

Beginnings of the College and the Conflict over the Location of the School

Work to create a college in Yavapai County started long before the first meetings of interested county residents. The State Jr. College Board was established in 1960 by the State Legislature. Gov. Paul Fanin appointed Dr. Taylor Hicks, Sr. a local dentist to the Board. The Board wanted a college to be established in Yavapai County but the county didn't meet the legal requirements of \$60 million in assessed property valuation for the county and 480 or more graduating seniors in the county until 1965.

There was a conflict over the location of the school. Citizens in the Verde Valley wanted the college there based on projections of future growth, its proximity to potential students from Flagstaff, and an offer of free land (120 acres) and \$100,000 donation from Gulf States Land & Industries.

Prescott residents wanted the College on their side of the mountain based on the population of graduating seniors at that time, and an offer of free land from the Fain Family, City of Prescott, and land for sale from the BLM.

Numerous heated discussions took place and editorials were printed in the local newspapers. The State Board of Jr. Colleges had the final say in the location of the school and Prescott was chosen because of the student population and demographics.