

# 2024 ISER



2024  
INSTITUTIONAL  
SELF-EVALUATION  
REPORT

VISALIA • HANFORD • TULARE

Sequoias Community  
College District



College of the Sequoias



**Institutional Self-Evaluation Report**  
**in Support of an Application for**  
**Reaffirmation of Accreditation**

Submitted by

**Sequoias Community College District**

915 South Mooney Boulevard  
Visalia, California 93277

to

Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges

**December 2024**







## Certification

To: Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges

From: Dr. Brent Calvin, Superintendent/President  
College of the Sequoias  
915 South Mooney Boulevard  
Visalia, California 93277

This Institutional Self-Evaluation Report is submitted to ACCJC in support of an Application for Reaffirmation of Accreditation. The Institutional Self-Evaluation Report reflects the nature and substance of this institution, as well as its best efforts to align with ACCJC Standards and policies, and was developed with appropriate participation and review by the campus community.

Signatures:

 <small>Brent Calvin (Nov 8, 2024 10:18 PST)</small>		Nov 8, 2024
Dr. Brent Calvin	Superintendent/President	Date
		Nov 8, 2024
Raymond Macareno	President, Board of Trustees	Date
		Nov 11, 2024
Juan Arzola	President, Academic Senate	Date
 <small>Anders Dowling (Nov 13, 2024 13:22 PST)</small>		Nov 13, 2024
Anders Dowling	President, Student Senate	Date
 <small>Jennifer Vega La Serna (Nov 12, 2024 15:27 PST)</small>		Nov 12, 2024
Dr. Jennifer Vega La Serna	Accreditation Liaison Officer	Date
		Nov 12, 2024
Dr. Sarah Harris	Accreditation Co-Chair	Date

## Acknowledgements

### Accreditation Workgroup Members

#### Co-Chairs

Jennifer Vega La Serna, Ph.D.  
Sarah Harris, Ph.D.

#### Subcommittee I: Institutional Mission and Effectiveness

Mainou Her  
Mehmet "Dali" Öztürk, Ph.D.  
Ryan Barry-Souza

#### Subcommittee II: Student Success

Jessica Morrison  
Johnathan Brooks  
Megan Miller

#### Subcommittee III: Infrastructure and Resources

Carolyn Franco  
James McDonnell  
Ron Ballesteros-Perez

#### Subcommittee IV: Governance and Decision-Making

Francisco Banuelos  
Jordan Lamb  
Sondra Bergen

#### Ex-Officio

Brent Calvin, Ed.D.

### Subcommittee Members

Amanda Thomas  
Amy Pritchett  
Brent Calvin  
Brent Davis  
Brice Nakamura  
Byron Woods  
Casandra Ledesma  
Chris Huff  
David Hurst  
Elise Baker  
Emily Campbell  
Glen Profeta  
John Lehn  
Juan Arzola  
Juan Vazquez  
Leah Velazquez  
Leangela Miller-Hernandez  
Linda Reis  
Lisa McHarry-Freeman  
Madison Dias  
Manlia Xiong  
Meghan Tierce  
Osiris Deleon  
Rainbow Park-Moore  
Samantha Brookshire  
Stephanie Collier  
Tyler Virden

### Evidence Team

Daniel Alvarado  
Dustin Schieler  
Jenae Prator  
Meghan Tierce  
Ryan Barry-Souza  
Tina See

## Contents

Forward to the Institutional Self-Evaluation Report.....	1
A. Introduction: Institutional Context .....	2
B. Institutional Self-Evaluation of Alignment with Accreditation Standards.....	9
Standard 1: Institutional Mission and Effectiveness .....	9
Standard 2: Student Success .....	17
Standard 3: Infrastructure and Resources .....	38
Standard 4: Governance and Decision-Making.....	57
C. Required Documentation .....	64
Standard 1: Mission and Institutional Effectiveness .....	64
Standard 2: Student Success.....	65
Standard 3: Infrastructure and Resources .....	67
Standard 4: Governance and Decision-Making.....	68
Other Federal Regulations and Related Commission Policies.....	68
D. Appendix 1: Verification of Catalog Requirements (ER 20).....	69
E. Appendix 2: Organizational Structure.....	70
F. Appendix 3: Approved Locations .....	71

## Forward to the Institutional Self-Evaluation Report

Sequoias Community College District is committed to excellent higher education in service of our diverse community. The District's participatory governance, decision-making processes, and structures are the core of the District's culture which integrates accreditation standards, data analysis, reporting, and continuous quality improvement. Multiple opportunities for feedback in the ISER drafting process allowed the District to identify opportunities for institutional improvement. The Accreditation Work Group (AWG), made up of faculty, administrator, and staff tri-chairs for each of the four Accreditation Standards, meets regularly throughout the year to share accreditation news and updates, review evidence, and draft reports coinciding with ACCJC requirements. In addition to District-wide email and survey communication, AWG members provide regular Accreditation updates to District Governance groups, including District Governance Senate, Academic Senate, and the Board of Trustees.

In preparation for the District ISER review, the AWG appointed additional subcommittees for each of the four standards, and they began reviewing the Standards based on guidelines developed by the AWG. The subcommittees reviewed the standards and identified how the District met the standard, identified apparent gaps, and provided examples of evidence. Identified gaps were distributed to responsible parties for feedback to provide evidence or to recommend how the District could address the perceived gap.

An initial draft of the ISER was sent to District employees via a feedback survey. The Writing Team (comprised of the AWG Co-chairs) reviewed and incorporated District-wide feedback into the ISER, including identifying ongoing institutional improvements, detailed below. The ISER was distributed to the Academic Senate and District Governance Senate in October 2024 for approval and to the Board of Trustees in November 2024.

Through the review and feedback process, the District identified opportunities for continuous improvement. Some projects that are ongoing and/or arising from the ISER review process include:

- One of the District's strengths is the governance and planning processes. In accordance with those timelines several critical items are in development including the Master Plan, Strategic Plan, and the Mission Statement review.
- Through the timeline for Administrative Procedure and Board Policy review, the District is completing the review of the Academic Policies and Procedures.
- The District is engaged in ongoing initiatives to improve Distance Education instruction that supports student success and ensures Regular and Substantive Interaction (RSI). The Distance Education at COS committee (DECOS) has taken the lead on developing a peer-review process for RSI; recommended [training requirements for online instructors](#) that were approved by the Academic Senate; and is developing training modules and a rubric to assess course quality. In addition, the District and both faculty unions recently adopted the DECOS recommended training requirements into the respective contracts.
- To improve outcomes assessment processes and reporting, the District migrated to a new Assessment Management System. Initial migration was completed in fall 2024, and the District is now engaged in Phase II system updates to improve overall assessment reporting, access to meaningful assessment data, and outcomes communication to students.
- Through leadership and feedback in Instructional Council, the District developed and is piloting, an updated process for faculty onboarding, which includes more robust resources in a Canvas repository, ongoing professional development, and mentoring. This pilot is planned to be expanded and fully implemented in 2025-2026.

A strength of the District's Accreditation review process has been the open communication between the AWG, subcommittees, the Writing Team, and the District about the ISER development. The District community was invited to review Standard drafts before they were finalized, and feedback received was considered for inclusion in the final drafts. The iterative writing process made the ISER a collaborative product including many District voices.

## **A. Introduction: Institutional Context**

### **Introduction**

Sequoias Community College District (hereafter, the District) is a single-college district located in the heart of the San Joaquin Valley in Central California. The District is an Accredited, comprehensive community college serving Tulare and Kings Counties with 17,366 students enrolled in 2022-2023. The District is a Hispanic-serving institution; on average, 73 percent of enrolled students since fall 2022 identified as Hispanic. According to Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) data, 63 percent of students enrolled in 2022-2023 were Pell Grant recipients, and 81 percent received some grant or scholarship aid.

The District's service area in Tulare and Kings Counties is predominately Hispanic, with residents' average educational attainment and income both below state averages. The District serves as a key engine for educational and economic improvement in its community. The history, programs, and services described below highlight a few of the ways the District operates to support its Mission to achieve equity for its diverse student population and support student success in attaining a variety of degrees and certificates, from basic skills to transfer education and workforce development.

### **History of the Institution**

College of the Sequoias was founded in 1926, one of California's early community colleges developed in partnership with local school districts. The College was first established by the Visalia Union High School Board of Trustees as Visalia Junior College and offered the first post-high-school instruction to students in the area. College classes were housed in the Visalia Union High School plant until the College moved to its own, newly constructed campus in the location it still occupies today. That same year, the College offered its first agricultural programs – the beginning of a comprehensive and vital agricultural program further developed a few years later through the establishment of the College farm in 1947.

In 1949, voters in the Tulare and Visalia Union High School districts voted to organize the area into a junior college district. Students suggested names for the newly formed District. From this list, the Board of Trustees selected College of the Sequoias, in honor of the region's Giant Sequoia trees and nearby Sequoia National Park. Since its founding, the District has continued to provide access to higher education to the residents of Tulare and Kings Counties for more than 90 years.

Today, College of the Sequoias is a single-college, three campus district that encompasses 2,893 square miles, with 80 percent of the District's geographic boundaries in Tulare County, 19 percent in Kings County, and one percent in Fresno County. The District is located in the center of one of the most productive agricultural regions in the world. Many of California's 200 commercially produced crops are grown in Tulare, Kings, and Fresno Counties, making agriculture the leading industry in the region. According to the USGS, using fewer than 1% of U.S. farmland, the Central Valley supplies 8% of U.S. agricultural output (by value) and produces 1/4 of the Nation's food, including 40% of the Nation's fruits, nuts, and other table foods. The information and data below highlights some of the characteristics and demographics of the District's students and regional population.

**Student Enrollment Data**

Over the last five years, enrollment at the District has remained stable even through pandemic challenges. From fall 2018 to fall 2022, the District's total headcount grew by 3.7% compared to an overall Statewide decrease of 19%. Over the same period, the headcount decreased at the Visalia Campus (-22%) and the Tulare Campus (-27.5%) while the headcount in online courses increased by 182%. At other sites, which includes dual enrollment, headcount increased 54%. In fall 2024, enrollment is projected to surpass pre-pandemic levels.

<b>Student Headcount by Campus</b>						
	<b>Fall 2018</b>	<b>Fall 2019</b>	<b>Fall 2020</b>	<b>Fall 2021</b>	<b>Fall 2022</b>	<b>5-Yr Change</b>
<b>District Total</b>	13,147	13,491	13,114	12,458	13,637	3.7%
<b>Visalia Campus</b>	10,043	10,042	9,563	5,681	7,832	-22.0%
<b>Hanford Campus</b>	1,887	1,936	2,263	1,178	2,302	22.0%
<b>Tulare Campus</b>	2,197	2,304	2,093	1,097	1,592	-27.5%
<b>Online Campus</b>	2,172	2,914	3,310	8,248	6,127	182.1%
<b>Other Sites</b>	1,224	1,489	1,621	1,643	1,884	53.9%
<b>State-Wide</b>	1,585,643	1,567,762	1,347,027	1,255,599	1,289,916	-18.7%

Source: COS Office of Research, Planning and Institutional Effectiveness

Source for Statewide: California Community College Chancellor's Office

From 2018-2019 to 2022-2023 FTES decreased 6% highlighted by a low of 9,082 FTES during the pandemic. Non-credit FTES remains significantly lower than pre-pandemic levels, specifically as it relates to capturing FTES in tutorial services.

<b>Full-Time Equivalent Students (FTES) by Campus</b>						
	<b>2018-19</b>	<b>2019-20</b>	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>2021-22</b>	<b>2022-23</b>	<b>5-Yr Change</b>
<b>District Total</b>	10,380	10,630	9,572	9,082	9,761	-6.0%
<b>Visalia Campus</b>	7,279	7,134	3,803	3,259	4,880	-33.0%
<b>Hanford Campus</b>	963	1,004	800	655	1,019	5.7%
<b>Tulare Campus</b>	901	927	579	553	707	-21.5%
<b>Online Campus</b>	704	962	3,861	4,084	2,553	262.7%
<b>Other Location</b>	534	603	529	532	603	13.0%
<b>Annual FTES By Credit / Non-Credit</b>						
	<b>2018-19</b>	<b>2019-20</b>	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>2021-22</b>	<b>2022-23</b>	<b>5-Yr Change</b>
<b>District Total</b>	10,380	10,630	9,572	9,082	9,761	-6.0%
<b>Credit</b>	9,750	10,148	9,416	8,898	9,563	-1.9%
<b>Non-Credit</b>	631	482	155	184	198	-68.6%

Source: COS Office of Research, Planning and Institutional Effectiveness

COS experienced a significant shift in course delivery modes post-pandemic, with a notable increase in online offerings since the onset of the pandemic. Post-pandemic, COS has sustained a higher proportion of distance education courses compared to pre-pandemic levels.



Course Offerings by Modality 2019-2024			
Term (FA/SP)	Face-to-Face	Online	Hybrid
2019-2020*	2,357 sections (87.7%)	239 sections (8.8%)	92 sections (3.5%)
2020-2021	1,221 sections (46.5%)	1,055 sections (40.2%)	346 sections (13.2%)
2021-2022	1,323 sections (54%)	878 sections (35.7%)	252 sections (10.3%)
2022-2023	1,738 sections (69%)	542 sections (21.5%)	238 sections (9.5%)
2023-2024	1,930 sections (73.2%)	497 sections (18.8%)	209 sections (8%)

\* Notes: Instruction method and campus location data for the fall 2020 and fall 2021 terms are noticeably impacted by the pandemic conditions, resulting in unreliable analysis during this period. It is recommended to analyze the data before and after the impacted terms. Some online courses may be coded as being taught at a physical location even though the instruction method was actually online, and vice-versa.

Over forty percent of COS students are under 20 years old (43.7%), which is higher than the statewide proportion of 34.5%. In fall 2022, the District's primary racial/ethnic groups were students who self-identified as Hispanic (73%) and those who self-identified as White (18%). The next largest proportion of students were those who self-identified as Multi-ethnic (3%). Compared to statewide demographics, the District's student population was lower for African-American (2%) and Asian students (2%). These proportions are aligned with the District's service area population described below.

The number of District students who self-identified as male or female has remained consistent across the last five years within the ranges of 57%-60% female students and 38%-42% male which is a higher difference than statewide (+10 percentage points). The number of District students who self-identify as non-binary or who do not report their gender has more than doubled over this same period. The percentage of first-generation college students enrolled in the fall term slightly decreased from 45% in 2018 to 43% in fall 2022.

Student Headcount by First-Generation College Student Status										
	Fall 2018		Fall 2019		Fall 2020		Fall 2021		Fall 2022	
	Students	Percent	Students	Percent	Students	Percent	Students	Percent	Students	Percent
<b>Grand Total</b>	13,147	100.0%	13,491	100.0%	13,114	100.0%	12,458	100.0%	13,637	100.0%
<b>1<sup>st</sup> Generation</b>	5,851	44.5%	5,993	44.4%	5,794	44.2%	5,370	43.1%	5,814	42.6%
<b>Not 1<sup>st</sup> Generation</b>	5,960	45.3%	6,247	46.3%	6,196	47.2%	6,034	48.4%	6,467	47.4%
<b>Unknown</b>	1,336	10.2%	1,251	9.3%	1,124	8.6%	1,054	8.5%	1,356	9.9%

Source: COS Office of Research, Planning and Institutional Effectiveness

### Service Area Demographic Data

The District provides education services in Tulare and Kings Counties. In 2020, the majority of the population in both Tulare and Kings Counties identified themselves as Hispanic or Latino, 63% and 53% respectively. From 2020 to 2040, the Hispanic population is projected to increase in Tulare County (3.4%) and Kings County (1.8%).

From 2020 to 2040, the school age population is projected to decrease in Tulare County (-3.8%) and Kings County (-3.5%). Between 2020 and 2040, the number of residents aged 18-24 years in Tulare and Kings counties is projected to increase, but during the same period, the percentage of 18-24 year-olds is projected to decrease in Tulare County and remain the same in Kings County.

<b>Current and Projected Area Population by Age</b>						
<b>Population by Age Group - Tulare County</b>						
	<b>2020</b>		<b>2030</b>		<b>2040</b>	
	<b>Count</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>Preschool Age (0-4)</b>	35,678	7%	37,361	7%	38,052	7%
<b>School Age (5-17 years)</b>	106,021	22%	97,461	19%	100,446	18%
<b>College Age (18-24 years)</b>	50,732	11%	56,531	11%	51,128	9%
<b>Working Age (25-64)</b>	229,143	48%	247,023	48%	270,935	49%
<b>Retirees (65 or more years)</b>	59,214	12%	78,434	15%	91,002	16%
<b>Total</b>	480,788	100%	516,810	100%	551,563	100%

<b>Population by Age Group - Kings County</b>						
	<b>2020</b>		<b>2030</b>		<b>2040</b>	
	<b>Count</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>Preschool Age (0-4)</b>	11,615	8%	11,343	7%	12,030	7%
<b>School Age (5-17 years)</b>	35,350	23%	34,653	21%	34,242	19%
<b>College Age (18-24 years)</b>	18,109	12%	22,358	13%	21,136	12%
<b>Working Age (25-64)</b>	72,808	47%	76,441	46%	88,285	50%
<b>Retirees (65 or more years)</b>	16,863	11%	20,957	13%	21,247	12%
<b>Total</b>	154,745	100%	165,752	100%	176,940	100%

*Projection Source: California Department of Finance (P3 File)*

### Service Area Socioeconomic Data

In Tulare County, the percentage of households with a language other than English spoken at home (51%) is higher than in Kings County (42%) and California (44%). Of the languages other than English spoken at home, Spanish is the most prevalent.

<b>Primary Language Spoken at Home</b>			
<b>Language Spoken at Home</b>	<b>California</b>	<b>Kings County</b>	<b>Tulare County</b>
<b>Population 5 years and over</b>	37,105,018	140,566	434,657
<b>English only</b>	56.1%	58.5%	49.5%
<b>Language other than English</b>	43.9%	41.5%	50.5%
<b>Language other than English Distribution</b>	<b>California</b>	<b>Kings County</b>	<b>Tulare County</b>
<b>Spanish</b>	28.3%	36.9%	46.5%
<b>Other Indo-European languages</b>	4.6%	1.4%	1.3%
<b>Asian and Pacific Islander languages</b>	9.9%	2.8%	2.2%
<b>Other languages</b>	1.1%	0.4%	0.5%

*Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates (DP02 File)*

The educational attainment rates for Tulare County and Kings County are lower than the state's rates. The percentage of high school graduates or above in California is 84% whereas Kings County and Tulare County rates range from 73% to 74%, respectively. In addition, only 14%-15% of adults living in Tulare and Kings Counties have a bachelor's degree or higher compared to 35% statewide. In the past five years, the proportion of Kings County (33% to 42%) and Tulare County (32% to 37%) 12<sup>th</sup>-grade graduates who completed all courses required for UC and/or CSU entrance have consistently been below the state rates, which ranged from 40% to 52%.

Educational Attainment Levels - California, Tulare & Kings Counties (percent)			
	California	Kings County	Tulare County
High school graduate or higher	84.2%	73.6%	72.6%
Associate's degree or higher	43.2%	23.4%	24.0%
Bachelor's degree or higher	35.3%	14.3%	15.2%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates (DP02 File)

Residents in Tulare and Kings Counties have lower reported family income than the median and mean family income levels statewide. In addition, Tulare and Kings Counties exhibit poverty levels above California’s rates. For example, Tulare County's poverty rate (16.4%) is nearly double the statewide poverty level (9%). In Kings and Tulare Counties, families with female householders with no spouse present have a poverty level above 30% compared to the statewide average of 21%.

### Service Area Labor Market Data

In Tulare County, some of the fastest-growing jobs that require a postsecondary education are Nurse Practitioners, Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers, Medical and Health Services Managers, and Nursing Assistants. The largest growing jobs in Tulare County with the highest annual wage are General and Operations Managers, Registered Nurses, and Secondary School Teachers (except special and career/technical education).

