As early as December 1946, *Vet’s Extended*, predecessor to the *Vanguard*, published a letter by student council member Richard Meigs proposing a permanent institution. Students were not the only voices for permanence at the college. Meigs’s opinion won approval from students and faculty alike, but others in more influential positions were not so sure.

After the flood, Chancellor Paul C. Packer suggested that, since the school was to be temporary in the first place, the destruction of the facilities and most of the student housing made this “a good time to close the facility.” Fortunately, the state board president, Edgar W. Smith, who also happened to be president of the Portland Chamber of Commerce, foresaw continued veteran growth and promised students that as long as enrollment kept above 1,000, the two-year school was safe for at least another year.

John Hakanson, a Vanport student who had advocated for a permanent Portland institution, had completed his studies at Vanport and moved on to Willamette University in Salem. There he continued his crusade and met with Governor Douglas McKay to discuss the future of higher education in Portland. When Hakanson discovered that McKay did not support Vanport in his budget message, he worked with others to get legislation passed to establish a Portland institution and purchase a building. He was successful, and on April 15, 1949, McKay authorized $875,000 to purchase the Lincoln High School building on the Park Blocks.

Others were also in the fight. Throughout his long, distinguished political career, Richard Neuberger remained a champion of a four-year college in Portland. Before the flood of 1948, the journalist and state legislator spoke to a Vanport student assembly, echoing Hakanson’s comments that it made little sense that the state’s largest institutions of higher education should be in the small towns of Eugene and Corvallis. In fact, Portland was the largest metropolitan area in the United States without a public four-year college.