A Note from Board President Veres

This has been a challenging summer across our state, with the recent rise in COVID tied to the Delta variant and wildfire season starting early, but it has also been a rewarding one for the future of community colleges in Los Angeles and throughout our state.

I am particularly proud of our students, who succeeded against all odds and demonstrated their tremendous resilience. Furthermore, some went above and beyond to advocate for their fellow students, which produced some significant legislative victories that will ensure equity and access to top-of-the-line education for years to come.

One notable item was a historic $6 billion broadband trailer bill signed by Governor Newsom last month, which will be a milestone in increasing access to connectivity to all Californians. Access to fast, affordable internet has been a fault line of inequality during this pandemic, and this bill is a significant step toward making this a reality for everyone.

Technology is the driver of California’s innovation economy, and this trailer bill takes a long-term approach to ensuring this remains the case, building state-owned middle-distance fiber infrastructure and last-mile broadband connections to ensure every home and business has an equal opportunity to thrive and create on internet. As this past year has shown, reliable home infrastructure is also critical in ensuring our educational system is resilient during times of crisis, while increasing access to coursework for students who have physical or geographical challenges in attending school regularly.

At LACCD, many of our students do not have reliable internet access, which is another way inequality can have an increasing effect in an economy where more jobs require technological proficiency. This broadband trailer bill addresses this with historic funding to fill these gaps, making new, robust connections for communities who have not been given equal footing online. It has been a long-term priority for the District, and we are motivated by this progress and excited to continue the hard work ahead.

The bill also includes the creation of a broadband czar position and advisory committee, which we hope will be made up of diverse leaders who can bring valuable perspectives and ensure the rollout of world-class internet infrastructure across the state is inclusive of currently underserved communities. Education, equity and innovation are interconnected parts of California’s cutting-edge economy, and it must remain a priority to give students in all of our communities the tools they need
to succeed. We simply cannot afford to worsen our current systemic inequalities by making access to the internet dependent on income.

Since the beginning of the pandemic, there have been many competing theories about the future of work. One area of unanimous agreement is that technology will play an increasing role in it. Community college students need reliable, fast internet to win the future, and once again, California is stepping into a leadership role.

Stay safe and remain strong!

Regards,

Steve Veres  
Board President  
Los Angeles Community Colleges Board of Trustees

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**LACCD’s COVID-19 Update**

**LACCD Students Return to In Person Instruction This Fall**

The Los Angeles Community College District (LACCD) Board of Trustees approved two new Board Policies which place requirements for the use of face coverings and vaccinations to access all District colleges and facilities. The Board approved the policies at its regularly scheduled meeting August 4 and directed the Chancellor to develop the administrative procedures needed to implement these policies.

Neither policy prevents anyone from enrolling, attending or working at the District’s nine colleges or other facilities due to their vaccination status, but will, in fact, create safer in-person learning and workplace environments for students and District employees. Numerous people spoke in favor of the policies, including many District employees.

The Board’s [vaccination policy](#) requires that “as a condition to physically access any District building, classroom, library, gymnasium, facility, or other indoor setting, all District employees and students shall either: 1) present proof that they have been fully vaccinated against the SARS-CoV-2 virus (COVID-19); or 2) undergo regular testing for COVID-19 infection and produce proof of negative COVID-19 test results.”
The Board’s new face coverings policy strengthens the District’s current alignment with the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health orders that all persons, regardless of vaccination status, must wear a facial covering or mask indoors.

“These policies strengthen the Board’s position that the health and safety of our employees and students remains the District’s priority,” LACCD Board of Trustees President Steve Veres said. “The policies, complemented by our improved ventilation systems and increased sanitization standards, provide our highest assurance against the spread of the coronavirus and its variants.”

The Board’s action is similar to what many other institutes of higher education, public sector organizations and businesses in California and the rest of the country are doing, including the University of California, the California State University system and other community colleges, according to District officials. Both the County and City of Los Angeles have recently announced vaccination requirements for employees. The Los Angeles City Council also announced it is considering proof of vaccination requirements for people when dining indoors at local restaurants.

“We have to follow the science. Medical experts have made it clear the most effective weapons against this disease are facial coverings and vaccinations. We have ramped up our supplies for face coverings and we will ensure that our colleges remain active as vaccination and testing sites to make it easy for our students and employees to get vaccinated,” LACCD Chancellor Francisco C. Rodriguez, Ph.D., said.

District officials believe the vaccination policy could be fully operational within about two months while the face covering policy is in operation now due to the county Health Orders. LACCD students are eligible to receive up to $150 in incentives from the Foundation for the Los Angeles Community Colleges to get vaccinated.