Some of the fastest-growing jobs in Kings County that require postsecondary education are Kindergarten Teachers (except special education), Teachers and Instructors (all other except substitute teachers), and Teaching Assistants (except postsecondary). The largest growing jobs in Kings County with the highest annual wage are General and Operations Managers, Registered Nurses, and Secondary School Teachers (except special and career/technical education).

### District Mission

The District is committed to serving its students and its region through fulfillment of the District Mission. The Mission describes the intended student population and the services that the District provides the community. The District Mission, as reaffirmed by the Board of Trustees in March 2021, follows:

*Sequoias Community College District provides excellent higher education in a spirit of equity for our diverse student population. We believe in students achieving their full educational potential and support student success in attaining a variety of degrees and certificates, from basic skills to transfer education and workforce development.*

### Locations

The District’s facilities include a comprehensive college located in Visalia and two state-recognized centers in Tulare and Hanford. In addition, the District offers classes at off-campus sites and through distance education. The District’s locations offer a full range of student support services including, but not limited to, admissions and records, financial aid, counseling, library resources, bookstore, District police, career and transfer center, access and ability services, and tutorial services.

### **Visalia Campus**

The Visalia campus has occupied its current location since 1939. Today, the Visalia campus is home to 44 buildings on 70.6 acres, with 494,025 gross square feet. In addition to offering transfer courses, the Visalia campus anchor programs are Nursing and Allied Health.

Visalia Campus  
915 South Mooney Boulevard  
Visalia, California 93277

### **Tulare College Center**

In spring 2013, the Tulare College Center opened its doors to students and instructors. The 500-acre site houses Agriculture Science and Technology. The Tulare College Center farms about 320 acres, creating a source of revenue to support the agriculture education program. The Tulare College Center is home to agriculture programs, graphic design, and architecture, in addition to offering general education and transfer courses. The brand new Applied Technology and Trades Complex opening in spring 2025 will provide a comprehensive location for critical career and technical education programs including automotive, construction, industrial maintenance, environmental controls, advanced manufacturing, and agriculture systems.

Tulare College Center  
4999 East Bardsley Avenue  
Tulare, California 93274

### **Hanford Educational Center**

The COS Hanford Educational Center is a 210-acre parcel owned by a community partnership comprised of the City of Hanford, Hanford Joint Union High School District, and the District. The property houses Sierra Pacific High School, a softball complex, and the COS Hanford Educational Center. The Hanford Educational Center is home to the Police Academy, Fire Academy, and the new Paramedic Training Program and offers transfer courses and programs such as industrial maintenance and electrician training. In March 2015, the Hanford Educational Center received center status from the California Community College Board of Governors.

Hanford Educational Center  
925 13th Avenue  
Hanford, California 93230

In addition, the District offers classes and programs through dual enrollment at several area high schools, while noncredit ESL classes are offered through local community agencies and the adult education consortium at area adult school sites.

### **Facilities Growth**

The District has accomplished substantial facilities growth including but not limited to:

- Hanford Educational Center
  - Hanford Pavilion
  - Classroom and Education Support Services Modular
- Tulare College Center
  - Applied Technology and Trades Complex

#### Visalia Campus

- Giant Marketplace
- Education Support Services Building
- Giant DREAM Center

To provide more opportunities in higher education, in fall 2022, residents of the COS School Facility Improvement District #2 (Visalia, Cutler-Orosi, Farmersville, Exeter, and Woodlake Unified School Districts) passed Measure C, a \$95 million bond that will fund a University Center on the Visalia campus. This will allow the district to establish partnerships with four-year universities and provide students with access to bachelor's and master's degree programs.

#### **Student Success Accomplishments**

The District was recognized as the 2022 Excellence in Placement Awards from Campaign for College Opportunity Equity Distinction:

- Black transfer-level English enrollment
- Black transfer-level math enrollment
- Black transfer-level math throughput

## B. Institutional Self-Evaluation of Alignment with Accreditation Standards

### Standard 1: Institutional Mission and Effectiveness

*The institution has a clearly defined mission that reflects its character, values, organizational structure, and unique student population. The mission outlines the institution's explicit commitment to equitable student achievement and serves as a guiding principle for institutional planning, action, evaluation, improvement, and innovation.*

- 1.1. The institution has established a clearly defined mission that appropriately reflects its character, values, structure, and unique student demographics. The institution's mission articulates its commitment to ensuring equitable educational opportunities and outcomes for all students. (ER 6)

The District's Mission appropriately reflects the community and students it serves, the nature and structure of the institution, and its commitment to equitable outcomes.

Sequoias Community College District's Mission Statement:

*Sequoias Community College District provides excellent higher education in a spirit of equity for our diverse student population. We believe in students achieving their full educational potential and support student success in attaining a variety of degrees and certificates, from basic skills to transfer education and workforce development.*

The Mission was updated and approved through the governance process as documented in the [District Governance Senate](#) and [Board of Trustees](#) meetings in February 2021. Through this collaborative process, beginning at Convocation, the Mission was updated to incorporate brevity and to include the District's varying educational goals including degrees, certificates, transfer, basic skills, and workforce development. A [District Governance Senate Task force](#) led the thoughtful campus-wide conversation to develop a revised mission statement that truly reflected the District's purpose and commitment to equity and student success.

The mission statement proudly affirms that the District will provide excellent higher education in a spirit of equity for our diverse student population and is accompanied by an [Equity Statement and Vision Statement](#) which underscore the alignment with ACCJC's Policy on Social Justice and a dedication to equitable outcomes and needs of students.

The District shares progress made toward achieving the Mission regularly with constituents through [Community Reports](#), [Annual Report on the Master Plan](#), [Board of Trustees meetings](#), [District Governance Senate meetings](#), and [program review process](#).

The District meets the Standard and Eligibility Requirements. The District demonstrates commitment to participatory governance in soliciting and incorporating feedback on the Mission and Vision statements through the feedback survey and governance process. The resulting statements clarify the District's Mission and values and effectively articulate the District's educational purpose, intended student population, educational programs, and commitment to student learning and achievement, as well as incorporating elements of the District's most recent equity work.

## **1.2. The institution establishes meaningful and ambitious goals for institutional improvement, innovation, and equitable student outcomes.**

The District's Mission is the foundation for all planning processes, as depicted in the [Model for Integrated Planning](#) (see graphic in 1.4). The District analyzes data to determine how effectively it accomplishes the Mission. This analysis is completed through several processes, such as the Annual Report on the Master Plan, Institutional Program Review, resource allocation process, faculty growth/replacement, student equity efforts, and the institutional set-standard analysis. Additionally, surveys are conducted with [students](#) and [staff](#) to gauge the quality of education and services provided by the institution.

Data analysis is central to planning processes in the District. The first step in preparing the District's [Master Plan](#) is an analysis of effectiveness in which the District compares the current status to the Mission (internal scans) and an analysis of projected demographics, legislative, and economic changes (external scans). These data, along with other relevant College documents, are used to identify challenges and opportunities for the long-term Master Plan. Through the process of developing the comprehensive Master Plan, the District develops District Goals that describe how it intends to address the identified current and anticipated challenges. The District Goals are the foundation for the District's short-term Strategic Plan. This three-year plan identifies District Objectives that describe specific activities intended to move the District toward the achievement of the District Goals, which serve to accomplish the Mission. The District is developing the [2025-2035 Master Plan](#) and revising District Goals and Objectives based on current internal and external scans and data on student success, learning outcomes and student equity.

The [program review](#) process captures unit-level planning for instructional, student service, and administrative units. These program reviews include an analysis of unit-specific data describing how each unit contributes to the achievement of the District Objectives and an analysis of progress on equitable Student Learning Outcomes, which serve as explicit efforts to accomplish the Mission. Program review will be completed biennially (every two years) or, alternatively, units may submit a program review annually as needed. Program reviews serve as the basis for units to align actions with District Objectives and analyze student learning and success.

For example, in their 2023 program review, the [Biology Department](#) analyzed three years of student success data for their major, general education, and allied health aligned courses. This data analysis was used to support a request to hire a full-time faculty member to teach on the Tulare College Center to extend the biology offerings for students in the pre-nursing pathway project with the goal of increasing the number of nurses in Tulare County. This goal was linked to District Objectives for growth and student success. The District hired a biologist for 2024-2025 and the department will provide an assessment of the impact in the subsequent program review.

The [Student Equity Plan](#) is designed to close the achievement gap between our local disproportionately-impacted groups and the other District populations. The plan supports the mission statement's aim to help our diverse student population achieve its transfer and/or occupational objectives. In addition, based on disproportionate impact analysis, equity goals were adopted to address the identified needs while simultaneously aligning with the District's Master Plan. The [Institution-Set Standards](#) were initially established in fall 2013 through an analysis of achievement indicators disaggregated by ethnicity, gender, and age. Performance indicators are shared annually throughout the participatory governance structure to engage the District in discussion on student equity and to develop strategies to address any gaps in student achievement. For example, in 2022 the District presented its updated Institution-Set Standards and rate of completion to the [Board of Trustees](#).

The District meets the Standard. The District’s Integrated Planning Model illustrates the extent to which the Mission directs institutional priorities, including program review, resource allocation, and the development of District Goals and District Objectives. These processes are codified in the Integrated Planning Manual, Resource Allocation Manual, and the Governance and Decision-Making Manual all of which exemplify how the institution establishes meaningful and ambitious goals for institutional improvement, innovation, and equitable student outcomes.

**1.3. The institution holds itself accountable for achieving its mission and goals and regularly reviews relevant, meaningfully disaggregated data to evaluate its progress and inform plans for continued improvement and innovation. (ER 3, ER 11)**

The District regularly reviews meaningful disaggregated data to assess progress and develop plans for improvement and innovation through numerous processes including program review, Institution-Set Standards, outcomes and assessment, district-wide surveys, and other planning processes.

The [Annual Report on the Master Plan](#) summarizes the current year’s achievements, analyzes progress toward achievement of the District Goals, and directs the District’s Actions in the coming year. Program review captures unit-level planning for instructional, student service, and administrative units. These program reviews describe how each unit will contribute to the achievement of the District Objectives. They include an analysis of unit-specific data, the identification of strengths and weaknesses, report on prior year Actions, a [link](#) to the assessment of student learning, the development of Actions for the coming year, and the identification of resources, if any, that are needed to support the initiatives.

In order to align with the [COS 2021-2025 Strategic Plan](#), the Institutional Program Review Committee added the following language to the Program Summary prompts: *“Please include disaggregated data wherever appropriate in your analysis. Examples may include the analysis of success rates by race and ethnicity, enrollment patterns by campus, etc.”* The [Program Review Dashboard](#) allows users to disaggregate course success rates, census enrollments, withdrawal rates, and headcounts. These measures can be viewed across many student demographics, student groups, and course characteristics. Further, the [data](#) can be cross-tabulated across three groups at a time allowing for meaningful analysis to discover and close equity gaps.

The District establishes [Institution-Set Standards](#) for successful course completions, transfer volume, students earning degrees, and students earning certificates. The aspirational goals were set by reviewing the most current and historical data, generating multiyear averages, and establishing a performance indicator for the standards. These standards are assessed annually, and the goals are reviewed, revised, and reset appropriately. The results are presented throughout the participatory governance groups and posted on the District’s Giant Fact Book and the website.

The District disaggregates and analyzes data for Student Learning Outcomes at the institutional level, under the direction of the Outcomes and Assessment Committee. The District’s [Institutional Learning Outcomes](#) are directly assessed on a five-year cycle and prior to fall 2023 were indirectly assessed as part of the biennial Student Support Services Survey, with [survey results](#) disaggregated and reviewed by the committee. Effective in fall 2023, the District updated its ILOs to align with its General Education outcomes, and the Outcomes Assessment committee began working in collaboration with the GE committee to develop and pilot a new survey. The District will pilot this new [exit survey](#), aimed specifically at COS graduates, rather than all students, in 2024-2025 to align the survey to District Goals and improve the application of results. Survey results will continue to be disaggregated, and academic programs over time may add specific questions to assess student learning in their areas.





## Institution-set Standard Recommendations and Outcomes

Student Achievement Area	Multi-Year District Average	Minimum Standard	Stretch or Aspirational Goal	Baseline Year 2017	Reported Year/Term 2018/19	Reported Year/Term 2019/20	Reported Year/Term 2020/21
Course Completion Rate	70% (Fall 12-17)	67%	74%	71%	✔ 74% ✔	✔ 74% ✔	✔ 82% ✔
Student Degree Completion	929 (2012-17)	883	1,068	1,054	✔ 1,335 ✔	✔ 1,538 ✔	✔ 1,468 ✔
Student Transfer to 4-Year Colleges/Univ.	920 (2010-2016)	828	1,012	852*	✔ 916	✔ 1,024 ✔	✔ 1,057 ✔
Student Certificate Completion	543 (2012-17)	489	652	711	✔ 838 ✔	✔ 701 ✔	✔ 722 ✔

In addition to quantitative data, District faculty regularly collect and discuss qualitative data for outcomes assessment, and report on assessment progress and completion in program review. For example, in their 2022 program review, the [History Department](#) reported the implementation of a standard grading rubric for outcomes assessment in Canvas, allowing better and more consistent collection and discussion of assessment results for faculty.

The District administers the Student Support Services Survey every other year to assess the quality of education and services provided by the District and inform plans for improvement and innovation. The survey collects information regarding student satisfaction with Student Services programs, the quality of education provided, and until 2023 self-reported completion of institutional learning outcomes. The results are shared through the District’s governance process and incorporated in unit-level planning for program and service improvement. For example, in response to the [2023 Student Support Services Survey](#), food services overhauled many aspects of their operation. Changes included the way food products are ordered and produced, adding options for healthy food on the menus, updated hours of operation, and training for student workers. The [resulting changes](#) have led to a 65% increase in sales, a 70% increase in customer volume, and a 20% increase in the number of student workers hired.

The District administers the [Giant Questionnaire](#) to District employees which provides feedback about the workplace environment, communication, diversity, inclusiveness, services provided, and the quality of education provided. Results are disseminated to the appropriate governance groups, academic programs, and student support programs to evaluate and make any relevant program improvements.

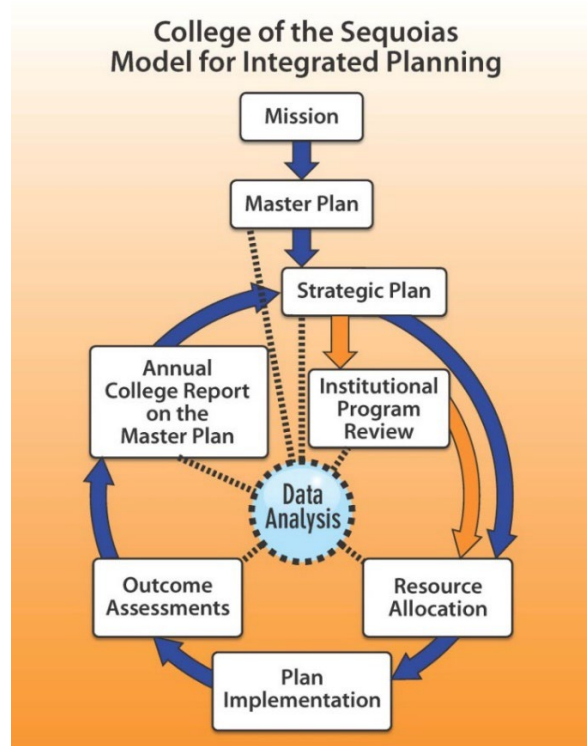
The District incorporates data analysis in many other planning processes. For example, student achievement data is disaggregated and analyzed for subpopulations of students through the monitoring of the Student Equity Plan and Institution-Set Standards. The District provides annual updates to data metrics for the [Student Equity Plan](#) which are reviewed and discussed by the [Equity and Diversity Action Committee](#) (EDAC). EDAC incorporates this data into its plans for institutional improvement. For example, the

[committee](#) takes the District’s identified disproportionately-impacted groups into account when reviewing proposals for events and other expenditures.

The District meets the Standard. Through structures developed within the participatory governance process, the District engages in annual institutional and unit evaluations to assess District progress toward meeting established goals and objectives, student achievement, and learning outcomes. The District regularly reviews relevant, meaningfully disaggregated data to evaluate progress and inform plans for continued improvement and innovation.

**1.4. The institution’s mission directs resource allocation, innovation, and continuous quality improvement through ongoing systematic planning and evaluation of programs and services. (ER 19)**

The District’s Mission is the foundation for all planning processes, including program review for academic and service areas, as depicted in the [Model for Integrated Planning](#). The Integrated Planning Manual describes institutional planning and the ways that constituent groups participate in and contribute to planning. The Model for Integrated Planning depicts how the components of planning link to one another in a cycle of evaluation, development of District Goals and Objectives, resource allocation, plan implementation, and reevaluation. The District demonstrates institutional effectiveness and practices a cycle of continuous quality improvement through the systematic and routine implementation of specific planning processes including the following: master planning (ten-year plan), strategic planning (three-year plan), Institutional Program Review (biennial plan), and the resource allocation process (annual). As evidenced in the Model, the Mission is the driving force for planning activities and data are central to these processes. To ensure adherence to the planning model, the District maintains several documents which detail the roles and responsibilities for these activities. The [Governance and Decision-Making Manual](#), [Integrated Planning Manual](#), and [Resource Allocation Manual](#) are crucial to maintaining the structure and systems of the District.



As shown in the graphic above, the analysis of data is central to the Model for Integrated Planning and serves as an important tool in each of the District's planning processes. The Master Plan provides an analysis of effectiveness with both internal and external scans. The District uses the data to evaluate whether it meets its Mission and analyzes projected demographics, legislative, and economic changes. These data inform the District Goals that describe how the District will address the identified challenges. The [District Goals](#) are the foundation for the Strategic Plan that identifies Objectives to achieving the Goals along with Actions, responsible parties, and completion dates for reaching the Objectives. District Objectives include initiatives that align with the Mission, such as "Increase the percentage of students who complete both transfer-level Quantitative Reasoning and English by 10 percentage points by the end of their first year from 2021-2025." Objectives also align with the District's equity statement and the ACCJC Policy on Social Justice. For example, "Reduce equity gaps in course success rates across all departments by 40% from 2021-2025."

[Program review](#) captures unit-level planning for instructional, student services, and administrative services units. Program review describes how each unit contributes to the achievement of District Objectives and contains an analysis of unit-specific data, a description of strengths and weaknesses, a report on prior year actions, a link to assessment of student learning, Actions for the following year, and resources needed to support the actions. The [program review](#) process will be completed biennially (every two years) by units in academic, student, and administrative services. Alternatively, units may submit a program review annually as needed.

As described in the Board Policy on Program Review ([BP 3260](#)), "the main purpose of program review is to give each program or service area a critical viewpoint from which to judge its long-term effectiveness in relation to the college's vision and mission." If a District Objective or Action requires funding, a unit may request those resources by demonstrating alignment with the District Objectives and/or Student Learning Outcomes, which in turn support the District's Mission. For example, in the 2023 program review, the [Animal Science Department](#) included a request for a Patience Pole to improve equine training and safety and a Bovine AI training model to train students in proper techniques of Embryo Transfer including identifying, grading, and sorting viable embryos. These requests were linked to District Objectives 2.1 and 2.4 as well as Student Learning Outcomes for related courses. These two funding requests were ranked highly by the [Instructional Council](#) and [Budget Committee](#) based on the connections to Objectives and student success.

The resource allocation process is an annual process that ensures the Actions identified in the Strategic Plan and program reviews are funded to the extent possible. Resource allocation ensures that funding aligns with the District's Mission and links District Goals and Objectives to the resources needed to accomplish the initiatives and Actions. Academic Services, Administrative Services, and Student Services provide priority rankings for funding and staffing requests based on program reviews. Then, the Budget Committee reviews and ranks the budget requests through the [Resource Allocation Rubric](#) to further ensure resources allocated are tied to the District Goals and Objectives. This process is described in the [Resource Allocation Manual](#).

