



PRESS RELEASE

Contra Costa Community College District
500 Court Street
Martinez, CA 94553
www.4cd.edu

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 2, 2021

Contact:

Timothy Leong, Public Information Officer
(925) 229-6823
tleong@4cd.edu

Accreditation Commission Extends Accreditation with Warning

MARTINEZ, CA – In a report to the Contra Costa Community College District (District), the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges, Western Association of Schools and Colleges (Commission) has announced continued full accreditation of the District’s three colleges, but has also issued a warning to the District. The warning is the lightest sanction level that can be issued; however, District leadership has already started working on serious solutions. Five concerns have been raised by the Commission, four of them connected to Governing Board behavior that was widely reported by local media throughout 2020.

“I applaud our colleges who are doing tremendous work to increase the success of our students,” says Chancellor Bryan Reece. “To be clear, the Commission’s findings have nothing to do with teaching or our ability to provide the support our students need. Nevertheless, we accept the findings and are ready to roll up our sleeves and begin the hard work in addressing the areas of improvement around District governance.”

The five areas of improvement are:

- **Standard III.A.5 (District Requirement 1):** In order to meet the standard, the Commission requires that the District develop a process by which all classified employees are regularly and systematically evaluated.

- **Standard IV.C.3 (District Requirement 2):** In order to meet the standard, the Commission requires the Governing Board should follow its Board policy related to the Chancellor’s evaluation process.
- **Standard IV.C.7 (District Requirement 3):** In order to meet the standard, the Commission requires the Governing Board act consistently with its adopted policies and bylaws, and regularly assesses these policies and bylaws.
- **Standard IV.C.11 (District Requirement 4):** In order to meet the standard, the Commission requires the Governing Board uphold and adhere to their adopted code of ethics policy-BP 1010.
- **Standard IV.C.12 (District Requirement 5):** In order to meet the standard, the Commission requires the Governing Board delegate full responsibility and authority to the Chancellor to implement and administer board policies without board interference and hold the Chancellor accountable for the operation of the District and colleges.

“The Governing Board and our community members have been frustrated with these issues for a while and we take these findings seriously,” says Board President Andy Li. “We have already begun working together to address these issues, and I am confident the trustees will continue making progress toward addressing the Commission’s areas of improvement.”

With four of the five areas for improvement attached to the Governing Board, and one to the District Office, the Commission did not find areas of concern in the three colleges. In fact, Diablo Valley College and Los Medanos College were officially commended for best practices.

Diablo Valley College received a Commendation for exceeding the following accreditation standard:

Standards I.B.5, II.A.2, II.C.1 (College Commendation 1): The Commission commends the College for its use of data to assess the accomplishment of its mission through its program review process in order to continuously improve courses, programs, and student services.

Los Medanos College received a Commendation for exceeding the following accreditation standard:

Standard III.A.14 (College Commendation 1): The Commission commends the College for its robust offering of professional development opportunities in support of its mission, vision, values, and strategic initiatives based on the use of data throughout College processes, including equity-centered practices.

A summary report highlighting the District’s progress in addressing the five areas is due to the Commission by October 2021, followed by a site visit from a peer review team to ensure continued progress is being made.

The Commission conducts accreditation for all community colleges in California (and other areas as well). Colleges are evaluated on a six-year cycle, and will soon transition

to a seven-year cycle. During these comprehensive evaluations, the Commission also includes a review of the District Office and Governing Board, but their accreditation decision is applied to the colleges themselves.

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The Contra Costa Community College District (District) is one of the largest multi-college community college districts in California. The District serves a population of 1,019,640 people, and its boundaries encompass all but 48 of the 734-square-mile land area of Contra Costa County. The District is home to Contra Costa College in San Pablo, Diablo Valley College in Pleasant Hill, Los Medanos College in Pittsburg, as well as educational centers in Brentwood and San Ramon. The District headquarters is located in downtown Martinez.

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