Los Angeles Community College District Awarded Five Congressional Project Funding Requests Totaling $2.85 Million

The Los Angeles Community College District (LACCD) was awarded five Community Project Funding grants in the fiscal year 2022 Labor-Health and Human Services-Education funding bill, providing $2.85 million in much-needed, dedicated funding to a variety of programs, including workforce development, student support services and a basic needs pilot. The House passed the bill on July 29th as part of an appropriations package.

The Community Project Funding grants, previously referred to as Congressional Earmarks, which provide direct funding for specific projects in larger spending bills, were reintroduced this year after a
10-year moratorium. Each one must be publicly sponsored by a Member of Congress. LACCD was awarded five from five different congressional representatives, showing the comprehensive support across Los Angeles County for the work the District is doing in providing a high-quality postsecondary education and ultimately placing students in satisfying careers at a critical time.

The five LACCD Community Project Funding grants, totaling $2.85 million, include:

- $200,000 sponsored by Rep. Judy Chu for success and access programs at East Los Angeles College, which include webinars, workshops, tours, and college resource centers to promote college access, family engagement, academic preparation, and college success and retention;

- $975,000 sponsored by Rep. Adam Schiff for a student basic needs pilot at Los Angeles City College, which would be used to support 500 unique students enrolled in at least six units. In addition to providing direct resources such as food aid, housing assistance, health services, and essential expense assistance, the LACC Basic Needs Project will provide textbooks, test fees, course supplies, transportation, success coaches, and tutoring for the program participants, empowering them to complete their chosen educational programs and pursue a path out of poverty for themselves and their families;

- $400,000 sponsored by Rep. Tony Cardenas to expand on the current workforce development programs at Los Angeles Valley College (LAVC) and Los Angeles Mission College (LAMC), which offer short-term, vocational training to non-traditional students in the biotech, manufacturing and transportation program;

- $350,000 sponsored by Rep. Maxine Waters for two student support services centers at Los Angeles Southwest College, the Re-Entry Initiative for Success in Education (RISE) Center and the Family Resource Center, which will provide services and resources to students from underserved populations to help them continue their education; and

- $925,000 sponsored by Rep. Nannette Barragan for a healthcare workforce program at the South Gate Center of East Los Angeles College, which would enable ELAC to provide free, low-cost training for students pursuing careers in nursing, physical therapy, and other medical professions at the college’s satellite campus in South Gate.

The Senate is also moving forward with their appropriations bills and are beginning their mark-ups at the end of July and in early August. These bills will need to be reconciled with the House bills and then voted on by both the Senate and House before being signed by the President.

Sen. Padilla and Sen. Feinstein announced that they are advancing several critical LACCD funding requests to the Senate appropriations committee.

Sen. Padilla’s requests include the Community Project Funding requests submitted by House Members totaling $1.32 million to support Rep. Cardenas request for workforce training at Los Angeles Mission College, Los Angeles Valley College, and East Los Angeles College, as well as $2.5 million to advance programs at Los Angeles City College and Los Angeles Southwest College aiming to remove barriers to college access, enrollment, and persistence submitted by Reps. Schiff and Waters.

In addition, Sen. Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.) is requesting an additional $7.5 million to fund a fareless public transit initiative in Los Angeles, which will benefit LACCD students by helping defray transportation costs which can often be a barrier to college completion.
State Budget Updates

In early July, the Governor signed the main budget bill, and the Legislature sent the Higher Education budget trailer bill to his desk which the Governor then signed. The two bills provide extensive and historic investments in California’s community colleges. This year, the LACCD had an ambitious legislative agenda in support of our institutions and students. We are proud to inform you that the final budget agreement includes many of the District’s priorities.

The District advocated for the following budget priorities that were included in the final budget package:

Institutional Support
- Elimination of all Deferrals
- Extra COLA Funding – 5.07% ($371.2 million)
- Investments in Strong Workforce Program - $42 million in additional investment
- Outreach, Enrollment and Retention Funding - $100 million
- Learning-Aligned Employment - $200 million in 2021-22
- Funding for Los Angeles, Mission College Plant Facilities Warehouse & Shop Replacement - 2021-22 fiscal year funding of $304,000. By the time the project is completed $6.7 million of state funding will be dedicated to the project.