In the District's cycle of integrated planning, resources are allocated based on rationales that tie the request to either a program review or to District Objectives. Funding requests in program reviews are required to be related to the measurement of a student learning outcome, a service area outcome, or a District Objective. The District Objectives in the Strategic Plan are derived from the District Goals, which in turn are based on the District's Mission. For example, the [District's Budget Committee ranks](#) above-based funding requests using a rubric that prioritizes clear links to multiple District Objectives. The Budget Committee is charged with overseeing the resource allocation process. The [Administrative Procedure](#) on

Requests for Personnel, Budget Augmentations, Facilities, and/or Equipment specifies that the District's Mission is the foundation of all planning processes, and that District Goals and Objectives are central to resource allocation.

The District meets the Standard. The Integrated Planning Model illustrates the extent to which the Mission directs institutional priorities, including program review, resource allocation, and the development of District Goals and District Objectives. These processes are codified in the Integrated Planning Manual. Through meaningful program review and resource allocation processes, academic programs and service-area units align requests with the Mission and support those requests with student learning and achievement data. As reflected in annual reports on the Master Plan, District Goals and Objectives are developed and monitored in response to an analysis of how effectively the District accomplishes the Mission.

**1.5. The institution regularly communicates progress toward achieving its mission and goals with internal and external stakeholders in order to promote understanding of institutional strengths, priorities, and areas for continued improvement. (ER 19)**

The District communicates the results of assessment and evaluation activities in myriad ways. Regular communication with external stakeholders occurs through joint District-level Board meetings, presentations to feeder high school districts, and to the Community Advisory Committee, as well as other methods. In addition, results are disseminated to internal and external stakeholders in District-wide forums, at Board Meetings, to governance groups, through email, and on the website.

District communication to internal and external stakeholders includes the [Giant Fact Book](#), [Annual Report on the Master Plan](#), [Student Equity Plan](#), Institutional [Program Review](#), [Outcomes Assessment](#), [Distance Education Annual Report](#), [Giant Questionnaire](#), and [Student Support Services Survey](#). The variety of reports describing the District, enables stakeholders to understand the scope and depth of the District's evaluative activities and provides an opportunity for feedback on strengths and weaknesses as well as setting priorities. For example, the Superintendent/President annually attends at least one Board of Trustees meeting for each of the District's K-12 feeder high school districts and presents an evaluation of the [success metrics](#) for students from the respective district. This presentation leads to a discussion of how the District can collaborate with feeder high schools to promote the success of their students.

An excellent example of communication and connection with the community is the creation of the new COS Visalia University Center. Based on community conversations and feedback over the last decade about the lack of a four-year institution in the two-county region, the District committed to funding and building a University Center on the Visalia Campus. This would expand and support the partnership the District has enjoyed with Fresno State locally since 2016. The Superintendent/President led a year-long campaign for a local [bond measure](#) which successfully passed in November of 2022. The District committed to the project by initially investing \$10M on land surrounding the current campus so that it could demonstrate to voters that not only was their demand stemming back to the start of the partnership in 2016, but also that the District was willing to invest its own funds in support of the project. The bond provides \$95M for the construction of the [University Center](#) and a new Student Union. This is an example of the District's commitment to the needs of the community, support for student success, and regular communication with internal and external stakeholders.

The District dedicates resources for faculty, staff, and students to meet and discuss relevant assessment and evaluation activities. For example, [Dialogue Days](#) is an event held each semester to encourage faculty to discuss learning outcomes assessment within their divisions and across the institution.

[Convocation](#) provides another venue for District-wide discussion of key District initiatives and evaluative reports, such as the Student Equity Plan and the Strategic Plan. In program review, units discuss their plans, and the related resource requests are reviewed and prioritized during division and service area meetings. [Program review](#) summary reports are publicly available on the District's website. Program review summaries are referenced by faculty, administrators, and participatory governance groups to set appropriate priorities. For example, [Instructional Council](#) uses program review summaries to rank and prioritize faculty positions and above-base funding requests. [Resource Allocation](#) and Institutional [Program Review](#) survey results are transparent and communicated through District-wide emails, shared at governance meetings, and with the Board of Trustees.

The Annual Report on the Master Plan summarizes the progress made towards accomplishing the District Goals, provides a basis for any change in the coming year, and identifies recommendations to improve policies or procedures. The report is distributed through the shared governance structure and published on the District's [website](#) to sustain a District-wide dialog. Additionally, the District's [Annual Report to the Community](#) is developed from the Annual Report on the Master Plan and distributed to external stakeholders as described above.

Results from the Student Support Services Survey and Giant Questionnaire are analyzed and findings are shared with relevant units. Each unit uses survey results to set priorities and advance the Mission. In addition, the District informs students and prospective students, personnel, the public, and outside organizations about the Mission, educational programs, learning outcomes, Accreditation status, and services through the [Catalog](#), COS eNews email, and printed materials such as posted committee agendas. The District also publishes reports on the state of the District and about available services through external and internal communication, including press releases, formal reports to the ACCJC, the Annual Report on the Master Plan, the Annual Report to the Community, and the Student Success Scorecard.

The development and maintenance of the accuracy of the information, as well as quality in the design and navigation of the website, is described in the [Board Policy](#) and [Administrative Procedures](#) on the District's website. The Public Information Office collaborates with the Senior Management Council and governance committees to develop and maintain the flow of information regarding the District.

The District broadly communicates the results of its assessment and evaluation activities externally and internally through dialog and dissemination of information. Participatory governance structures are in place to provide the opportunity for District stakeholders to discuss assessment and evaluation results and make plans to improve practices.

## Standard 2: Student Success

*In alignment with its mission, the institution delivers high-quality academic and learning support programs that engage and support students through their unique educational journeys. Academic and learning support programs promote equitable student success, and the institution evaluates student learning and achievement data to inform improvements and advance equitable outcomes.*

### 2.1. Academic programs at all locations and in all modes of delivery are offered in fields of study consistent with the institution's mission and reflect appropriate breadth, depth, and expected learning outcomes. (ER 3, ER 9, ER 12)

Instructional programs at the District, regardless of location or mode of delivery, are rigorously reviewed and assessed to ensure that they are offered consistent with the Mission, reflect appropriate breadth and depth, and that students are able to achieve their goals for learning and success. The integrated planning and governance processes ensure that faculty experts are involved at all levels of program planning, review, and assessment.

Instructional programs are offered in fields of study consistent with the [Mission](#) to provide “*excellent higher education*” that leads to “*students attaining a variety of degrees and certificates, from basic skills to transfer education and workforce development.*” Instructional programs include associate degrees, career technical education (CTE), noncredit, and community education. The District offers [162 programs](#) leading to goals consistent with its Mission:

- 76 associate degree program
- 45 certificate of achievement programs
- 37 skills certificate programs
- 3 noncredit certificate of competency programs
- 1 noncredit certificate of completion

Thirty-three of the associate degree programs are Associate Degrees for Transfer (ADTs) articulated with the CSU system. District data affirms that a significant portion of [program enrollment](#) and [awards](#) are in the degree programs.

Courses and programs are offered at three primary locations: the Visalia Campus, the Tulare College Center, and the Hanford Educational Center. Courses are also offered through distance education, dual enrollment, and instructional service agreements.

Regardless of location or mode of delivery, courses and programs offered are appropriate to higher education and culminate in identified Student Learning Outcomes and Program Learning Outcomes. Courses and programs are subject to the same [curriculum approval process](#), which includes oversight and evaluation by faculty in the appropriate subject/department in order to ensure currency, academic quality, and rigor. Curriculum proposals are reviewed by the Curriculum Committee which includes faculty subject matter experts, administration, and staff to ensure rigorous and appropriate content. [Program descriptions](#) include statements of transfer and career objectives in alignment with the Mission, and these objectives are published in the Catalog. District policies ensure that degree programs and certificates conform to generally-accepted practices in higher education, including standards for General Education, major core or area of emphasis requirements, and the correct calculation of credit hours (units). The [Administrative Procedure](#) on Program Curriculum and Course Development ensures that the Curriculum Committee receives regular training on regulations governing the approval of curriculum. For example, each fall the



first Curriculum Committee meeting includes committee training. In fall 2023, [training topics](#) included curriculum regulations, unit calculations, District policies and procedures, upcoming legislation, and review of course outlines of record.

Courses approved for Distance Education include a [Distance Learning Addendum](#) that is reviewed by the Distance Education Coordinator and approved by the Curriculum Committee to ensure that methods of instruction align with standards for regular and substantive interaction, student authentication, last day of attendance, and accessibility.

Student Learning Outcomes for courses are reviewed by the Curriculum Committee as part of the official Course Outline of Record and are published in the course schedule and available on the Outcomes and Assessment [website](#). Program Learning Outcomes are reviewed through the curriculum approval process and are listed in the Catalog and published on the Outcomes and Assessment [website](#). Learning outcomes are documented in Nuventive Improve, which is the District's central hub for Outcomes Assessment and program review. Learning outcomes for courses and programs are regularly scheduled for assessment on a three-year cycle and are systematically assessed at least once every three years, with cycles and reminders set using the Improve system. The Outcomes and Assessment Coordinator assists faculty with assessment training and resources. The coordinator produces an [assessment currency report](#) at the beginning of the fall and spring semesters and presents this report to the Outcomes and Assessment Committee and Instructional Council as a reminder of which outcomes are due for assessment each year.

The program review process ensures that requests for resources are tied to District Objectives, and program review requires a report of progress on Program Learning Outcomes. [Program review](#) includes an overall assessment of outcome achievement, changes made based on outcome assessment, and an evaluation of the outcome cycle for all modes of delivery, including Distance Education.

A key [Goal of the District's 2015-2025 Master Plan](#) was to improve the rate at which students complete degrees, certificates, and transfer objectives. This Goal drives data collection and reporting across the integrated planning process. For example, in 2022 the [Annual Report on the Master Plan](#) included updated data on transfer and completion, as well as progress reports on specific actions focused on student success, such as updated data on student placement and success in Math and English.

The District meets the Standard and Eligibility Requirements. Instructional programs, regardless of location or mode of delivery, are rigorously reviewed and assessed to ensure that they are offered consistent with the Mission, meet standards for higher education, and that students are able to achieve their goals for learning and success.

**2.2. The institution, relying on faculty and other appropriate stakeholders, designs and delivers academic programs that reflect relevant discipline and industry standards and support equitable attainment of learning outcomes and achievement of educational goals.  
(ER 3, ER 9, ER 11, ER 14)**

Faculty, including full-time and adjunct faculty, participate in the review, design, and assessment of academic programs to ensure that they reflect relevant discipline and industry standards and support equitable attainment of learning outcomes and achievement of educational goals. Programs and courses are regularly reviewed to ensure currency is in line with the [Administrative Procedure](#) on course and program review.

The curriculum review process is the primary method utilized to ensure that courses and programs offered align with the Mission and reflect relevant discipline and industry standards, as outlined in the California Code of Regulations Title 5 and the associated CCCC Program and Course Approval Handbook. Courses offered are developed with an official Course Outline of Record, which contains all elements required by Title 5, including course units, contact hours, prerequisites, methods of instruction, catalog description, and course content including Student Learning Outcomes. The Curriculum Committee receives annual training on Title 5 requirements in accordance with state guidelines.

The curriculum is [reviewed for currency](#) on a continuous cycle, with a five-year review for the majority of programs and courses, and a two-year review process for CTE programs. Faculty and administrators are reminded of the courses and programs scheduled for currency review each year through an [annual report](#) produced by the Curriculum Coordinator and distributed to the Curriculum Committee. The report is regularly updated and is a standing [agenda](#) item throughout the year.

Per [Board Policy](#) and [Administrative Procedure](#) on Course and Program Development, courses and programs are developed or reviewed by faculty members with expert knowledge in the relevant discipline. Prior to submission for Curriculum Committee review, courses and programs are developed according to each division's established curriculum review and development process. [Division processes](#) may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Alignment with the Mission and strategic plan
- Department and/or division discussion
- Identification of existing resources
- Labor market, transfer, and/or distance education analysis
- Needs assessment

Divisions follow these processes to ensure that curriculum meets generally-accepted academic and professional standards in the relevant discipline. For example, in May 2022 the Curriculum Committee reviewed and approved an initial proposal for the development of a [Paramedicine](#) program. The program proposal was developed in response to requests from industry partners, to fill a gap for first responder training in our service area, and to provide an additional educational pathway for students interested in allied health careers.

Courses and programs are reviewed through a regular and systematic curriculum process. Once a course or program has been discussed, drafted, and reviewed according to the division's process, a faculty author composes and launches the course or program in the curriculum management system for review by the Curriculum Committee. The [Curriculum Committee](#) is composed primarily of faculty members, with each division nominating a curriculum representative to serve on the committee and review the curriculum. Curriculum review is completed in the curriculum management system, CourseLeaf CIM. The [review process](#) includes the Curriculum Coordinator, Curriculum Specialist, faculty curriculum representative, Articulation Officer, associated division chair and dean, and other advisory members of the committee as appropriate, such as a Financial Aid officer or resource librarian. Errors or recommendations are addressed by the original course author. Following initial technical review, proposals are reviewed by the Vice President of Academic Services, Curriculum Committee, Academic Senate, and the Board of Trustees.

The Curriculum Committee reviews the overall curriculum process to ensure that it is effective at meeting the Mission and ensures equitable outcomes for students. For example, in 2022 the Curriculum Committee added a component of equity review to the course outline of record, to ensure courses are meeting



discipline standards and ensure equitable outcomes for students. The committee offers [professional development](#) for faculty to confirm that course design and delivery of instruction meets equity goals. In 2023-2024, 122 courses were [reviewed for equity](#).

One example of this process is the Child Development faculty's review of [CHLD 039 – Child Growth and Development](#). Child Development faculty reviewed this course in 2023 for alignment with transfer requirements through the C-ID course standard for CSU transfer, as well as for industry standards via the discipline's curriculum alignment project (CAP) and made related updates to course content. In addition, faculty reviewed course content for equity and made course content updates to topics and materials that were culturally relevant for students, thus ensuring that the course content and delivery reflects relevant discipline and industry standards and supports equitable attainment of learning outcomes for students.

Through the program review process, faculty review efficiency, student success, and other relevant data for each unit, including data on student success measures, which can be disaggregated by student characteristics in alignment with the District's equity goals. Faculty and administrators discuss this success data for their courses and programs as part of the program review process. Data is used in program reviews to support related actions, which are also linked to District Objectives in support of integrated planning and continuous improvement. When a unit plans to create a new program, new courses, or significantly update the existing curriculum, these plans are included as actions in program review. Through the program review process, faculty review progress on Student Learning Outcomes assessment completion and discuss strategies for improving teaching and learning.

For example, in their 2023 program review, the [Physical Therapist Assistant](#) program provided an analysis of program and course learning outcome assessment focused on student success in meeting discipline and industry standards. Assessments focus on industry standards for specialized accreditation and student success in the completion of the industry's licensing exam. Program review actions, such as one to *“provide students with industry competencies through faculty development,”* focus on improvement of instruction and are linked to [District Objectives](#) on student success. The program review, through alignment with Course Outcomes, Program Learning Outcomes, and District Goals, ensures that the PTA program reflects district and industry standards and ensures student attainment of their educational goals.

The District meets the Standard and Eligibility Requirements. Through faculty participation in a robust curriculum approval process, as well as professional development activities and the process of program review, the District ensures that all academic programs are designed and delivered to reflect relevant discipline and industry standards and support equitable attainment of learning outcomes and students' achievement of their educational goals.

**2.3. All degree programs include a general education framework to ensure the development of broad knowledge, skills, and competencies related to communication, quantitative reasoning, critical thinking, information literacy, civic responsibility, and the ability to engage with diverse perspectives. (ER 12)**

All degree programs in the District include a substantial component of General Education to ensure the development of broad knowledge, skills, and competencies. Local degrees align with the District's general education framework, which includes elements of communication, quantitative reasoning, critical thinking, information literacy, civic responsibility, and engagement with diverse perspectives. Degrees intended for transfer align with the general education patterns of the UC and CSU systems, which also incorporate these

elements. Around 15% of [degree-seeking students](#) in the District follow the local GE pattern and 85% follow transfer GE.

The District's [General Education Philosophy and Framework](#) guide the development and review of general education courses. This philosophy is published and communicated with students in the [COS Catalog](#). The General Education Committee reviews [course submissions](#) for the local GE pattern to ensure alignment with GE areas and outcomes. Courses proposed for transfer GE are reviewed through the [curriculum process](#) for appropriate content and fit according to guidance from transfer partners. Following curriculum review, the articulation officer solicits course submissions, which are submitted for transfer GE via the submission processes of the CSU and UC systems.

As part of its process of continuous improvement, the local GE pattern is reviewed regularly. For example, in 2021 the District began the process of reviewing and improving the local General Education outcomes. The review process began in the Outcomes and Assessment Committee as a result of [Institutional Learning Outcomes Assessment results](#) which indicated a need for stronger alignment between the Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs) and General Education Learning Outcomes (GELOs). The Outcomes and Assessment Committee reviewed various [references](#), such as California Title 5 regulations, the AACU's VALUE Rubrics, and the Degree Qualifications Profile in order to draft updated and aligned ILOs and GELOs that would provide all students the opportunity to develop broad competencies consistent with best practices in higher education, including global awareness and cultural competency. Updated draft ILOs and GELOs were shared with the General Education Committee for feedback, followed by an opportunity for District-wide feedback via a [survey](#). The updated outcomes were approved through the District's [governance process](#) and took effect in fall 2023. Once the outcomes were implemented, the Outcomes and Assessment Committee, in collaboration with the General Education Committee, began developing and updating the assessment survey process, previously used for ILOs, to assess the revised outcomes. The committee expects to pilot this new [survey](#) in fall 2024.

Following the approval of updated GELOs, and in response to [California legislation and regulatory guidance](#), the District has now begun the process of reviewing and updating both its local GE pattern and framework and the review and improvement of transfer GE, with both a streamlined local GE pattern and a single transfer GE pathway (Cal-GETC) for students to be implemented in fall 2025. In a demonstration of the commitment to participatory governance and institutional improvement, the District has convened a [task force](#) for Cal-GETC implementation, focused on ensuring Cal-GETC is implemented successfully and in a way that continues to ensure student success.

The District meets the Standard and Eligibility Requirements. All degrees at the District include a general education framework designed to ensure the development of broad knowledge, skills, and competencies. In addition, the District works to continually improve its General Education framework, outcomes, and offerings to ensure they are current and reflect standards appropriate to higher education.

#### **2.4. The institution communicates clear, accurate, and accessible information regarding programs, services, and resources that foster success in students' unique educational journeys. (ER 20)**

The District communicates clear, accurate, and accessible information to students. Students are informed of District programs, services, and resources in a variety of ways to foster success in completion of their educational journeys. The District's Catalog provides students with accurate, current, and consistent information about academic programs, including program requirements and learning outcomes. Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) for courses are communicated directly with students in the course schedule and

on course syllabi. Additional information is communicated with students directly through methods that include [email](#), Regroup, social media, Canvas announcements, and the website.

The District provides a comprehensive Catalog that is published annually. Annual publication ensures that the Catalog provides accurate and current general information, requirements, policies, and procedures, as well as other information allowing students to be well informed about academic and student support programs, requirements, and services. The Catalog is available in an electronic form which can be downloaded from the website in Portable Document Format (pdf). Print versions of the Catalog are available in the Counseling and Veteran's Affairs Offices or by request. The Online Catalog includes all of the information listed in the Eligibility Requirement (see Appendix D).

Outcomes are defined for courses, programs, the general education pattern, the institution, and service areas. Learning outcomes for courses and programs are composed and updated as necessary by faculty who are content-area experts during the regular process for curriculum review. Courses and programs are [reviewed and updated](#), at minimum, once every five years. SLOs are part of the official course outlines of record for each course, available online on the Outcomes and Assessment Committee [website](#), listed on course syllabi, and available to view when students search for courses in the online course schedule. Program Learning Outcomes are published in the COS Online Catalog as part of program descriptions and are also available on the Outcomes Assessment website. [General Education Learning Outcomes and Institutional Learning Outcomes](#) are created and reviewed by the General Education and Outcomes and Assessment Committees, are published in the Online Catalog, and are available on the Outcomes and Assessment Committee website.

