 3524 which represents a 2.2% increase over the 2007 Fall semester.

“This is our funding base year so I am extremely proud of the growth we are seeing across our district and I know this will have a positive effect on our communities,” said Dr. Cheryl T. Sparks, President of Howard College.

The Big Spring campus enrollment tallied in with 10 additional students while the SouthWest Collegiate School for the Deaf saw a slight decrease of 11 students from Fall 07. The Lamesa campus also showed a minimal decrease of 5 students for the semester.

One area of particular growth was seen in the San Angelo campus enrollment as it grew by 82 students from 1905 in Fall 2007 to 1987 in Fall 2008. That growth is greatly represented by the concurrent or dual credit students. “We have an excellent partner in San Angelo ISD, and this year we were able to continue increasing the dual credit courses offered, especially in the workforce training area, and we see that they were eager to take advantage of that opportunity,” added Sparks.

Concurrent classes, also known as dual credit classes, are offered through the high schools in the 13 county service area, utilizing college faculty as well as credentialed instructors in the high school system.

“Dual credit classes offer many opportunities for the high school students who are wanting to get a jump start on their college coursework or vocational training,” said Dr. Amy Burchett, Executive Dean of Instruction.

Although dual credit courses are available in general studies coursework, a large portion of the credits currently being taken by high school students is in the workforce education track.

“Workforce education classes focus on preparing students for vocational opportunities in areas such as welding, drafting and nurse’s aid training as opposed to the typical general studies college classes such as English and History,” said Burchett.

The enrollment numbers are exciting as the base funding year is at hand, however, the district contact hours are equally important for funding purposes. The Howard College preliminary district numbers reported an increase of 16,656 contact hours which shows that not only are more students enrolled in college classes, but we are also seeing those students take more courses.

The record enrollment experienced by Howard College means that more people are seeking out higher education and that is good for the entire 13 county service area.

With the Big Spring campus bond program bringing in some much needed updates and renovations, and the continued increase in enrollment, the future is only looking

bright for Howard College. “The voters of Howard County have placed their confidence in Howard College to educate our students and be a dynamic resource in our district and community,” added Sparks. “Our foundation is here in Howard County through the established tax base utilized for this county only and the growth we are experiencing across the district only serves as a compliment to the original foundation that thrives in Howard County.”

For more information on Howard College, please call 264-5000 or visit [www.howardcollege.edu](http://www.howardcollege.edu)