Support for Student Services
- Development of an LGBTQ+ Pilot Program - $10 million
- Investments in the Umoja, MESA, Puente, and EOPS Programs - $74 million
- Expansion of Funding for Zero-Textbook-Cost Degrees and OER - $115 million
- Support for Student Basic Needs Including Food and Housing Insecurity - $100 million
- Investment in Affordable Student Housing - $2 billion
- Broadband Expansion - $6 billion

Support for Faculty
- Investments in Full-Time Faculty that can be used to Hire Ethnic Studies Faculty - $100 million
- Funding to Implement Ethnic Studies Programs - $5.6 million
- Professional Development for Faculty - $20 million

LACCD looks forward to working to implement these important investments so that they work for our students.
Metro Fareless Pass for LACCD Students

The Los Angeles Community College District’s (LACCD) student advocates won the recommendation of the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (LA Metro) staff to their Board of Directors to implement the student transit pass pilot program for the 2021-22 fiscal year. LACCD’s leadership, including the full Board of Trustees, heartily applauded the student advocates for their initiative, and congratulated the LA Metro staff for helping to move along the student pilot program that could have an enormous effect on the travel habits of our students.

Currently, the Los Angeles Community College District is negotiating the terms of the agreement with LA Metro leadership. The goal is to provide new ridership opportunities for students as early as the Fall 2021 semester, and to build upon the agreement in future years. LACCD has also submitted a FY 2022 Senate Congressional Directed Spending Request, and Sen. Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.) is advocating on behalf of an additional $7.5 million to fund a fareless public transit initiative in Los Angeles, some of whose primary beneficiaries will be community college students.

LACCD Board Resolutions

In accordance with LACCD’s commitment to inclusion, equity, and social justice, the LACCD Board of Trustees introduced and approved several important resolutions including:

In Recognition and Celebration of Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month
Board President Veres, First Vice President Buelna and Trustees Fong presented a resolution “In Recognition and Celebration of Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month” which declared May as Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month at the Los Angeles Community College District in appreciation of the achievements and contributions made by the AAPI community to the educational programs and success of the LACCD.


In Celebration of Juneteenth Independence Day

Board President Veres, Trustees Fong and Henderson presented a resolution “In Celebration of Juneteenth Independence Day” in which the Los Angeles Community College District (LACCD) Board of Trustees recognized June 19, 2021, as “Juneteenth Independence Day,” and expressed continued support of the nationwide celebration of Juneteenth Independence Day to provide an opportunity for the people of the United States to learn more about the past and to better understand the experiences that have shaped and developed the United States.

More here: http://go.boarddocs.com/ca/laccd/Board.nsf/goto?open&id=C3C2SE7D430C

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, and/or Asexual (LGBTQIA+) Pride Month

Trustees Vela, Hoffman, and Henderson presented a resolution in support of “Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, and/or Asexual (LGBTQIA+) Pride Month” in which the Board of Trustees of the Los Angeles Community College District (LACCD) proclaimed June as “LGBTQIA+ Pride Month” in the Los Angeles Community College District and encouraged the District family and students to recognize and appreciate the achievements and contributions of this diverse community.

More here: http://go.boarddocs.com/ca/laccd/Board.nsf/goto?open&id=C3C2SG7D450D

Reaffirming the Support for the LACCD Framework for Racial Equity and Social Justice and Vision for Success Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

Trustees Hoffman, Fong, and Henderson presented a resolution “Reaffirming the Support for the LACCD Framework for Racial Equity and Social Justice and Vision for Success Diversity, Equity and Inclusion” by which the LACCD Board of Trustees, reaffirmed strongly LACCD’s support for diversity in faculty and staff hiring; diversity among faculty, students, staff and programs; and the expectation that everyone in the LACCD community, through their roles and responsibilities, will implement the District’s diversity initiatives and maintain a climate of respect, civility, anti-racism, and inclusion as part of the institution’s commitment to educational excellence.

More here: http://go.boarddocs.com/ca/laccd/Board.nsf/goto?open&id=C3GNEM5F98F2

LA College Promise Deadline Coming Fast

Did you know?? All first-time, full-time students get FREE tuition for two years at all Los Angeles Community Colleges through the Los Angeles College Promise Program (LACP). LACP provides no cost tuition for first-time, full-time students regardless of academic standing, income or immigration status. The deadline to apply for the LA College Promise Program for the Fall 2021 semester was August 1, 2021; however, Some extensions could be available, and students should apply as soon as possible at http://lacollegepromise.org/apply.html!

Beyond free tuition, LACP also provides:

- Priority registration for classes
• Dedicated academic counseling and coaching support
• Additional financial support
• A free laptop
• Access to emergency aid funds
• Job opportunities

Students need to follow the steps listed on our website:
1. Apply to the LACCD college of your choice.
2. Apply to LA College Promise.
3. Complete a Financial Aid application (FAFSA or Dream Act). The college will be in contact about next steps, and questions or help requests should be directed to asklacp@laccd.edu.