Course [syllabi](#) are required to contain up-to-date [SLOs](#). Syllabi are submitted to the area dean's office each semester and are reviewed for currency and correctness. Faculty provide syllabi to students during the initial class meeting or online. The College of the Sequoias Teachers Association ([COSTA](#)) and College of the Sequoias Adjunct Faculty Association ([COSAFA](#)) Master Agreements state that faculty are expected to provide course syllabi on the first day of instruction as one of their professional responsibilities. Faculty evaluation committees review syllabi as part of the [full-time](#) faculty evaluation process. The deans review syllabi during the [adjunct](#) faculty evaluation process. Faculty also regularly communicate SLOs to students throughout the semester. For example, the Nursing Division printed and laminated the Nursing Course SLOs for each semester and they are leveled for each semester. The SLOs are color-coded by semester and printed on student ID badges so that students can easily share their SLOs with the nurse mentor at each clinical site.

The development and maintenance of accuracy of information, as well as quality in the design and navigation of the website, is described in the [Board Policy](#) and [Administrative Procedure](#) on the website. The District has mechanisms for ensuring effective communication with its students in multiple modalities regarding the programs, services, and resources available to support the student journey. In addition to the website, the District regularly communicates with students via [social media](#), Canvas notifications, and Regroup messages. The biennial [Student Support Services Survey](#) assesses student satisfaction with communication modalities.

The District regularly reviews its communication practices, policies, and procedures to ensure clarity, consistency, accuracy, and relevance. The Academic Services Office coordinates the development and organization of the Catalog with numerous departments on campus. The [Catalog Workgroup](#) comprises representatives from Academic and Student Services and meets regularly to ensure the accuracy and currency of the Catalog. Counselors, administrators, division chairs, and faculty review [drafts](#) of the Catalog for accuracy, completeness, structure, and organization. The District uses the CourseLeaf platform to host

the Catalog and streamline the development and review process. Curriculum review processes also occur in CourseLeaf, supporting accurate and consistent catalog information for courses and programs.

The Marketing and Public Relations Office collaborates with the Senior Management Council and governance committees to develop and maintain the flow of information regarding the District. The office uses analytics, student surveys, and regular audits to ensure communication across platforms is effective, engaging, and aligned with the needs and preferences of the student population. The District has processes in place to ensure that messaging is consistent and accessible across all platforms. This involves regular reviews and updates to the [style guides and communication protocols](#) used by different departments. Periodic audits are conducted to ensure that information shared across different channels (i.e., emails, social media, website, newsletters) is uniform and aligns with the branding and messaging standards. For example, based on feedback the District updated the format of Canvas announcements to improve accessibility.

In addition, based on feedback from a [website survey](#) and student surveys indicating difficulties in navigation, COS will undertake a comprehensive redesign of its website in spring 2025. Improvements include a more intuitive layout, enhanced search functionality, and mobile optimization. Enhanced digital [advertising](#) has been incorporated through modalities like geo-fencing, targeting students and parents utilizing specific zip codes. Analysis of social media analytics showed higher engagement with visual content and student success stories. In response, the District increased its use of infographics, videos, and interactive posts highlighting student achievements and upcoming events.

Furthermore, feedback from students revealed inconsistencies in the formatting and frequency of emails from different departments. The District standardized [email templates](#) and implemented a centralized email scheduling system to ensure consistency and prevent information overload.

The District meets the Standard and Eligibility Requirements. The District communicates clear, accurate, and accessible information regarding programs, services, and resources that foster success in students' unique educational journeys and regularly evaluates these processes to ensure that information is accurate and timely.

## **2.5. The institution holds itself accountable for students' success by scheduling courses in a manner that ensures degree and certificate programs can be completed in the expected period of time. (ER 9)**

The District schedules courses to ensure students' success and degree and certificate completion. Courses are scheduled based on data, student needs, and program completion pathways. Instructional Council meets regularly to exchange information between administration and faculty divisions regarding the effective scheduling of courses, maintenance of quality instruction, appropriate student support services, and equitable allocation of instructional materials and facilities. The [Schedule Development Timeline](#) ensures that the schedule is built based on input from deans, directors, provosts, counselors, faculty members, and division chairs.

Within each division, courses are scheduled to allow completion of degrees within two years. For example, in 2022 the Administration of Justice Division met to review and restructure course scheduling in the division. Courses were scheduled back-to-back to allow students to complete their coursework in a single trip to campus, as documented in the department's [program review](#).

Time-to-degree is a key component of the Strategic Plan, particularly the District Objective to increase the number of students who earn degrees or certificates annually. As part of this initiative, the District

implemented DegreeWorks in Student Services, a software package designed to assist students and advisors in navigating pathways to completion. For example, following the development of Guided Pathways, counseling worked with Divisions to create [guidelines](#) for degree pathways and published recommended [program maps](#) for each District program in DegreeWorks.

The [Enrollment Management](#) group meets on a monthly basis to review relevant data, scheduling, enrollment, and plan for future enrollment goals. The District recently established a new position, Dean of Enrollment Management, whose focus is on data and assessment on scheduling, program pathways and improving enrollment management practices. The dean regularly provides [training and data analysis](#) for division chairs, deans, Instructional Council, and other relevant groups. For example, the dean started [Friday Focus](#) which is a monthly workshop for deans to discuss scheduling data and effectiveness.

The District meets this standard and Eligibility Requirement. Courses on all three campuses are scheduled to ensure student success in the completion of their certificates and degrees.

## **2.6. The institution uses delivery modes and teaching methodologies that meet student and curricular needs and promote equitable student learning and achievement.**

Regardless of location or means of delivery, the District uses delivery modes and teaching methods that meet student needs and promote equitable student learning. The District's Mission to provide excellent higher education in a spirit of equity for our diverse student population drives District [planning and objectives](#) related to student equity and success.

Instructional delivery modes, including face-to-face and distance education, focus on effective instructional and support methods for students, and the [Distance Education Mission statement](#) mirrors the overall Mission to support our diverse population of students. The Master Plan contains specific District Goals related to equity, particularly Goal #3: *“College of the Sequoias will strategically tailor and implement academic programs and student services that match the unique needs of its student population.”* Specific Objectives tied to this Goal are assessed annually in the Strategic Plan and in the [Student Equity Plan](#).

Program review data dashboards include disaggregation metrics for mode of delivery and identified equity groups. Departments review this data as part of institutional program review. For example, in their 2023-2024 program review, the [Philosophy Department](#) discussed disaggregated success rates by race/ethnicity and online modality. As a result of that assessment, the department planned to experiment with early interventions and communications to encourage student engagement in online courses and follow-up with the Distance Education Coordinator to review other strategies to help students struggling in online courses.

The District offers courses and programs through traditional face-to-face instruction, fully online, and hybrid distance education. The District does not offer correspondence education. Fully online and hybrid courses are delivered using web-based learning management systems and are managed according to the [Administrative Procedure](#) on Distance Education and Student Authentication.

The curriculum approval process also supports best practices for online instructional delivery. Courses proposed for distance education delivery include a [Distance Learning Addendum](#) as part of the curriculum review process, where faculty specify how online course delivery will meet requirements for regular and substantive interaction, student authentication, and online delivery of course content. The Distance Learning Addendum is regularly reviewed and updated to align with current regulations and for continuous improvement. For example, in 2020 the Distance Learning Addendum was [updated](#) to allow for distance education delivery in emergency circumstances. In 2023, the Distance Learning Addendum was reviewed

again for [updated](#) language on regular and substantive interaction and improvements to the instructions for faculty to encourage more in-depth responses. The DLA was also updated to encourage faculty to consider and connect instructional methods to District Goals and Objectives during the curriculum review process.

Faculty training emphasizing the importance of multiple teaching methodologies and course delivery methods is offered annually in support of faculty efforts to diversify instruction and improve student learning. The Faculty Enrichment Committee offers training and workshops on a variety of topics. For example, in the week prior to the start of each semester, the District offers several training and professional development opportunities. In [fall 2023](#) and [spring 2024](#), the District offered several trainings focused on culturally-competent instruction, including sessions on classroom practices, syllabi design, and advanced pedagogical. In these trainings, faculty participants could develop or revise their syllabi and classroom practices to make improvements in support of equitable student achievement. Fourteen faculty members completed improvement projects focused on cultural competency and pedagogy in the classroom. Example projects included but were not limited to improving syllabi and incorporation of authentic assessment.

In addition to professional development workshops throughout the academic year, New Faculty Orientation workshops (offered the week of [Fall Convocation](#)) provide an overview of teaching at the community college. Topics covered include building community, understanding the role of faculty at the community college, managing workload, supporting students' success, and accessibility. The Access and Ability Center, Student Success Center, and the Learning Resource Center also hold training sessions for faculty during or immediately following Convocation week to introduce faculty to learning support services and encourage collaboration.

Faculty teaching distance education courses must meet a certification requirement, as described in the District's [Master Agreement](#). The District offers an [Online Teaching Certificate Program](#) (OTCP) each semester facilitated by the Distance Education Coordinator. This program covers a variety of topics, including supporting student success in online learning, with data related to success in online courses. OTCP contents include student-centered and accessible course design and LMS usage, legal issues relating to DE, and equity-minded behaviors in DE instruction. The online success data is disaggregated by subpopulation and presented to participants. The Distance Education Committee at COS ([DECOS](#)) works to continually review and update the training and makes recommendations to the Academic Senate for updated processes to improve student success in online courses. In 2023-2024, in support of continuous improvement, DECOS developed [recommendations](#) to improve the distance education certification process and training. The proposal includes multiple options for certification, aligns training to @ONE professional development recommendations for California Community Colleges, and recommends ongoing recertification to ensure faculty meet up-to-date legal and regulatory requirements for distance education. This proposal was extensively discussed and approved through the governance process, with [Academic Senate](#) approval in May.

The Distance Education Coordinator offers additional training throughout the year on effective practices using online modalities, including training focused on regular and substantive interaction with students. For example, in 2023-2024, the Distance Education Coordinator developed and piloted a peer review process for Regular and Substantive Interaction (RSI) in online instruction. Reviewers were trained in RSI guidelines and reviewed course shells from faculty participants using a [rubric](#). Faculty participants reported feedback was helpful and they were able to adopt instructional improvements in their online courses as a result of participating in the review process.



The District meets the Standard. The District uses delivery modes and teaching methodologies that meet student and curricular needs and promote equitable student learning and achievement, in alignment with its Mission.

**2.7. The institution designs and delivers equitable and effective services and programs that support students in their unique educational journeys, address academic and non-academic needs, and maximize their potential for success. Such services include library and learning resources, academic counseling and support, and other services the institution identifies as appropriate for its mission and student needs. (ER 15, ER 17)**

The District designs and delivers, regardless of location or means of delivery, equitable and effective student support services in alignment with student needs and the District's Mission. Services are regularly evaluated through the program review process, service area outcomes assessment, and via District surveys, which provide disaggregated data for disproportionately impacted student groups.

The District supports student learning and achievement by providing in-person and online library and learning support services for basic skills, transfer, and career technical students as well as faculty and staff. Education Support Services houses multiple departments that address students' academic and non-academic needs, support student success, and provide essential services for faculty and staff. Libraries operate on each of the three campuses and online. Learning support services provide resources for District academic programs and include the Library, Tutorial Center, Writing Center, Math Lab, Mathematics, Engineering, Science Achievement (MESA), and Language Center. The Library/Learning Resource Center's [mission](#) is to support student success, community advancement, and information literacy by providing equal access to quality resources and services to District students, faculty, and staff in a safe and inclusive environment.

**Library**

The Library provides multiple services and resources that support students' academic and non-academic needs and maximize their potential for success. Librarians support student attainment of information literacy skills through both instruction and research assistance. Faculty librarians work closely with instructional faculty to provide Library instruction across diverse disciplines; since 2018, librarians have offered over 450 library instruction sessions reaching over 4,700 students. These sessions are tailored to specific classes and assignments and are customized to support student success. Individual sessions are assessed using class surveys that are discussed at the department's Dialogue Days meeting. Librarians developed a Canvas module that can be customized and added to any Canvas course shell to enhance library instruction. The course module covers the basics of the research process, use of Library resources, plagiarism, and citation.

The Library supports students' information literacy skill development through a robust offering of credit-bearing classes. Approximately 3,700 students have completed Library classes since fall 2020. Library course outcomes are aligned with the Association of College and Research Libraries' Framework for Information Literacy in Higher Education.

In support of distance education, the Library provides a range of services and resources. These include remote Ask-a-Librarian services, laptop and hotspot checkout, and a library online research guide to help navigate the various library services and resources available for distance education. Librarians are available to create online research guides that can be easily integrated into Canvas.

Additionally, librarians are available at Ask-a-Librarian Service points, which include physical service desks, online chat, phone, and email. Librarians are available for extended one-on-one research assistance appointments at all three campuses and online. Students can schedule appointments through the Library’s LibCal platform.

The Library’s Hotspot and Laptop Checkout Program provides students with semester-long access to essential technology, including laptops and hotspots. Since 2020, the LRC has circulated 7,070 Chromebooks, 1,667 Windows laptops, and 8,417 hotspots. Students’ technology needs are supported by a Student Help Desk on the Visalia campus. The Student Help Desk provides technical support to students in-person, over the phone, through text, live chat, and email.

The Library collections include print and non-print materials which are accessible at all three locations through inter-campus request services. Non-print materials may include electronic resources, anatomical models, and technology. The Library collections are managed and curated by faculty Librarians, in consultation with teaching faculty. Currently, the Library provides access to approximately 45,900 print book titles, 2,900 course reserve titles, and 14,150 eBooks available through OneSearch. Ninety-three individual academic databases are available from the Library’s Academic Databases web page. The popular course reserves collection provides textbooks for many courses, for both 2-hour and semester-long checkouts. Library staff further support student access to materials by providing copyright-compliant scanning services.

The Library liaison program is designed to support both students and faculty. In 2023-2024, librarians revised the program to align with Giant Pathways. Each pathway is assigned at least one librarian who manages the collection within that pathway and serves as primary point of contact for those departments and provides outreach throughout the semester. Subject faculty meet with their library liaison to discuss material acquisitions for their courses, work on developing research assignments, or create research guides tailored to help students access and use library resources effectively.

The Library supports student equity through its ongoing support of [Open Educational Resources](#) (OERs) and Zero-textbook-cost (ZTC) initiatives. Librarians assist faculty in finding no- and low-cost instructional materials, which include public domain/openly-licensed content, as well as materials available through Library vendors. The Library supports the discoverability of open textbooks by making them available through its OpenSearch catalog. Currently, 1,469 titles are available through OneSearch. Librarians have also offered ZTC/OER workshops for teaching faculty. In spring 2023, the Library collaborated on a well-attended, grant-funded ZTC workshop with several discipline faculty, and, in previous semesters, has offered OER workshops at all three campus sites.

### Learning Resources

In addition to the Library, the District offers learning support services that include the Writing Center, Tutorial Center, Math Lab, Language Lab, MESA, Academic Center for Excellence, Embedded Tutoring, and Supplemental Instruction.

Service	Locations	Purpose
<b>Writing Center</b>	Visalia – ESS Hanford – E91 Tulare – Building A Online	The Writing Center offers Face-to-face and online 1:1 tutoring with qualified writing tutors at each campus, for any class and any assignment: brainstorming, understanding assignments, developing ideas, revision and proofreading, research, in-text citations and quotes, documentation styles like MLA/APA/Chicago, personal statements, cover letters, resumes, visual presentations, and more.



<b>Tutorial Center</b>	Visalia – ESS Hanford – E91 Tulare – Building A Online	The General Tutorial Center offers 1:1 and small group content tutoring in designated subjects including sciences, computer science, economics, and philosophy.
<b>Math Lab</b>	Visalia – ESS Hanford – E91 Tulare – Building A Online	The Math Lab offers math tutoring with staff, faculty, and qualified tutors.
<b>Language Lab</b>	Visalia - ESS Online	The Language Center prepares COS students to become autonomous language learners who are persistent and successful in pursuing their life and professional goals. The Language Center offers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ESL, English, and Spanish Tutoring</li> <li>• Reading, conversation, grammar support, and workshops</li> <li>• Information on ESL classes, registration support, and financial aid</li> </ul>
<b>MESA</b>	Visalia – JM 115 and 124	The MESA program supports STEM students while they complete their associate degrees and/or transfer to a 4-year university of their choice. MESA provides students with resources such as tutoring, free books, technology, academic coaching, internships, and professional development.
<b>Embedded Tutoring</b>	Offered in classrooms	Embedded tutoring offers peer academic support in ESL and English 001 classes.
<b>Supplemental Instruction</b>	Offered in classrooms	Supplemental Instruction Leaders facilitate weekly study sessions in designated high-attrition classes.

In support of continuous improvement, in 2023 the District completed construction on a new building, [Educational Support Services](#), in order to provide centralized support for student educational resources. This building houses Tutorial Services, the Math, Language, and Writing Centers, as well as student study rooms. The District has been working toward centralized academic support services since 2018 as part of its Strategic Plan Objectives to increase student success, with steady progress including the creation of a Tutorial services workgroup and [centralized program review](#). As a result of the new building and increased collaboration between services, foot traffic for all support services has increased as students seek out places to study, work on homework, or even simply wait between classes. The [Educational Support Services Department reports](#) that the new location provides an opportunity to maintain a warm and open environment that attracts students while encouraging these students to log in for tutoring when appropriate. The new location provides increased space to host programs and groups from across the campuses. For example, the General Tutorial area allows athletic teams to conduct their team study hours. Now that the educational support services are located in the same building, they are strongly connected and provide improved collaboration between services.

### **Student Support Services**

Access to student support services is available at all three District campuses as well as online. Student support services are conveniently clustered for ease of access on the Visalia campus. The Welcome Center is the starting place for students to guide them to the appropriate service. Support services include Admissions and Records, Financial Aid, Academic Counseling, Welcome Center, Assessment Center, Access and Ability

Center, Veterans Resource Center, Extended Opportunity Programs and Services, CalWorks, the Cooperative Agencies Resources for Education program, Health Center, Transfer and Career Center, TRiO Upward Bound Math and Science program, Foster Youth NextUp, Giant Marketplace, Mental Health Counseling and the Student Success Program.

Service	Location/s	Purpose
<b>Mental Health Counseling</b>	Student Health Center Visalia Campus – Health Center Online SilverCloud	The mission of the mental health counseling program is to provide students with research-informed, ethically sound, and culturally sensitive mental health services. Mental health supports students by providing a safe environment for them to enhance their self-awareness, interpersonal skills, and personal development.
<b>Admissions and Records</b>	Visalia Campus – Sequoia 107 Tulare College Center – Building A Hanford Educational Center – The Hub	The Admissions and Records Office helps students from the beginning of their journey when they initially apply to COS to the end when they are applying for graduation. The office also helps with applications, residency, transcripts, grades, registration, petitions, concurrent High School enrollment, evaluation of outside transcripts, and graduation applications.
<b>Veterans Resource Center</b>	Visalia Campus – Sequoia 106 Tulare College Center Hanford Educational Center  Counseling Services are offered throughout the semester as needed. Training has been provided to Hanford Student Services Staff to assist veterans on the Hanford Campus and will be offered to staff in Tulare.	The Veterans Resource Center is committed to assisting student veterans in their transition to college by providing services that address their academic, social and physical needs as well as supporting retention and student success. In addition, the VRC is committed to assisting active-duty personnel and dependents in reaching their educational goals.
<b>Extended Opportunity Programs and Services</b>	Visalia Campus – Sequoia 10 Tulare College Center – Twice a month Hanford Educational Center – Twice a month Appointments offered in-person and via Zoom	The Extended Opportunity Programs and Services (EOPS) at College of the Sequoias is dedicated to recruiting and successfully retaining college students of educationally and socioeconomically challenged backgrounds from Kings and Tulare Counties. The primary purpose of the EOPS program is to prepare students to transfer to a four-year university, and/or complete an associate's degree or vocational certificate to acquire career-related skills to attain employment as a result of their educational experience.

