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# Cabrillo board makes bilingual skills 'required' for job

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The Cabrillo College governing board last night voted to change the wording on the job qualifications for the Watsonville Center director position to read that bilingual skills are "required" instead of "preferred."

"After we analyzed what that person would be doing at the Watsonville Center and in the Watsonville community, we felt that bilingual skills were required," said Ann Stephenson, Cabrillo College vice president.

The Watsonville Center is currently headed by Rachel Calero,

who is bilingual. Calero, who has been a teacher at Cabrillo for about two years, took over the post on an interim basis at the end of the summer when former interim director Doug Barr resigned to take a job at Saddleback College in Orange County in Southern California. Barr, who was not bilingual, had been the Center's director since it opened about four years ago.

Last night's 5-1 decision (trustee David Weiss was absent), ended a long struggle — at least temporarily — between forces opposed to making bilingual skills a requirement and those who argued that

those skills are necessary to adequately do outreach in South County, where Hispanics make up the majority of the population.

Trustee George Couch, a leading supporter of making bilingual skills a requirement, said, "I think this is a very important manifestation of Cabrillo."

Although the vote for 5-1, with David Moore casting the "no" vote, the board in the past had been more sharply divided on the issue than last night's vote indicates. Last spring, trustees Couch and Nancy Matlock found themselves the only supporters of making bilingual skills a requirement,

as fellow board members expressed everything from mild apprehension to vehement opposition to the idea.

Moore has been one of the leading voices of opposition on the board. He had expressed the strongest aversion to the change in the job description, saying it would limit the number of candidates applying for the job. He also called the move an example of "reverse discrimination."

At last night's meeting, he again voiced his opposition to the change. While he said he realized that many of the students who use the Watsonville Center are His-

panic, a large number of whom have limited English skills, he thought speaking Spanish to them would "foster a dependence" on Spanish and divert them from learning English.

"It's OK to speak Spanish to become a productive member of society," he said. "But does it foster a dependence?" he asked rhetorically.

Some members of the audience let out a sigh and others stirred in their seats after Moore's comments.

Stephenson said her office will take applications for the position

and hoped to fill it by January. The position will continue to be on an interim basis until someone is hired as dean of off-campus facilities, including the Watsonville Center and a proposed center in Scotts Valley. That position, Stephenson said, may not be filled for as long as two years because of budgetary constraints.

When that position is filled and a permanent director of the Watsonville Center is sought, the issue of whether bilingual skills will be required or preferred will be revived because last night's decision is only applicable to the interim director.