From the Chancellor’s Desk

Dear Colleagues, Advocates and Friends,

On July 14, 2021, the Senate Education Committee refused passage of AB 1040 (Muratsuchi) at its final policy committee hearing of the 2021 legislative year. The ethnic studies bill was heard by the Committee, but died due to lack of a motion by committee members. The measure would have required students to complete an ethnic studies course in order to receive an Associate’s degree.

Despite the defeat of this bill, I am incredibly proud of the enthusiastic and broad groundswell of support that was garnered for AB 1040 and for ethnic studies. A necessary awakening and heightened awareness occurred during this fight and placed ethnic studies as a legitimate and rigorous academic discipline, with its own academic canon and traditions that have largely been marginalized in the “academy,” with a few exceptions. Ethnic studies have inspired an entire generation of students, community leaders, and educator activists with the skills and with the self-determination to return with degrees in hand to lift our communities. I am a proud product of that movement, of dedicated teachers and of intentional programs, and many of you are, as well. The work we’re doing today are the echoes of that vision, intelligence, perseverance and activism that came before us.

California has always led the educational movements that have served as a weathervane for the rest of the country. In the case of ethnic studies, the California State Legislature has already passed a university ethnic studies requirement (AB 1460-Weber) for California State University (CSU) students and will hopefully soon pass an ethnic studies requirement for high school graduation (AB 101-Medina). Noticeably and shamefully, the community colleges, as the most ethnically and racially diverse system of higher education in the country, will be conspicuously absent in law—a missed opportunity to codify this requirement statutorily and to make a profound and lasting statement about California’s position on racial equity and social justice.

LACCD’s effort, however, in sponsoring both AB 3310 (Muratsuchi) in 2020 and AB 1040 (Muratsuchi) this year, combined with your steadfast advocacy, propelled and accelerated the passage of California Community College Ethnic Studies Title 5 Regulations that require ethnic studies as a graduation requirement for the community colleges—regulations that we waited for 50 years since the inception of ethnic studies! Without your efforts, the statewide Community College Academic Senate and the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges may have never
made efforts to quickly adopt an Administrative Title 5 Ethnic Studies Regulation two days before our bill was scheduled for a hearing. While adoption of such a regulation is a huge and positive step in the right direction, it falls short of the statutory protections through legislation needed to ensure stable ongoing funding and commitment to our community colleges. And as I shared in my testimony before the Senate Education Committee, the community colleges—the most underfunded segment of higher education—are once again strapped with an unfunded mandate.

Looking towards the immediate future, there are opportunities to move forward in making ethnic studies a priority in the community college system. LACCD advocated and was successful in securing $5.6 million in one-time funds specifically earmarked for ethnic studies to be used for conferences, curriculum development and professional development. We also supported and advocated in this year’s budget $100 million in ongoing funding for full-time faculty and $15 million in one-time funding for part-time faculty that could be used to expand ethnic studies course offerings. LACCD and other supporters of ethnic studies need to proactively encourage their local governing boards and administrators to direct these funds towards expanding ethnic studies offerings and faculty hiring.

Over the longer term, there is still much unfinished business beyond the important adoption of Title 5 Regulations. This includes ensuring that CSU approves ethnic studies courses offered by community colleges to meet the CSU graduation requirement and adopting statewide portability for ethnic studies. Transfer students make up more than one third of all CSU students, and with the success of programs like the Associate Degree to Transfer (ADT), that number will only increase. With the passage of AB 1460 in 2020, it has become imperative for community colleges to fully develop a process to complete transferable ethnic studies credits to set students up for academic success once they have transferred. Ethnic studies ensure that our transfer students headed to a CSU can meet their ethnic studies course requirement at our colleges, saving students both time-to-degree and financial aid dollars at their CSU campus.

The work continues. La Lucha Sigue (the righteous struggle for equity and justice) continues. The lack of a diverse curriculum and a racially diverse faculty are still major issues in our state’s educational system. Without honest conversations about power, privilege, what we teach in our classrooms, who teaches our students, and our own leadership, we run the risk of further perpetuating the very inequalities and disparities that we seek to disrupt and improve.

LACCD looks forward to working with all the supporters of ethnic studies and racial equity, and other important endeavors in the future. Thank you once again for your passion and commitment to overcome and end racism in our community colleges and in our society.

With my admiration and respect,

Francisco C. Rodriguez, Ph.D.
Chancellor
Los Angeles Community College District

About the Los Angeles Community College District
We are the Colleges of Los Angeles! LACCD is the nation’s largest community college district, educating about 250,000 students annually at its nine colleges that serve the residents of more than 36 cities and communities from 900 square miles of Los Angeles County. Since 1969, the District has been providing an important learning pathway for students seeking transfer to four-year colleges or universities while also offering two-year degrees and certificated training programs to Southern California’s diverse workforce in many specialized trades and professions.

Members of the Board