<p><b>Transfer and Career Center</b></p>	<p>Visalia Campus – Sequoia 9</p> <p>Transfer and Career Counseling Services are offered on all three campuses. With one full-time counselor on the Visalia Campus and another full-time counselor that splits their time between Visalia, Tulare and Hanford.</p> <p>Two Coordinators are housed on the Visalia campus. They support and host career services events and transfer workshops in Hanford and Tulare several times each semester.</p> <p>Online Self-Guided Canvas Courses: Resume, Cover Letter, Interview Prep, and Transfer 101. A Transfer Ready Canvas Course is being developed and will be available fall 2024</p>	<p>The Transfer and Career Center is dedicated to empowering students in their academic and professional journeys. The Center provides comprehensive support for resume and cover letter development, interview preparation, career exploration, and seamless transfer processes. The Transfer and Career Center’s mission is to equip students with the tools, resources, and guidance they need to make informed decisions about their education and careers, ultimately helping them achieve their goals and reach their full potential.</p>
<p><b>CARE</b></p>	<p>Visalia Campus – Sequoia 10 Tulare College Center – Twice a month Hanford Educational Center – Twice a month Appointments offered in-person and via Zoom</p>	<p>Cooperative Agencies Resources for Education Program (CARE) at COS serves EOPS students who are transitioning from receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) to becoming more economically self-sufficient. CARE students receive additional benefits including a CARE unmet need, transportation grant, and school supplies.</p>
<p><b>NextUp</b></p>	<p>Visalia Campus – Sequoia 155 Tulare College Center – Twice a month Hanford Educational Center – Twice a month Appointments offered in-person and via Zoom</p>	<p>The NextUp program, also known as CAFYES (Cooperating Agencies Foster Youth Educational Support) at COS is designed to serve current and former foster youth. NextUp services include all EOPS benefits in addition to NextUp unmet needs, meal, nutrition, and transportation grants.</p>
<p><b>CalWORKs</b></p>	<p>Visalia Campus – Sequoia 10 Appointments offered in-person and via Zoom</p>	<p>The California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids Act (CalWORKs) program provides students who are currently receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) cash aid with coordinated student services such as academic counseling, work study, childcare, and advocacy. The goal of CalWORKs is to guide students through a successful educational journey that will help them achieve long-term self-sufficiency.</p>

<b>Financial Aid / Work Study</b>	Visalia Campus – Sequoia 105 Tulare College Center – Building A – Student Services Hanford Educational Center – Vocational Ed Building	The financial aid office administers a robust program of grants, loans, and employment opportunities to support students in meeting their college expenses. Staff are available at all three campus locations to assist students with FAFSA and CADAA applications, financial aid questions, and work study needs.
<b>Trio, Upward Bound, Math and Science Program</b>	Visalia Campus – Alpine Building	The Trio Program provides services for 67 students from 4 targeted high schools (Lindsay, Orosi, Woodlake, Farmersville). The goal of Trio is to prepare students for their college journey by offering STEM opportunities to explore and learn who they want to be. Staff consists of a Director, a specialist, and two tutors who participate in outreach events, Saturday sessions, field trips, and after-school tutorial sessions.
<b>Access and Ability Center</b>	Visalia Campus – Lodgepole 105 Tulare College Center – Building A Hanford Educational Center – Vocational Ed Building  Students can receive specialized counseling and various support services, including the ability to request their authorized accommodations, on any of our three campuses as well as online.	The Access and Ability Center (AAC) advocates for equal access to opportunities for student success. AAC envisions a college experience that is supportive, engaging, and barrier-free.  The AAC provides eligible COS students with a variety of support services designed to maximize access to education. Students providing verification of qualifying conditions may be eligible for services such as extended testing time in a distraction-reduced setting, note-taking assistance, equipment loans (e.g., digital recorders, smart pens), audiobooks/ electronic text, enlarged print, learning assessments, sign language interpreters and/or other services.
<b>Counseling</b>	Visalia Campus, Sequoia 103, Hanford Educational Center, Hub in the Vocational Education Building, Tulare College Center Appointments offered in-person and via Zoom.	The purpose of counseling is to help students succeed in their studies through self-evaluation, decision-making, careful planning, and commitment. We offer face-to-face appointments at all three campus locations and online counseling services.
<b>Articulation</b>	Visalia Campus, Sequoia 9	The articulation and transfer office is focused on student access, equity, and success and on establishing pathways for students transferring to four-year colleges and universities through articulation agreements.

<b>Student Success Program</b>	Visalia Campus, Sycamore 107, Moro 112, Educational Support Services, 126 Hanford Educational Center, Education 65 Tulare College Center, Building B, 214	The Student Success Program is funded through Student Equity and Achievement funds and serves the District’s disproportionately impacted students through dedicated success coordinators and program counselors. The Giant Dream Center and HBCU Pathway program are embedded into the Student Success Center.
--------------------------------	---	--

In an ongoing effort to continuously evaluate and improve programs and services within Student Services (as well as the District as a whole), each area participates in or utilizes data from five major processes for assessment and improvement. These include Institutional Program Review, the biennial Student Support Services Survey, annual program-specific surveys, annual service area outcome development and assessment, and annual review of the program actions that drive District Objectives within the Annual Report on the Master Plan. In addition, several areas including Extended Opportunity Programs and Services, CalWorks, and NextUp have advisory boards that provide valuable feedback and guidance that is used in the annual evaluation process.

Student Services units participate in the program review process, which allows each area to report on their progress with service area outcomes as well as the actions that drive the District Objectives as outlined in the Strategic Plan. Each unit uses data and feedback derived from the biennial [Student Support Services Survey](#) and annual program-specific surveys provided on a program-by-program basis to set outcomes and actions for the subsequent year. The program review process is tied closely to the resource allocation process as set forth in the District’s Resource Allocation Manual. When a request for additional resources is granted through the resource allocation process, the unit includes an evaluation of its effectiveness in the subsequent program review, considering how the resource helped their program in pursuit of the District Objective it was designed to support. This final evaluation closes the loop on that particular resource allocation.

Orientation and Counseling services are designed to assist students in achieving their educational goals through the full educational journey, from matriculation through enrollment and beyond. Local high school students and their families are invited to participate in Preview Night, which provides information on COS pathways and programs. The high school priority registration process, STEPS, provides case management for students through the matriculation process from recruitment to enrollment. [Giant Days](#) follows this event, serving as a face-to-face orientation on all three campuses. An online orientation option is also available. Once students complete the matriculation process, the Student Success program case manages students throughout their time at COS, supporting student retention and success.

The Student Success and Support Program initiative, focused on student matriculation (orientation, assessment, counseling, and follow-up services), allows the District to increase and more systematically serve first-time students entering college. Data on the District’s disproportionately-impacted student populations was used to start the Student Success Program, funded through Student Equity, Basic Skills, and Student Success and Support programs. Student Success centers are located on all three campuses and services are available to Distance Education students through a designated Student Success Coordinator. Data from the [Student Success Program](#) indicates an increase in student success for the District’s diverse student population.

The District's work toward continuous improvement and equitable student support led in January 2024 to the opening of the [Giant Marketplace](#) and [Giant Threads](#) storefront, physical shopping locations on the Visalia campus designed to support students' basic needs. [Giant Marketplace](#) houses the District's Giant Pantry, which provides food support as well as assistance with benefit applications at locations in Visalia, Hanford, and Tulare. [Giant Threads](#) provides a mobile closet with free, professional interview clothing in support of students, as well as a storefront on the Visalia campus. The Giant Threads mobile facility holds events on all three campuses, where students can receive tailoring from the fashion program and select new, professional clothing at no cost.

The District meets the Standard and Eligibility Requirements. The District is committed to equitable and effective services and programs that support students in their educational journeys and align with the District's Mission.

**2.8. The institution fosters a sense of belonging and community with its students by providing multiple opportunities for engagement with the institution, programs, and peers. Such opportunities reflect the varied needs of the student population and effectively support students' unique educational journeys. (ER 15)**

The District provides multiple opportunities for student engagement in alignment with the Mission and reflecting the needs of its diverse student population. The District provides formal and informal opportunities for students to engage with the institution, programs, and peers. The co-curricular and [athletics](#) programs are aligned with the Mission and designed to improve the educational experience for students. The quality and effectiveness of these programs are assessed and evaluated through the program review process.

Student Activities and Affairs hosts [44 active student clubs](#) with options available for students on the Visalia and Tulare campuses. Club options reflect the varied needs of students. For example, Tulare clubs such as Ag Business and AG Council focus on students enrolled in Agricultural programs at that campus and provide opportunities for travel and networking. Clubs such as MEChA, Puente, and the Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers provide professional and cultural options for Hispanic students. Clubs and activities are evaluated through program review and service area outcomes. For example, [Student Activities and Affairs](#) achieved the following service area outcomes in 2023-2024:

- Hired student worker in Tulare to assist the Student Services Director in student engagement events
- Added ID printers for Giant Days to increase the number of ID cards processed
- Successfully recruited African American students for leadership classes and senate positions
- Met with Athletic Director to collaborate and schedule tailgates for various teams
- Club advisor training was well attended and a new club funds application was created

The District regularly offers Career-focused events and activities for students. For example, the annual [Entree to Employment](#) event is a dinner and networking event that connects students with industry partners. Twenty-two industry partners and forty students attended the 2023 event, and qualitative feedback from students and industry partners was used to evaluate the event's success. For example, a commercial music student was offered an internship as a result of attending the event and is now an on-air host with Spirit 88.9, a local radio station.

The District provides student support and learning services programs and offers a wide variety of co-curricular programs, events, and activities that engage participants and keep students involved on campus while enhancing the overall student educational experience. Co-curricular programs include: student clubs and organizations, intercollegiate athletics, theatre, pep band, jazz band, symphonic band, chamber singers, art exhibits, a guest lecture series, diversity and heritage celebrations, honors societies such as Alpha Gamma Sigma, and the Agriculture Department and Ag Council which sponsor numerous student competitions. The District has a process for [how to start a club](#), organize the officers and membership, and run meetings. Student clubs are governed by the Student Senate's Inter-Club Council under the supervision of the director of Student Activities and Affairs. At the beginning of each semester, the Inter-Club Council organizes and sponsors the Club Rush event to welcome interested students.

The Intercollegiate Athletic Department includes ten women's and eight men's sports. The Athletic Department participates in the Central Valley Conference for most sports and the Northern California Football Alliance for football. The department undergoes a comprehensive athletic review process every five years, performed by the Central Valley Conference in accordance with California Community College Athletic Association (CCCAA) guidelines. Giant athletic teams and athletes are successful in state sports competitions as well as in the classroom. The Athletic Department places a heavy emphasis on student athlete academic success and has invested significantly in strategies for increasing student success. Based on the assessment and evaluation of the Student Equity Plan, the District found that many of the disproportionately-impacted students were also student athletes. In order to increase student success and equity, the District placed a Student Success Center in the Athletic Department. A full-time Student Success Coordinator works directly with the cohort of student athletes. Student athletes successfully earn degrees and certificates at a rate higher than the general student population. For example, in 2023-2024, 199 COS student athletes earned either a degree or certificate. 167 associate degrees were issued to these students in addition to 56 certificates for a total of 223 awards earned. The District is very proud of our student athlete success both on and off the field. In 2023-24, COS won six conference championships and Men's Basketball was the State Runner-ups. We are very proud of alumnus, [Quincy Hall](#), who recently won the 400-meter championship at the 2024 USA Olympic Trials and representing Team USA in Paris at the Olympics, won the Gold medal in the 400-meter.

The [Athletics Philosophy](#) reflects a commitment to student success and to the community. For example, the Athletics department regularly offers [camps](#) and clinics for community members in order to prepare future students for college-level athletics and provide enrichment opportunities to the District's service area. For example, the athletics department hosted several youth camps in basketball, football, track and field, swimming, soccer, volleyball, baseball, dance, and cheer. More than one thousand local participants attended these camps in 2023-2024.

The District's Fine Arts Division has several successful co-curricular programs. The Theatre Department presents several productions featuring a combination of students and community members annually. Students in the Theater Program participate in various regional competitions and have been acknowledged for several awards. The Art Gallery on the Visalia campus serves as the venue for showcasing student art and for hosting community art exhibits. The Music department offers regular concerts and events as well as community participation in choral and band ensembles. The District is extremely proud of the Fine Arts response to the pandemic that allowed faculty, students, and community members continued access to the arts. In 2021-2022, the [Theatre Department](#), with support from the District and the COS Foundation, held two outdoor productions. Shakespeare's "*Much Ado About Nothing*," consisted of nine outdoor performances on all three District campuses, which required completely moving the set, lighting, and sound for each show. In May 2022, *Beauty and the Beast* was performed outdoors in the Visalia campus quad with 600 community members in attendance on opening night and over 1100 attendees on each of the two

following nights. All productions were provided free to the community. There were 75 students involved in the events, allowing continued essential hands-on learning for our students.

In addition to events for athletics and the arts, the District offers activities and events throughout the year including a guest speaker series, heritage and diversity celebrations, a Veterans Day celebration, equestrian shows, and several campus open house community events. For example, as part of the District's [HBCU Pathways](#) program, in 2023 the District hosted an [African American Celebration](#) for High School Seniors and College Students. The event was hosted to recruit current high school seniors as well as acknowledge the college's Black/African American Students who were degree and certificate awardees and featured more than 500 guests, a live band and choir led by COS professors Dr. Charles Parker, and a keynote speech from author Glen Bowie.

The District has policies and procedures that govern the requirements for students to participate in co-curricular activities. The District also has information on how to receive co-curricular funding. Funding for co-curricular activities comes from three primary sources: District funds, auxiliary funds distributed by the Student Activities and Affairs Office, and proceeds from fundraising events. Strict fiscal controls are in place related to club and team fundraising, expenditures, and travel. The [Club Advisor Handbook](#) provides the steps required to spend club funds and advises the groups. The District is committed to offering meaningful opportunities for students to participate in co-curricular activities while ensuring that they are well-organized, funded, and supervised.

The District meets the standard. The District fosters a sense of belonging and community with its students by providing multiple opportunities for engagement with the institution, programs, and peers that are reflective of the District's Mission and the needs of its students and community.

**2.9. The institution conducts systematic review and assessment to ensure the quality of its academic, learning support, and student services programs and implement improvements and innovations in support of equitable student achievement. (ER 11, ER 14)**

The District has a well-established process for defining and assessing Student Learning Outcomes in academic, learning support, and student service areas. Outcomes assessment is ongoing, systematic, and used for continuous improvement in support of equitable student achievement. Disaggregated data is incorporated in program review, Institutional Learning Outcomes Assessment, and Institutional Planning to ensure support of equitable student achievement.

Outcomes are defined for courses, programs, general education patterns, the institution, and service areas. Learning outcomes are composed and updated as necessary by faculty who are content-area experts during the regular process of curriculum review. Courses and programs are reviewed and updated, at minimum, once [every five years](#). Student Learning Outcomes are part of the official course outlines of record for each course, available online on the Outcomes and Assessment Committee [website](#), listed on course syllabi, and available to view when students search for courses in the online course schedule. Program Level Outcomes are published in the COS Online Catalog as part of program descriptions and are also available on the Outcomes and Assessment Committee website. General Education Learning Outcomes and Institutional Learning Outcomes are created and reviewed by the General Education and Outcomes and Assessment Committees, are published in the [Online Catalog](#), and are available on the Outcomes and Assessment Committee website. Service Area Outcomes are developed based on specific department needs and analysis in program review, as well as on feedback from student surveys. Service Area Outcomes are recorded in the assessment management software (Nuventive Improve).



District outcomes are documented in Nuventive Improve, which is the central hub for outcomes assessment and program review. Student Learning Outcomes, Program Level Outcomes, and Service Area Outcomes are regularly scheduled for assessment on a three-year cycle and are systematically assessed at least once every three years, with cycles and reminders set using the Improve system. The Outcomes and Assessment Coordinator assists faculty with assessment training and resources. The coordinator produces an assessment [currency report](#) at the beginning of the fall and spring semesters and presents this report to the Outcomes and Assessment Committee and Instructional Council as a reminder of which outcomes are due for assessment each year. Reports of learning outcome assessments can be accessed through the assessment report link on the Outcomes Assessment [website](#). The institutional program review process ensures that requests for resources are tied to program assessment or District Objectives, and program review requires a report of progress on program assessment. Improve allows Student Learning Outcome assessment to be mapped up to Program Level Outcomes, and all assessment progress is reported as part of [program review](#).

Prompts within program review require an overall assessment of outcome achievement, changes based on outcome achievement, and an evaluation of the outcome cycle itself for all modes of delivery. Service area outcomes follow the same structure as Student Learning Outcomes and are also monitored as part of program review. In support of continuous improvement, in 2022 the District convened a [task force](#) to review the Assessment Management System. This group set priorities for improvement, including ease of use and an ability to directly link learning outcomes to resource requests in program review. Although it was previously an option to link outcomes assessment to resource requests, system limitations required this to be completed manually, and, as a consequence, it was rarely used. The task force recommended an update to Nuventive Improve, and system migration was completed in spring 2024. Updated system features now allow [in-system mapping](#) of Program Learning Outcomes to resource requests, strengthening the alignment of assessment results with the implementation of innovation and improvement in program review.

Program Level Outcomes are mapped to the District's ILOs. ILOs are assessed on a [five-year cycle](#) with assessments designed and monitored by the Outcomes and Assessment Committee. ILO assessments are triangulated to include multiple measures and use direct and indirect assessment methods. Survey items addressing each ILO were developed by the Outcomes and Assessment Committee and initially included in the [Student Support Services Survey](#), last distributed in spring 2023. Each ILO is also assessed using direct measures. For example, in 2021 faculty assessed the [Life Skills ILO](#) by reviewing outcome criteria, creating or identifying related assignments, providing sample student work, developing an outcomes rubric and assessing assignment samples. A summary of the District's ILO assessments is posted on the Outcomes and Assessment Committee website. Survey results related to ILOs are disaggregated by subpopulations of students and addressed in assessment reports.

Recommendations based on prior assessments led the Outcomes and Assessment Committee to update the survey process to focus more specifically on COS graduates, and in spring 2024 the committee began development of a [new exit survey](#) to support assessment of updated ILO/GELOs. The committee will pilot this new survey in fall 2024 and plans to update it over time with additional questions designed to support the assessment of learning outcomes in specific academic programs.

As part of the work on assuring academic quality and institutional effectiveness, the Outcomes and Assessment Committee, which is a subcommittee of the Academic Senate, monitors the development and assessment of Student Learning Outcomes as well as provides training for faculty, staff, and administrators related to the assessment of learning outcomes. [Service Area Outcomes](#) are reviewed by area managers through the program review process. For example, in their 2023 program review, the [Student Success](#)

[Program](#) described the need to better assist non-AB540 students to achieve their academic goals as well as to identify students who fall through the cracks due to their documentation status. Through this process, the Student Success Team identified a Student Success Coordinator to serve this student population and to serve as the liaison to bring in free legal services. Additionally, the team identified space for a Dream Center, which is strategically located next to the ESL Language Center in the Educational Support Services Building.

Disaggregated data analysis is incorporated throughout the District's assessment, Institutional Program Review, and planning processes. Program review incorporates [data dashboards](#) with disaggregated data based on disproportionately impacted groups. In addition, District dialogue about disaggregated learning and achievement data informs institutional goal-setting. For example, in fall 2023 the District began development of its next ten-year Master Plan. The [development process](#) included robust review and discussion of student equity and achievement data, resulting in recommendations to incorporate equity throughout the four Master Plan Goals.

The District meets the standard. The District has robust and well-established processes to conduct systematic reviews and assessments to ensure the quality of its academic, learning support, and student services programs and implement improvements and innovations in support of equitable student achievement.

### Standard 3: Infrastructure and Resources

*The institution supports its educational services and operational functions with effective infrastructure, qualified personnel, and stable finances. The institution organizes its staffing and allocates its physical, technological, and financial resources to improve its overall effectiveness and promote equitable student success. The institution actively monitors and assesses resource capacity to inform improvements to infrastructure and ensure long-term health and stability.*

- 3.1. The institution employs qualified faculty, staff, administrators, and other personnel to support and sustain educational services and improve student success. The institution maintains appropriate policies and regularly assesses its employment practices to promote and improve equity, diversity, and mission fulfillment. (ER 8, ER 14)**

The District has demonstrated policies and practices in place to ensure that there is a sufficient number of qualified personnel to maintain effective and efficient College operations. The District's [Integrated Planning Manual](#), [Governance Manual](#), [Resource Allocation Manual](#), and Board Policies and Administrative Procedures provide the structure and method for hiring qualified employees and ensuring that there are sufficient staff to manage operations. The Mission is the foundation for all planning processes, and District Goals and Objectives are central to resource allocation. In the cycle of integrated planning, resources are allocated based on their connections with District Goals, service area outcomes, student learning outcomes, and/or District Objectives.

The [Faculty Obligation Number](#) is analyzed annually to determine any unmet need for faculty positions. The process for funding and prioritizing faculty hires is codified in the [Administrative Procedure](#) for Submitting and Ranking Tenure Track Faculty Vacancies and the [Administrative Procedure](#) for Submitting and Ranking Student Services Instructional and Non-Instructional Faculty. Requests for faculty positions are part of the Institutional Program Review process where divisions provide data and evidence to determine the need for new or replacement full-time faculty. Divisions participate in a ranking process and prioritized requests are forwarded to Instructional Council (for academic faculty) or to Student Services Council (for Student Services faculty). The Instructional Council and Student Services Council consider program review data and department-specific data on efficiency and success and, following a robust discussion, vote on a prioritized ranking. These prioritized lists are submitted to the Vice Presidents of Academic Services and Student Services for review and submission to the Superintendent/President. The Superintendent/President presents the final prioritized list for all tenure-track faculty positions to [District Governance Senate](#).

For staff and management positions, Senior Management determines the funds available for personnel requests. Personnel requests are part of the annual Institutional Program Review process as identified in the [Board Policy](#) for Institutional Program Review which "provide a rationale or context for resource requests." As established in the Administrative Procedure on requests for personnel, budget augmentations, facilities and/or equipment, Senior Management conducts a review of classified, management, and confidential staffing requests generated from [Institutional Program Review](#). Program review includes an analysis of evidence of the need for additional or replacement personnel for each unit and ties the need to District Goals and Objectives. For units that do not participate in Institutional Program Review, new positions are requested through Senior Management Council when deemed necessary for furthering the District's Master Plan or Strategic Plan, and according to the procedures set forth in the [Management Handbook](#).

Through a [participatory governance process](#) including Instructional Council or Student Services General Council, area Vice Presidents and the Superintendent/President compile a prioritized list of requests within their area and develop a written rationale that is based on criteria and evidence which links to outcomes

and/or District Objectives. For example, the [Instructional Council](#) meets in the fall and each division presents their classified staff requests as identified in program review and prioritized by their division.

Instructional Council members vote and develop a final prioritized ranking of positions that is submitted to the Vice President of Academic Services. The Vice President presents the prioritized list that includes any recommended changes to Senior Management Council in March and ultimately to the Superintendent/President. The Superintendent/President then finalizes the prioritized list after the Governor's May revise budget proposal is available, and the new positions are built into the following year's [budget](#).

The District ensures the quality of its personnel through clear and rigorous standards for hiring. Planning processes for the District ensure that the Mission is central to developing positions. Procedures for selection of personnel are clearly and publicly stated within four hiring procedures documents available through Human Resources: Management Hiring Procedures, Faculty Hiring Procedures, Confidential Employee Hiring Procedures, and Classified Employee Hiring Procedures. These [procedures](#) are also codified in the COSTA Master Agreement and in the Academic Senate faculty hiring agreement with the District. These procedures are regularly reviewed and updated to ensure currency and relevancy. For example, the [District](#) and the [Academic Senate](#) convened a task force to update the [faculty hiring procedures](#) with the goal of highlighting our commitment to equal employment opportunity and equity in hiring which approved and finalized in fall 2024.

The District's employee hiring procedures and guidelines ensure the employment of highly qualified individuals who are knowledgeable in their specific area, who are skilled in performing the essential functions of the job, and who can assist in the effort to foster overall District effectiveness.

In addition, the Board of Trustees, represented by the administration, has the legal and public responsibility for ensuring a fair and effective hiring process. To that end, it is the District's philosophy that the responsibility for selecting well-qualified individuals involves the effective participation of appropriate personnel in the required phases of the hiring process.

To ensure that the District hires employees who are qualified to support and sustain educational services and improve student success, the District follows the hiring procedures for the position. These procedures follow a robust process to recruit, interview and select qualified employees. Job descriptions are reviewed and revised as necessary to ensure that minimum qualifications, job duties, and requirements are clearly stated. Human Resources reviews applications to ensure applicants meet minimum qualifications. Candidates participate in interviews and a job-specific simulation activity, such as a teaching demonstration. Final candidates are forwarded for a second level interview with the Superintendent/President, area administrator and other hiring committee members as designated by the hiring procedures.

Faculty job descriptions are developed by area faculty, Human Resources, and the area Vice-President. Job descriptions include a description of the position; the minimum qualifications required for the position; desirable qualifications for the position; information on courses to be taught if hired; academic responsibilities associated with being a District faculty member including responsibility for teaching and learning, curriculum oversight and the assessment of student learning outcomes; academic and work experience needed for the position; and the requirement that the faculty member, if hired, must have knowledge of and commitment to working with students of diverse backgrounds in accordance with the Mission. Faculty degrees must be from accredited institutions and applicants claiming equivalency must follow the [Administrative Procedure](#) for Equivalency prior to interviewing.

Pursuant to the classified collective bargaining agreement, representatives from the California School Employees Association (CSEA) and the Human Resources office collaborate to develop classified job descriptions. Job descriptions typically include a description of the position, minimum qualifications, duties, conditions of employment, working conditions, screening procedures, and the application procedure. As provided for in the [CSEA Master Agreement](#), new classified positions can be established only after agreement is reached between the District and the classified bargaining unit.

The [Management Handbook](#) contains information on the recruitment and selection of management employees. When a management position becomes available, the supervisor responsible for the position works jointly with the Human Resources Office to develop a job description. Job descriptions include basic function, representative duties, required knowledge and abilities, education and experience, and application procedures.

The [Confidential Employee Handbook](#) contains information on the recruitment and selection of confidential employees. When a confidential employee position becomes available, the supervisor responsible for overseeing the position works jointly with the Human Resources Office to develop a job description. [Job descriptions](#) include basic function, representative duties, required knowledge and abilities, education and experience, and the application procedure.

Position descriptions are reviewed and updated as necessary by Human Resources staff, Senior Management, the hiring supervisor, unions, and the hiring committee members. The Senior Management team is responsible for determining the position qualifications in accordance with Title 5 requirements and the District Mission for management positions. Human Resources works with faculty hiring committees to draft the job announcement. The faculty hiring committee determines the relevant discipline to define the minimum qualifications as set by the California Community Colleges and any additional qualifications.

The District develops and maintains policies and practices to support its diverse personnel. The District maintains [Board Policy](#) on Equal Employment Opportunity and [Administrative Procedure](#) on Equal Employment Opportunity to codify the District's efforts to build a community in which opportunity is equalized and to foster a climate of acceptance with the inclusion of faculty and staff from a wide variety of backgrounds. In support of this goal, the Human Resources Office administers an [Equal Employment Opportunity Plan](#) (EEO) according to the Administrative Procedure.

The District's [EEO Plan](#) is the primary document guiding the recruitment and hiring of diverse personnel. The District's EEO Plan states that *"taking active and vigorous steps to ensure equal employment opportunity and creating a working and academic environment, which is welcoming to all, will foster diversity and promote excellence."* In order to encourage a diverse candidate pool, the District requires an equity narrative as part of the application process for all positions and includes an equal opportunity statement on all advertised positions. The equity narrative was added in lieu of a diversity statement in 2022 based on feedback from the Equal Employment Opportunity Advisory Committee to improve the depth of responses and the ability of hiring committees to assess candidates' commitment to student equity.

The EEO Plan includes regular assessment of the District's workforce and applicant pools. Annual reporting is provided to the Superintendent/President, and data related to workforce and applicant pools are regularly updated and reported as part of the [EEO Plan](#). The Human Resources Office tracks and evaluates employment equity and diversity through annual EEO certification reporting using data from the Chancellor's Office Datamart and NEOGOV.

The District meets the Standard. The District employs qualified faculty, staff, administrators, and other personnel to support and sustain educational services and improve student success. The institution maintains appropriate policies and regularly assesses its employment practices to promote and improve equity, diversity, and Mission fulfillment. The criteria, qualifications, and procedures for the selection of personnel are clearly and publicly stated and address the needs of the institution serving the student population. Management hiring procedures, faculty hiring procedures, confidential hiring procedures, and classified employee hiring procedures are published in respective documents located on the Human Resources website. Each job description and job position flyer accurately reflect position duties, responsibilities, and authority.

**3.2. The institution supports its employees with professional learning opportunities aligned with the mission and institutional goals. These opportunities are regularly evaluated for overall effectiveness in promoting equitable student success and in meeting institutional and employee needs.**

The District plans and provides opportunities for the professional development of personnel through its governance and institutional planning processes. The District affirms its commitment to professional development in Goals 3 and 4 of the [Master Plan](#), which state that the District will strategically tailor and implement academic programs and student services that match the unique needs of its student population and the demands of ongoing changes in workforce development; additionally, the District will engage in best practices and staff development to sustain effective operational systems for institutional assessment and continuous improvement. The District evaluates and assesses progress toward these Goals through related District Objectives. The District plans and provides professional development opportunities primarily through employee groups, such as the Faculty Enrichment Committee, Professional Association of Classified Employees (PACE), and Management and Instructional Councils. The [Professional Learning Plan](#) was created in 2022 in response to District Objective 4.3.1 which serves as a guiding document for District-wide professional development.

The Human Resources Department provides general onboarding information for new employees. [New Faculty Orientation](#) occurs during Convocation week through a series of workshops provided by FEC, Academic Senate, COSTA, COSAFA, and Academic Services. Additional orientation occurs at the division and department level as developed by the relative dean and division chair. PACE provides [Classified Employee Orientation](#) annually to onboard and support new classified employees.

Managers participate in the Management Institute and individual orientation as organized by their respective Vice President. Employee following handbooks provide additional details and guidance on employee rights, responsibilities, and expectations:

- [Management Handbook](#)
- [Confidential Employee Handbook](#)
- [Master Agreement for Classified Employees](#)
- [Master Agreement for Full-Time Faculty](#)
- [Master Agreement for Adjunct Faculty](#)

The Faculty Enrichment Committee is charged with communicating available professional development activities for faculty and for approving and tracking enrichment activities for faculty FLEX hours. Full-time faculty are required per the [Master Agreement for Full-Time Faculty](#) to earn 20 hours of FLEX Program activity hours per academic year. Faculty are provided with professional development opportunities through FEC and can earn FLEX through additional activities as approved by FEC. Adjunct faculty and staff are also

invited to participate in FEC workshops. FEC offers workshops in response to faculty interest in various topics, as measured in the [2021 Giant Questionnaire](#), a District-wide survey of faculty, administration, and classified staff. In addition, full-time faculty can access a conference fund to attend specialized training and conferences for professional development. There is an additional budget available for adjunct faculty professional development.

Classified staff are provided with professional development opportunities through PACE workshops. These [workshops](#) address topics such as job skills, employee health, and morale. PACE also hosts events that promote unity and support collaborative engagement amongst District employees. Faculty are also invited to participate in PACE workshops; all District employees are invited to PACE events.

Professional Development for managers and other administrators is provided through the Management Council, the Deans Council, and at the annual [Management Institute](#). For example, the Management Institute is a multi-day workshop that includes opportunities for leadership development and management planning. Managers are also supported throughout the year via membership and attendance at state-wide meetings including the Community College League of California, the California Community College Chief Instructional Officers, Chief Business Officer, Chief Information Systems Officers Association, Chief Student Services Officer conferences, and the Association for California Community College Administrators (ACCCA). Managers are also supported through attendance at the ACCCA summer institute for new Administrators.

Professional development programs are evaluated through the Institutional Planning Process, with annual reports on the Strategic Plan Objectives and actions related to professional development. Professional development opportunities are assessed through an [evaluation form](#) that is distributed to participants following workshops or training sessions. This process is used to evaluate and improve professional development programs. Overall satisfaction with opportunities for professional development is also measured as part of the Giant Questionnaire.

In addition to the opportunities for professional development provided by employee groups, the Human Resources Office provides training opportunities for professional development using [Keenan and Associates SafeSchools](#) online training videos. These online training videos cover topics such as mandatory reporting, sexual misconduct, emergency management, employment practices, supervisory practices, environmental awareness and investigation, back injury and lifting, electrical safety, energy conservation, forklift safety, heat injury and illness prevention, Title IX and gender equity in athletics, workplace bullying, conflict management, copyright infringement, food safety, foodborne illnesses, pandemic flu, arson awareness, dating violence, hazing, and defensive driving. Human Resources also provides training on equity and hiring practices through the [Equal Employment Opportunity Advisory Workgroup](#).

The District meets the Standard. The District plans, provides, and systematically evaluates professional development for faculty, classified staff, and administrators through its Institutional Planning Process. Professional development workshops and programs are provided through the Human Resources Office, Faculty Enrichment Committee, Professional Association of Classified Employees, and Management Council, with regular and systematic input from District employees on the topics and format for professional development programs.



### **3.3. The institution evaluates its employees regularly, using clear criteria that align with professional responsibilities and reflect the institution's mission and goals.**

The District ensures that all personnel are evaluated systematically and at stated intervals. The District has established evaluation processes that include performance of duties, participation in appropriate activities, and areas for improvement. When improvement is recommended, the evaluation processes ensure that follow-up is appropriate and timely. The Board of Trustees recognizes that the evaluation of employees is an administrative responsibility and authorizes the administration to proceed with conducting regular and timely employee evaluations as prescribed within the applicable employee collective bargaining agreements. The Board of Trustees further recognizes that a highly successful District must have staff members who are competent in relevant areas. The goal of [evaluations](#) is to assist employees to improve in the performance of their duties with appropriate follow-up as needed.

The [Administrative Procedure](#) on employee evaluations states that the evaluation of District employees is conducted using guidelines in the employee's applicable collective bargaining agreement and further defines the criteria and the evaluation process for each of the bargaining units. The process and criteria for evaluation of [managers](#) and [confidential staff](#) are established through the personnel policies for managers and codified in the respective employee handbooks.

Staff, faculty, and administrators are evaluated regularly at stated intervals that are tracked and reported by the Human Resources Department. Human Resources staff notify the respective administrator when evaluations are due for adjunct faculty, staff, and administrators. The appropriate Vice President notifies full-time faculty and deans when faculty evaluations are due based on a schedule maintained by the Office of Academic Services. In assessing the evaluation process, the District found an area of improvement in the completion of staff evaluations. Based on this assessment, the District adopted the [NEOGO](#) management information system that provides automated notification to supervisors on staff evaluation timelines with reminders until the evaluation is completed. This has resulted in 100% completion of classified staff evaluations.

The philosophy and purpose of classified staff evaluation, as codified in the [CSEA Master Agreement](#), is to identify and commend effective performance; counsel and assist employees to improve performance; and appropriately document the basis for commendation and/or concerns of job performance. The criteria for evaluation and assessment of classified staff includes the performance of representative duties, maintenance of professional and effective attitude toward job performance, and observation of the employee's work product. Supervisors meet with staff members to discuss and provide recommendations and directions for improvement for each evaluation. Classified staff are evaluated on or before the sixth month of service. Staff are then evaluated annually or every two years, depending on their salary step, or more frequently as necessary.

The purpose of full-time faculty evaluations is to assess the performance of faculty in their respective roles at the District, to acknowledge outstanding performance, and to document performance that is not meeting expectations. The faculty evaluation process involves the assessment of the performance of faculty in teaching methods, materials, and effectiveness; non-classroom methods, materials, and effectiveness; and professional responsibility. Faculty develop an evaluation plan addressing each of these areas, which is reviewed by the area dean. The evaluation of instruction focuses on delivering the content in the course outline of record and the syllabus, or for counselors – a student educational plan. The faculty evaluation committee consists of two faculty members and the area administrator, each of whom conducts an observation and addresses the performance criteria as indicated in the evaluation plan. Faculty include student learning outcomes in their syllabi and participate in the Student Learning Outcomes assessment



cycle. Probationary faculty are evaluated annually while tenured faculty are evaluated every three years in accordance with California Education Code. The evaluation process for probationary faculty includes a meeting of the evaluation committee. Based on the feedback and [evaluation](#), the area supervisor provides recommendations for improvement.

The [adjunct faculty performance evaluation](#) is designed to improve the quality of instruction, enhance academic growth, promote professionalism, and assess performance. Evaluations include a classroom observation, a student evaluation questionnaire, a self-evaluation, and an administrative response. Adjunct faculty are evaluated during the first semester of employment and at least once during every six semesters, with more frequent evaluations scheduled by the appropriate administrator if necessary. The area supervisor provides final feedback and improvement plans and timelines as needed.

Management and confidential employee evaluations serve as an opportunity for feedback on work quality, overall work performance, work behavior, strengths and weaknesses, supervisor's perceptions, and how to improve and enhance performance. Managers and confidential employees are evaluated on an annual basis through a [three-step process](#) that includes goal development, mid-year self-assessment, and year-end evaluation. The supervisor provides feedback and critique through the evaluation which culminates with recognizing achievements and accomplishments, measurable progress or improvements in performance, discussion of strengths and weaknesses, and guidance and suggestions for improvement.

The District stores completed evaluations for full-time and adjunct faculty in Banner. Classified staff and Management are stored in NEOGOV.

The District meets the Standard. The District has processes in place to ensure that evaluations lead to improvement in job performance. Evaluations for employees are tracked and updated by Human Resources and Academic Services to ensure evaluations are completed on a timely and regular basis. Evaluation criteria are jointly established by the employee group and the District to ensure that evaluations accurately reflect the effectiveness of personnel in the performance of duties.

### **3.4. The institution develops, maintains, and enhances its educational services and operational functions through the effective use of fiscal resources. Financial resources support and sustain the mission and promote equitable achievement of student success. (ER 18)**

The District ensures that there are sufficient financial resources to support, sustain, and improve student learning programs and services while ensuring on-going fiscal stability. The District's Institutional Planning Process provides the avenue for budget development and resource allocation that ties directly to the Mission, Goals, and Objectives that improve institutional effectiveness. The District prioritizes financial resources in adherence to the resource allocation process and is committed to maintaining balanced budgets in the General Fund Budget and other Restricted Budgets to ensure financial stability.

The District's budget development process begins by defining the existing base budget, determining any additional financial resources available, and, through the governance process, enhancing programs and services by allocating additional budgets for faculty, staff, and discretionary needs, all while maintaining a healthy fund balance. The [Resource Allocation Manual](#) guides the budget development process and monitoring of financial resources.

The [financial resource allocation cycle](#) begins with program review. Institutional [Program Reviews](#) are completed for academic departments, divisions, and administrative units. Divisions, departments and units have the opportunity each year through program review to request one-time above-base resources, and/or

new staffing positions, to improve student learning, improve effectiveness, and further a District Goal or Objective. For example, in 2023-2024 the Biology Department via program review, requested a textbook set for one of the core courses Biology 30 to provide access for students at no cost which increases student equity. This request was ranked by the Budget Committee and resources were provided for Biology to purchase the textbooks. The impact will be assessed in the following year's program review. Above-base resources and new staff positions are granted through the defined governance processes outlined in the [Resource Allocation Manual](#), [Integrated Planning Manual](#), and [District Governance Manual](#).

The Vice President of Administrative Services and fiscal staff prepare and work with the Budget Committee to refine a [Fiscal Solvency Projection](#). The budget and fiscal solvency projections are shared through the participatory governance structure annually and presented to the [District Governance Senate and Budget Committee](#). In addition, budget information is presented during the District Governance Senate meetings held at each district location allowing for information and feedback from campus constituents. When finalized, the fiscal solvency projection is presented to the Board of Trustees as part of the [Tentative and Final Adopted Budget](#). The fiscal solvency projection includes revenue and expenditure increases and decreases that are expected two years from the current budget year based on the Governor's May revise and final budget assumptions. This projection assumes no growth in future years to create a conservative analysis. This planning enables the District to ensure fiscal solvency and stability in future years. Base budget allocations (proposed department/division budgets) are distributed in February each year, including divisions, departments, grants/categorical, and service areas, for the unit's input regarding budget account distribution.

Divisions, departments, and units request ongoing Base Budget Augmentations for discretionary budgets annually, as defined in the [Administrative Procedure](#) on Requests for Personnel, Budget Augmentations, Facilities, and/or Equipment. For example, in 2023-2024, the [Biology Department](#) requested funding for increased lab supply costs in order to add essential Biology classes in the Tulare College Center. These additional classes allow students in Tulare access to required major courses in Allied Health. The request was approved and the department will assess the enrollment and success of the new classes.

The District prepares the Tentative and Final budget annually, starting with establishing budget assumptions following the Governor's proposed January State Budget, with input from the Budget Committee and campus constituents. This information is presented at the [Budget Committee](#) and [District Governance Senate](#).

Occasionally, large one-time unrestricted resources/funds become available to the General Fund. Through the District's Resource Allocation Manual, the President/ Superintendent and Vice President of Administrative Services meet to draft an expenditure proposal that addresses the needs District-wide. The proposal is initially reviewed by Senior Management and then sent to Budget Committee for review, revision (if necessary), and approval. There the proposal goes to District Governance Senate for review and approval. Lastly the Superintendent/President will take to the Board of Trustees for review, revision (if necessary), and approval. Once the Board of Trustees approves, Fiscal Services will make the transfers to the respective departments.

The following reports are presented quarterly or annually to the Board of Trustees and to the Budget Committee to report fiscal status and budget changes, providing transparency and accountability:

- [Quarterly Budget Accountability Reports](#)
  - Year-End Budget versus Actuals Analysis Report
  - Year-End Actual Expenditures/Revenues Report
- [Quarterly 311 Financial and Budget Reports](#)
- [Final Budget Book Fiscal Year 2023-2024](#)
- [Annual Financial and Budget Report](#)

Additional transparency and accountability are documented in various communications, such as annual notifications to the bargaining units and regular revenue and expenditure projection presentations to the [Budget Committee](#) and the [Board of Trustees](#).

The District meets the Standard. The District has established an Integrated Planning Model that guides all planning, and the Resource Allocation Manual that guides resource allocation planning. The foundation of this planning is the base budget, which is rolled into the following year's budget development. The budget development process involves input from governance groups and constituents and ensures that financial resources are sufficient to support and sustain instructional programs and services, and to improve institutional effectiveness. The annual allocation of resources supports the development, maintenance, and enhancement of programs and services. Governance participation and constituent input, as well as frequent reporting, allow for managing the District's financial affairs with integrity and in a manner that ensures financial stability.

**3.5. The institution's mission and goals are the foundation for financial planning. Financial information is disseminated to support effective planning and decision-making and provide opportunities for stakeholders to participate in the development of plans and budgets.**

The District's Mission and Goals are foundational to the Master Plan, the Strategic Plan, and the Annual Budget. The Model of Integrated Planning guides the District in decision-making at each level. The [Mission](#) serves as the foundation of all planning processes because it describes the intended student population and the services the District provides to the community. The Master Plan relies on data to help identify challenges and opportunities and to explain how the District intends to address these challenges. The [Strategic Plan](#) delineates the data from the Master Plan and provides shorter-term Objectives that are completed within a three-year cycle.

For example, the Mission states: *"Help our diverse student population achieve their transfer and/or occupational objectives; support students' mastery of basic skills, and provide programs and services that foster student success."* The [Final Budget Book](#), shows explicit links from the Mission, Master Plan Goals, and Board Priorities to the Resource Allocation Philosophy which is designed to support student success.

Annual resource allocations follow the District's resource allocation processes depicted in the [Resource Allocation Manual](#) (RAM); they are linked to the District Mission, Goals, or Objectives which are presented to the Board of Trustees and the Governance senates through the participatory governance process. According to the RAM, there are different methods by which units can ask for additional resources. The [first](#) is via a unit's program review process to request staffing or above-base funds, the [second](#) is by requesting ongoing base-budget increases. For units that complete a program review, staffing requests are ranked by the respective service area committee (Instructional Council or Student Services Council) or by the area administrator (Vice President of Administrative Services or President).

The above-base requests are ranked by the Budget Committee utilizing five criteria as defined in the [RAM rubric](#). The rubric criteria include an [analysis](#) of how the funding request links to a District Objective.

Units that are granted resources are required to complete an assessment of how the resource has assisted them in meeting a District Objective or program/unit action plan. For example, in the [2022-2023 Welding Program Review](#), the department requested \$50,000 for new lab equipment in order to expand quality control training for welding students. In the following [above-base assessment survey](#), the department reported increased program enrollment and completion and positive employer engagement and feedback.

Board Policies and Administrative Procedures provide the processes that ensure sound financial practices (authorizations, fiscal management, bids, and contracts, etc.) and financial stability (minimum fund balance, budget management, audits, etc.). The District reviews and revises Board Policies and Administrative Procedures every five years through an established governance cycle process. [Chapter 6 – Business and Fiscal Services Policies](#) is scheduled for review in 2025-2026 through the participatory governance process.

Financial information is disseminated regularly throughout the District using the following methods:

- [Budget forums](#) are presented during the District Governance Senate meetings held at each district location allowing for information and feedback from campus constituents. All constituents are invited to review the budget assumptions and resulting anticipated District budget and to provide input.
- Changes in working budget are presented each month to the [Budget Committee](#) as well as to the [Board of Trustees](#)
- [Quarterly Finance reports](#) (CCFS 311's) are presented to the Budget Committee and the Board of Trustees
- [Budget Adoption](#) is presented to all senates and Budget Committee each fall, and [Budget Development and Assumptions](#) are presented to numerous constituent groups each spring.
- [Tentative](#) and [Final Budgets](#) link new resource allocations with District Goals, Objectives, and Strategic Plans

The District's clearly defined processes for planning and budget development allow for constituents to provide input and feedback. The District's processes for financial planning and budget development are defined in the Resource Allocation Manual. The District begins the budget development process following three major principles: 1) balance ongoing expenditures with ongoing revenues, 2) maintain a minimum of no less than an average of two months of total unrestricted and restricted general fund operating expenditures as recommended by the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office and six percent reserve for economic uncertainties, and 3) fund all expenditures in the nondiscretionary base, such as contractual obligations. As noted in the RAM, there is a [timeline and process](#) for base budget development. The District adheres to the following steps:

1. The basic allocation for each service area is based on the prior year's budget.
2. Carry-over funds are granted if the need is tied to a District Objective and approved by the service area administrator.
3. The basic allocation may be adjusted based on decisions about requests coming from the four service areas in regard to base budget augmentations and staffing requests.

The integrated planning processes and participatory governance structure ensure that constituents have appropriate opportunities to participate in the budget planning processes.

For example, the Budget Committee has an ongoing responsibility to review the budget assumptions and report the changes and status of the budget to the District Governance Senate. The budget assumptions guide the allocation of resources. The Budget Committee receives the initial draft of budget assumptions based on the Governor's January budget proposal. The committee reviews and revises these budget assumptions through discussion at [Budget Committee](#) meetings. As noted in the Integrated Planning Manual, there is a variety of information that is considered when developing the budget assumptions, including District Goals (Master Plan) and District Objectives (Strategic Plan); priorities identified through program review; mandates from external agencies; and status of long-term obligations. These budget assumptions are then used to build the draft budget presented at District Budget Forums and then used to build the Tentative Budget in June.

The basic allocation for each department or division is based on that service area's prior year budget. A department or division can make budget changes by the following:

- Requesting additional staff (Program Review)
- Requesting one-time above-base resource allocations (Program Review)
- Requesting ongoing discretionary base budget augmentations (budget augmentations process)

In addition, units can reallocate their base budget to more appropriate budget account lines. Managers of each area/unit may complete the Base Budget Adjustment Justification form and request a budget re-allocation. For example, the Technology Department requested a reallocation of the budget between object codes for student software agreements.

To support participation in the budget planning processes, the District provides [training](#) on Above-Base Resource Request annually. In addition, the District holds budget forums during the District Governance Senate meetings held at each district location allowing for information and feedback from campus constituents.

The Budget Committee reviews and revises budget assumptions that guide budget development, monitor the District's fiscal solvency, and make recommendations to the District Governance Senate on policies, planning, and other matters related to fiscal resources. The Committee oversees the budget development process, including making [recommendations](#) for Above-Base Funds and the District's Faculty Obligation Number. Final Budgets are presented at the District Governance Senate, Academic Senate, Instructional Council, Student Senate, and Board of Trustees, and the following year's January budget proposal is presented to many constituent groups and to the Board of Trustees, allowing for further input and participation. Above-base allocations are presented and discussed annually at District Governance Senate for input and final approval and at Board of Trustees meetings for information.

Each year, the District analyzes the effectiveness of the budget development and resource allocation process through a [survey](#) disseminated to the Budget Committee members and units that received above-base resource allocations, regarding the above-base resource allocation process.

The District exceeds the Standard. The District has clearly defined and documented guidelines, timelines, and processes for financial planning and budget development as defined in the Resource Allocation Manual. The over-arching guidelines for resource planning and allocation are published in the Integrated Planning Manual. Budget assumptions and the budget development process are communicated widely to all constituencies, allowing appropriate opportunities for participation and feedback.

**3.6. The institution ensures the integrity and responsible use of its financial resources and regularly evaluates its fiscal outcomes and financial management practices to promote institutional mission fulfillment.**

The District's internal control structure ensures the financial integrity and responsible use of financial resources. The District regularly reviews the effectiveness of fiscal planning to ensure goals for student learning are met and to plan for future fiscal needs. The District's general ledger system for accounting, payroll, and purchasing is held in Ellucian (Banner) software and integrates a hierarchy approval system for requisitions and department budget transfers. In addition, the organizational structure is in place to ensure the separation of duties, especially involving position control, input of positions/timesheets, and payroll. An employee is only approved for input or access rights to various screens on the fiscal software system after review by the Chief Accounting Officer and Director of Budgets.

[Internal control mechanisms](#) include the following:

- A wet signature from the Vice President of Administrative Services is required for any purchase order of \$10,000 or more
- Only the Chief Accounting Officer, the College Accountant, and the Director of Budgets and Categorical Accounting can add/delete employees for approval in Banner
- The Chief Accounting Officer or the Director of Budgets and Categorical Accounting must authorize any journal entries under \$5,000 before posting to the general ledger
  - For journal entries over \$5,000, both must authorize before posting to the general ledger

[Monthly budget reports](#) are approved by the Board of Trustees with all changes to the current budget after being first reviewed by the Budget Committee. Budget Expenditure and Revenue Projections are presented to the [Board of Trustees](#) in the last two quarters of the year.

Annual audits and findings/recommendations are presented annually to the Board of Trustees and the Budget Committee. During the annual audit, any concerns the auditors have pertaining to internal controls (or lack thereof) are evaluated and discussed with constituent groups that may be affected. The District has had clean [audit results](#) for all internal control testing since 2011-2012.

To ensure fiscal controls and integrity in purchasing using the District's credit card, CalCard, the District's [CalCard Rules and Procedures](#) form documents the requirements for use of the CalCard, and each cardholder certifies compliance with the applicable rules. Signed forms are retained in Administrative Services. District managers and authorized staff utilize CalCards for a large number of discretionary budget purchases. All purchase-card expenditures are reviewed and authorized by the direct supervisor and by the Vice President of Administrative Services.

The District evaluates and assesses the resource allocation processes, including established internal controls, through the [Budget Committee's](#) annual assessment and annual revision of the [Resource Allocation Manual](#). District Governance Senate reviews recommendations made for improvements based on the annual assessment. Additional evaluation and assessment occurs as a result of any audit findings or concerns regarding internal controls, neither of which has occurred in the last five years.

The District reviews and updates the Business and Fiscal Services Board Policies and Administrative Procedures every five years.

The District's financial and internal control systems are evaluated regularly to ensure validity, effectiveness, and continuous improvement. Completion of the District's annual program review process allows Fiscal



Services to analyze and assess the unit's financial and internal control systems and implement action plans to improve processes. For example, fiscal services requested an increase to the auditing budget through the Base Budget Augmentation process in order to access new external auditors. External auditors ensure the District complies with all Federal, State and Local laws governing its resources. Additionally, Fiscal Services creates and assesses service area outcomes in the annual program review process and makes plans for actions to improve the outcomes. Fiscal Services staff review the District's written narratives of [internal control procedures](#) for each department annually in conjunction with the annual external audit. The District has received no financial or compliance [audit findings](#) since 2011, and no deficiencies or material weaknesses were identified in the District's internal control over financial reporting.

The District meets the Standard. The District regularly evaluates financial and internal control systems and processes, as do the external auditors. Any concerns or discrepancies are communicated and corrected. Financial integrity and responsible use of resources are assured through internal control structure and mechanisms, and through the District's policies and procedures. Financial information and processes are widely disseminated, and pertinent timely information is presented to the Board of Trustees regularly to guide the Board's decision-making. Regular evaluation occurs through annual evaluation of and revisions to the Resource Allocation Manual, annual financial and compliance audits, and review of the Business and Fiscal Services policies and procedures.

**3.7. The institution ensures financial solvency. When making short-range financial plans, the institution considers its long-range financial priorities and future obligations to ensure sustained fiscal stability. (ER 18)**

The District ensures financial solvency. The District has sufficient cash flow and reserves and has appropriate risk management strategies in place. When making financial plans, the District considers its financial priorities and future obligations and ensures sustained fiscal stability. In order to ensure sufficient reserves, the District has established [processes](#) to determine minimum reserves, as codified in the Resource Allocation Manual's [Base Budget Development Process](#), which requires two months total unrestricted and restricted expenditures minimum reserve. The District regularly meets or exceeds this minimum reserve. For example, the District closed 2022-2023 with over [28.83% General Fund Reserves](#). In 2021, the Board of Trustees adopted [priority seven](#), to *"ensure fiscal stability by providing timely updates to the Board on the state funding formula while maintaining a General Fund reserve no less than the current average for community colleges statewide."* The general fund reserve has consistently met or exceeded this goal and is above the statewide average for California Community Colleges.

Fiscal Services monitors actual and projected cash flows for the purpose of assessing cash and financial resources throughout the year. Cash and fund balance quarterly updates and revenue and expense projections are presented to the [Board of Trustees](#) and Budget Committee. [Quarterly Budget and Financial Reports CCFS-311Q](#) are presented to the Board of Trustees and show the actual fund balances and cash balances for prior years, and the projected fund balance and projected cash balance for the current year, for the unrestricted General Fund.

- [Accountability Budget Report](#)
- [Fiscal Year 2023-2024 Working Budget](#)
- [Fiscal Year 2023-2024 311Q](#)

The District has the option to use Tax Revenue Anticipation Notes or to borrow from a municipal lease offered by a local bank to meet financial emergencies. In the last five years, the District did not need any Tax Revenue Anticipation Notes or emergency loans. The District is in regular communication with a local bank if

short-term loans are needed for emergency purposes. Due to the District's sound fiscal control, it has consistently passed its [annual audit](#) without any findings or management letters, also known as an unmodified [audit](#). Utilizing one-time funds, the District's Other Post-Employment Benefits Trust is 100% funded as well as paying off the District's long-term debt with the exception of its SFID bonds.

The District undergoes an annual process to establish fiscal priorities and to address short-term and long-term fiscal planning. These plans include long-term liabilities and obligations, including debt, health benefits, insurance costs, and building maintenance costs. The District allocates resources to pay down long-term obligations such as Other Post-Employment Benefit obligations. During the annual [budget](#) development cycle, the District prepares a multi-year [fiscal solvency](#) projection based on realistic assumptions. The [fiscal solvency](#) plan is presented through the participatory governance structure each year to the Budget Committee, District Governance Senate, Student Senate, and the Board of Trustees. The District adopts a budget that allows for a balanced budget two years out, using known and realistic cost factor assumptions. Considering its long-range financial stability, the District budgets for increased Public Employees Retirement System (PERS) and STRS employer contribution costs one or two years in advance, to ensure fiscal stability in the near term.

Another long-range financial priority for the District is to fully fund its [Other Post-Employment Benefits Trust](#). The District has made great strides, and as of the January 11, 2024 Actuarial report, the District is fully funded by \$644,144.

Other long-term financial obligations could arise in building maintenance costs, health insurance costs, and other insurance costs. The District works to meet these obligations as follows:

- Total cost of ownership documentation is prepared and maintained by the Facilities Department. The District frequently allocates one-time funds to facility maintenance, such as the recent renovation of the District softball women's locker room and football locker room. Emergency or unexpected maintenance costs are funded with the Capital Projects fund, which receives annual revenues from development agency pass-through funds, and interest earned.
- Rising health insurance costs have been maintained by establishing a health insurance cap for all employee groups. If budget constraints arise at any time, the District can choose not to increase that cap.
- For property and liability insurance, and workers' compensation insurance, the District widely implements safety training to reduce experience modifiers, which can increase rates. The District maintains average ex-mods for both coverages (0.82 for Liability insurance, 0.83 for property coverage, and 1.2 for workers' compensation).

The District meets the Standard. The District has sufficient cash flow and reserves, has appropriate risk management strategies in place, and considers its financial priorities and future obligations to ensure sustained financial stability.

**3.8. The institution constructs and maintains physical resources to support and sustain educational services and operational functions. The institution ensures safe and effective physical resources at all locations where it offers instruction, student services, and/or learning supports.**

The District offers courses, programs, and learning support services at three primary locations: Visalia campus, Hanford Educational Center (built and opened in 2010), and Tulare College Center (built and opened in 2013).



To ensure sufficient physical resources at all locations, the District annually analyzes space inventory and facility needs through its [Five-Year Construction Plan](#), submitted to the Board of Trustees for action each year. At any given time, there are approximately 15 or more projects underway for the Visalia campus, and six or more each for the Tulare and Hanford centers, as seen on the [Facilities Activity Reports](#). Recent construction projects include the following:

- Visalia Campus
  - Sequoias Stadium and Track
  - University Center and Student Union
  - Education Support Services Building
  - Giant Marketplace
- Hanford Educational Center
  - Exterior Painting and Landscaping
  - Student Lounge Patio
  - Monument Sign/Digital Marquee upgrade
- Tulare College Center
  - Photovoltaic Project - Solar
  - Bookstore/Food Services Remodel
  - CTE Complex

The District’s Educational and [Facilities Master Plan 2015-2025](#) is the primary document guiding the District to ensure safe and sufficient physical resources at all District locations. This document identifies available facilities space inventory, enrollment projections on all campuses, and future instructional and facilities’ needs. The District is in the development process for the new facilities master plan for all three campuses which should be completed in fall 2024 to support the 2025-2035 Educational Master Plan.

A second resource is the District’s [Space Inventory](#) and [Condition Index by Facility](#), found in the California Community College Chancellor’s Office Fusion System. Every three years, the state assesses the conditions of facilities in the inventory and applies an index to rank/rate each building or facility regarding improvement or renovation needs. The District uses these ratings to prioritize facilities projects in its Master Plan with a focus on classroom upgrades.

The Facilities/Safety Council meets monthly to analyze and systematically evaluate the District’s facilities and facility-related safety. For example, the Council’s objectives for 2024 were to update and establish revision plans for all required Facilities and Safety Council documents and publications, and to continue to address any safety issues occurring within the District. For example, the following safety upgrades were identified and completed:

- District-wide installation of security cameras
- Updated hardware locking system
- Emergency radios

Scheduled maintenance projects are implemented annually based on state funding for physical plant and instructional support. The annual funding provides timely repair and maintenance of facilities: to correct and avoid health and safety hazards, to maintain an environment conducive to learning, to prevent the disruption of programs, and to improve the long-term cost-effectiveness of facility operations. Additionally, it provides for unusual, non-recurring work to restore a facility to a safe and usable condition. Examples of projects completed through scheduled maintenance include:

- HVAC Unit Replacements
- Remodeling of Classrooms
- ADA – Concrete work

The District conducts regular internal facilities and conditions analysis for all rooms on all three District sites. This analysis includes repairs such as carpet, paint, or door hardware that are prioritized by the Facilities Department. In addition, faculty and staff can submit repair requests through the [Maintenance Direct Work Order](#) system. These two processes enable the District to provide consistent timely repairs and maintenance throughout all District facilities.

District personnel conduct analysis of physical resources through the Institutional Program Review process, which enables departments and programs to request above-base resource allocation for physical resource improvements or upgrades needed. Every year, a number of facilities above-base resource requests are granted. If projects are not funded through the above-base process, the project has the potential to be funded through [foundation grants](#).

The District’s property and liability insurance provider, the State Wide Association of Community Colleges (SWACC), performs an annual inspection of buildings and grounds for ADA compliance and safety issues. A [report](#) is generated from the inspections; it notes areas of concern or needed improvement. When areas of needed training are identified, the District provides safety training in cooperation with Keenan and Associates for the proper safety procedures following Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) guidelines and requirements. The District also implements its own regular online safety training for District staff through Keenan and Associates.

The District performs and documents regular safety systems testing, such as fire safety inspections, elevator inspections, and hood fume fire suppression inspections. The District’s safety technician oversees and coordinates facilities’ safety compliance tests and reporting as well as ADA facility’s accessibility needs and issues.

The District’s [Employee Safety Manual](#) and [Emergency Preparedness Handbook](#) are readily accessible to all staff and community members on the COS website. The Chief of Police serves as the District Safety Officer, and the Dean of Sciences serves as the District Chemical Safety Officer. New employees are [trained](#) on the safety issues relevant to their positions.

The District meets the Standard. The District’s planning, inventory maintenance, reporting, and safety testing and training contribute to safe and sufficient physical resources that support and ensure the integrity and quality of the District’s programs and services. The various resulting projects support the completion of the District Objectives, which support the District Goals in the Strategic Plan, and ultimately support and further the District Mission at all locations.

**3.9. The institution implements, enhances, and secures its technology resources to support and sustain educational services and operational functions. The institution clearly communicates requirements for the safe and appropriate use of technology to students and employees and employs effective protocols for network and data security.**

Technology Services implements, enhances, and secures technology resources in alignment with the District’s Mission. Resources support and sustain educational services and operational functions. The District clearly communicates requirements for safe and appropriate use of technology to students and employees.

The District's [Technology Services Plan](#) aligns technology planning, implementation, and maintenance with the District's Mission, Vision, Goals and Strategic Plan Objectives. The plan's guiding principles include the advancement of teaching, learning, and student support, and these principles are informed by the Mission and Vision. Each initiative in the plan is also crosswalked to District Objectives and regulatory requirements. In regular program review, Technology Services reports on outcomes progress related to plan initiatives. For example, in the [Technology Services 2023-2024 Program Review](#), the department reported progress on infrastructure updates enhancing the speed and flexibility of network resources.

The District regularly evaluates its technology infrastructure, including network security, to ensure ongoing effectiveness in supporting educational services and operations. Through the annual program review process, Technology Services addresses and analyzes the District's technology services, support, equipment, infrastructure, and hardware/software for adequacy and needed improvements, reflecting on the needs of the District and its constituents. The Technology Department develops service area outcomes, assesses and analyzes these outcomes annually, and reports progress in program review. For example, the [Technology Services 2023-2024](#) program review included an action to segment the Visalia campus network into seven distinct regions, in alignment with the goal to increase network security and performance. Security projects completed in 2022 include security service contracting for 24/7 monitoring and threat assessment, implementation of multi-factor authentication for staff and students, and successful completion of full disaster recovery testing.

The District communicates guidelines for appropriate use of its technologies to students and employees. The District's [Administrative Procedure](#) on Responsible Use of Information Technology outlines user rights and responsibilities at the District. Technology Services provides training and professional support for District employees through one-on-one meetings, informational emails on technology-related updates, and in-person and remote training on content management for the internal website system. For example, Technology Services maintains and provides users with a [manual](#) on basic security awareness and best practices.

The District's technology infrastructure is appropriate to support educational services and operations. The [Technology Committee](#), as part of the District's participatory governance structure, reports to the District Governance Senate on the appropriateness and adequacy of services, professional support, facilities, hardware, and software. The committee comprises representatives from all District constituent groups, including full- and part-time faculty, staff, administrators, and students as prescribed by the District [Governance Manual](#). The [committee](#) makes [recommendations](#) to the District Governance Senate on policies, planning, and other matters related to technology, prepares and monitors implementation of the Technology Plan, prepares an annual progress report on the Technology Plan, develops instructional technology standards, monitors compliance with policies related to technology, coordinates practices as needed related to technology, and serves as a forum for dialog on ongoing technology projects.

The District also evaluates the appropriateness of its resources through regular surveys. Both the Giant Questionnaire, a triennial survey of District Employees, and the Student Support Services Survey, a biennial survey of COS students, include questions related to user satisfaction with Technology Services. In the 2023 Student Support Services Survey, students reported the lowest satisfaction (77%) for wireless access on campus. In response to the survey, Technology Services has increased network access across all three campuses.

For example, the following improvements have been made to the Cafeteria/Alta Peak network in the six months since the surveys were submitted:

- During the Educational Support Services construction project, the Alta Peak building operated on temporary connections that flowed through Cedar. The building has since been reconfigured to use a direct and permanent connection. An additional access point was installed in Alta Peak over the summer.
- District-wide improvements were made in recent months to performance issues in all locations. This involved fine-tuning the equipment to operate more efficiently through concrete and plaster construction and adjusting the number and type of radios to minimize interference.

Performance tests after the abovementioned changes show a substantial 5-7x improvement over observed speeds last spring. Even during peak lunch hours, devices receive speeds on par with high-speed broadband connections (>100mbps speeds with low latency). These connections support video streaming, zoom sessions, and regular web browsing traffic.

The District meets the Standard. Technology Services regularly evaluates its services to meet the District's educational and operational needs and ensures technology resources are safe, appropriate, and secure.

**3.10. The institution has appropriate strategies for risk management and has policies and procedures in place to implement contingency plans in the event of financial, environmental, or technological emergencies and other unforeseen circumstances.**

The District has appropriate risk management strategies in place. Policies and Procedures at the District include contingency plans in the event of emergencies or other unforeseen circumstances. The District's emergency policies and procedures include financial, environmental, and technological emergencies. The District has sufficient cash flow and reserves and has appropriate risk management strategies in place.

To ensure sufficient reserves, the District has established policies and procedures to determine minimum reserves, as codified in the Board Policy on Budget Preparation, which requires a six percent minimum reserve. The District regularly meets or exceeds the minimum reserve established in the Board Policy. The District closed 2022-2023 with 30 percent General Fund Reserves. The Board of Trustees is working toward continued increases in the General Fund Reserve. The District's reserve exceeds that of [Board Priority #7](#) – *“Ensure fiscal stability by providing timely updates to the Board on the state funding formula while maintaining a General Fund reserve no less than the current average for community colleges statewide.”*

Fiscal Services monitors actual and projected cash flows for the purpose of assessing cash and financial resources throughout the year. Cash and fund balance quarterly updates and revenue and expense projections are presented to the Board of Trustees and Budget Committee. Quarterly Budget and Financial Reports (CCFS-311Q) are presented to the Board of Trustees and show the actual fund balances and cash balances for prior years, and the projected fund balance and projected cash balance for the current year, for the unrestricted General Fund.

The District has the option to use Tax Revenue Anticipation Notes or to borrow from a municipal lease offered by a local bank to meet financial emergencies. In the last five years, the District did not need any Tax Revenue Anticipation Notes or emergency loans. The District is in regular communication with a local bank if short-term loans are needed for emergency purposes.

The District has contracted with the Statewide Association of Community Colleges (SWACC Joint Powers Authority) for Property and Liability Insurance and with Tulare County Schools Insurance Group (TCSIG JPA) for Workers Compensation Insurance as a risk management strategy. The District also contracts with Self-Insured Schools of California (SISC III JPA) for health insurance benefits and coverage. All three Joint Powers Authority (JPAs) maintain appropriate reserves as a risk management strategy.

The District has policies and procedures in place that address contingency plans in the event of emergencies. The District's Emergency Response Plan addresses procedures to protect and govern employees, students, visitors, and children in childcare programs on its campuses and facilities in the event of an emergency, natural disaster, or the occurrence of a hazardous condition. This plan is described in District [Board Policy](#) and [Administrative Procedure](#) and is a confidential document available to first responders. District Police maintain an [Emergency Preparedness](#) website with relevant phone numbers, alert systems, evacuation procedures, and other related information for the public.

The District's Technology Services department has procedures in place in the event of technological emergencies. The District conducts annual Banner/System Disaster Recovery simulations to ensure recovery if its main system was compromised. In 2022, the Chancellor's Office and the District engaged in Cybersecurity Strategies along with funding to support districts. As a result, the District's information system(s) are more secure to include Single Sign-On and Multi-Factor Authentication. The District recently hired an IT Cyber Security Administrator whose job entails ensuring the security integrity of our Districts IT systems. In May 2023, the District had cybersecurity training at its [Management Institute Retreat](#).

The District's [Technology Plan for 2022-2025](#) included several initiatives in support of increased technological resilience and disaster recovery. For example, initiatives included the completion of Infrastructure cloud migration to support District and Technology Services' growing needs to comply with Disaster Recovery initiatives and the elimination of shadow systems/databases. Technology Services has moved critical infrastructure to the cloud and increased network security by hiring a Cyber Security Administrator.

The District meets the Standard. The District has appropriate risk management strategies in place, inclusive of Policies and Procedures outlining contingency plans in the event of emergencies or other unforeseen circumstances.

## Standard 4: Governance and Decision-Making

*The institution engages in clear and effective governance practices that support the achievement of its mission. Governance roles and responsibilities are delineated in widely distributed policies, and institutional decision-making processes provide opportunities for meaningful participation and inclusion of relevant stakeholders.*

### **4.1. The institution upholds an explicit commitment to principles of academic freedom, academic integrity, and freedom of inquiry. (ER 13)**

The District is committed to academic freedom, integrity, and freedom of inquiry. The [Board Policy](#) and [Administrative Procedure](#) on Academic Freedom explicitly identifies the District's commitment to academic freedom, integrity, and responsibility. This policy is regularly reviewed by District constituencies through the participatory governance structure. For example, in 2022 the Academic Senate reviewed Administrative Procedure 4030 and made recommendations to update the procedures for addressing Academic Freedom disputes. A Senate subcommittee reviewed policies from other Districts, made recommendations for changes, and the recommendations were then reviewed and approved by the [Academic Senate](#). These recommendations were then included in the update process for Board Policies/Administrative Procedure in spring 2024. The updated Administrative Procedure is being updated and reviewed through the governance process in fall 2024.

The District's policy on academic freedom is communicated to students through publication in the [COS Online Catalog](#). The District recognizes that protecting academic freedom is essential to achieving its Mission. The District further recognizes that academic freedom is included within the freedom of expression and is necessary for the pursuit of knowledge within academic disciplines. These freedoms are essential elements of teaching and student learning. For example, the District's [Code of Ethics](#) includes a responsibility to promote freedom of inquiry and expression for students in their pursuit of learning.

[Student standards of conduct](#) are published and communicated to students in the Catalog and include requirements for academic honesty. These requirements are also codified in the District's [Board Policy](#) on Standards of Conduct.

The District meets the Standard and Eligibility Requirements. The District maintains policies and procedures that affirm its commitments to academic freedom, integrity, and freedom of inquiry, and communicates those policies to students.

### **4.2. Roles, responsibilities, and authority for decision-making are clearly defined and communicated throughout the institution. The institution's structure for decision-making provides opportunities for stakeholder participation and ensures the inclusion of relevant perspectives.**

Roles, responsibilities, and authority for decision-making at the District are clearly defined and widely communicated through the District's [Governance and Decision-Making Manual](#). The District has established policies and procedures that provide the appropriate roles for administrators, faculty, staff, and students' participation in decision-making processes. The Governance and Decision-Making Manual describes and clarifies each [constituent group](#), their relative role and responsibilities, and appropriate checks and balances in actions required for decision-making. The administrative policy on participation in local decision-making describes the roles of faculty, the Board of Trustees, classified and confidential staff, and students.

The District's governance and decision-making processes ensure that administrators, faculty, and staff have substantive and clearly defined roles in institutional governance. Senates, committees, councils, task forces, and workgroups are defined in the District's [Governance and Decision-Making Manual](#) and have a substantial voice in District policy, planning and resource allocation processes. Board Policies and Administrative Procedures clarify administrator and faculty roles in governance. For example, policies addressing faculty purview in decision-making include the following:

- [Board Policies and Administrative Procedure Review](#)
- [Institutional Planning](#)
- [Participation in Local Decision Making](#)
- [Program and Curriculum Development](#)
- [Program Review](#)
- [Recruitment and Hiring](#)
- [Requests for Personnel, Budget Augmentation, Facilities and/or Equipment](#)

The District's Governance and Decision-Making Manual indicates that the [role of administrators](#) in making decisions is determined by the scope of responsibility and authority delegated to administrative positions through their job descriptions. In general, administrators are expected to provide leadership and overall administration in academic matters, financial planning and policy, and routine operations for their units. The Management Handbook states that the primary role of the administration is to serve, support and guide the campuses, divisions, departments, staff, faculty, and students. Administrators strive to provide effective, sufficient systems that are aligned with District Goals and Objectives.

Students participate in the development of recommendations to the Superintendent/President on issues that have a significant effect on them. The governance process defines specific matters identified as having a significant effect on students as delineated in Title 5 regulations such as grading policies, curriculum development, and Student Services planning and development. The Governance and Decision-Making Manual specifies membership for senates, committees, and councils – which includes student representation in the major decision-making bodies. In addition, the Board of Trustees includes a non-voting Student Trustee who is recognized as a full member of the Board and is entitled to participate in discussion of issues and receive all materials presented to Board members with the exception of closed sessions.

The District's Governance structure is continuously reviewed and modified as needed to ensure opportunities for stakeholder participation and inclusion. The District's [Administrative Procedure](#) on District Governance Structure and Manual Modifications describes how proposed changes to the governance structure may be recommended for review and discussion, as well as the annual review process for the District's governance manuals

The District meets the Standard. Roles, responsibilities, and authority for decision-making and clearly defined and communicated, providing opportunities for constituent groups in the District to participate in decision-making and provide relevant perspectives.



**4.3. The institution’s decision-making structures are used consistently and effectively. Institutional decision-making practices support a climate of collaboration and innovation that advances the mission and prioritizes equitable student outcomes.**

Decision-making structures at the District are clearly defined and are regularly and effectively used to support collaboration and innovation in alignment with the District’s Mission. The District’s Governance and Decision-Making Manual defines the structures and roles for decision-making and outlines [principles of participatory governance](#) that include Mutuality, Collegiality and Collaboration, Transparency, Representative Participation, Mutual Accountability, and Clarity of Roles. In alignment with the Governance Manual, the District’s [Model for Integrated Planning](#) allows individuals, departments, and divisions to bring forward innovative ideas that lead to the improvement of student learning and institutional effectiveness through the institutional program review process, outcomes and assessment process, and the strategic planning process.

The District holds itself accountable for implementing its decision-making practices consistently to ensure the inclusion of appropriate stakeholders and a shared understanding of decisions. The District’s Governance structure is continuously reviewed and modified as needed to ensure opportunities for stakeholder participation and inclusion. The District’s [Administrative Procedure](#) on District Governance Structure and Manual Modifications describes how proposed changes to the governance structure may be recommended for review and discussion, as well as the annual review process for the District’s governance manuals. In addition, the District’s [Board Policy](#) and [Administrative Procedure](#) on Policy and Administrative Procedures review ensures that District Policies and Procedures are regularly reviewed and that any employee, student, or member of the public may either initiate a review of any policy/procedure or propose a new one. For example, in 2023 as the District reviewed its policy on Pass-No Pass, staff members in Veterans requested a policy update to allow expanded use of Pass-no Pass grading to support credit for prior learning petitions. This policy request was reviewed by the [Curriculum Committee](#), who suggested language changes to align with Title 5 guidelines. It was subsequently reviewed and amended by the [Academic Senate](#), where the amended language was added to clarify that P/NP could be assigned by faculty to courses as appropriate. The resulting [policy](#) changes reflected input from all stakeholder groups in support of expanded access to P/NP for students.

The District’s Decision-making practices result in decisions that support institutional innovation and advance the District’s Mission in support of equitable student outcomes. The District’s [Integrated Planning Manual](#) describes planning at the District and the ways its constituent groups contribute to planning efforts. As documented in the manual, planning at the District proceeds from the District’s Mission. For example, the District Goals set during the development of the master plan articulate how the District intends to address current and anticipated challenges and guide the allocation of district energies and resources by serving as the basis for short-term plans (Strategic Plans and Institutional Program Reviews) that are developed during the 10-year term of the master plan. In 2024, the District began development of its next [10-year Master Plan](#) following the development process specified in the planning manual. The District established a [Master Plan Task force](#) to oversee the timeline and development process. The task force and IPEC assigned various sections to the appropriate responsible parties and provided feedback on drafts of each chapter. Responsible parties collaborated with faculty, staff, and students in their respective areas for input and discussion. In an interactive process, the drafts were then shared District-wide as well as during a [Master Planning Summit](#). The Master Plan will be completed in fall 2024.

Data gleaned from the Student Support Services Survey along with feedback from constituents, including discussions at Academic Senate, indicated that food insecurity was a rising concern for students, exacerbated by the pandemic. Through the resource allocation process, the decision was made to provide resources to



increase access to food and social services. Significant resources were allocated to construct the new Giant Marketplace which provides a welcoming space for students to access food and social services resources. Basic Needs data and Giant Marketplace information was presented at the [January 2024 Board Retreat](#).

The District meets the Standard. The District regularly evaluates its decision-making practices and makes improvements when needed to improve effectiveness, holds itself accountable for effectively implementing its decision-making processes, and uses its decision-making model to support a climate of collaboration and innovation with the goal of achieving equitable outcomes for students.

**4.4. Acting through policy, the governing board takes responsibility for the overall quality and stability of the institution, and regularly monitors progress towards its goals and fiscal health.  
(ER 7)**

The District's Board of Trustees, acting through policy, takes responsibility for the overall quality and stability of the District, and regularly monitors progress toward the District's Goals and its financial health. The District's [Board of Trustees](#) establishes policies consistent with the District's Mission to ensure the quality, integrity, and improvement of student learning programs and services. The Board of Trustees has ultimate responsibility for:

- Monitoring institutional performance and educational quality
- Setting prudent, ethical, and legal standards for District operations
- Assuring the fiscal health and stability of the District

The Board of Trustees establishes Mission-consistent policies to ensure the quality, integrity, and improvement of student learning programs. The guidelines for establishing and reviewing [Board Policies and Administrative Procedures](#) ensure that policies are consistent with state and Board of Governors regulations and are necessary to the efficient operation of the District's Board Policies and Administrative Procedures are regularly reviewed by the Superintendent/President and Senior Management to remain current and to ensure compliance with state and federal law. Board Policies and Administrative Procedures are [reviewed](#) on a six-year cycle, guided by annual updates from the Community College League of California's Board Policy and Procedure Service. Board Policies and Administrative Procedures are published on the District [website](#) and are chaptered by their area of emphasis. Covered areas include the District, the Board of Trustees, the General Institution, Academic Services, Student Services, Business and Financial Services, and Human Resources.

The Board of Trustees has ultimate responsibility for monitoring institutional performance and educational quality. The District's Board of Trustees reviews and approves educational programs and curricula that have undergone the required approval processes, which include the departments, divisions, the Curriculum Committee, and Academic Senate. The Vice President of Academic Services presents new, modified, or deleted [curriculum](#) at Board of Trustees meetings for Board review and approval. Regular reports and presentations at Board of Trustees meetings by Academic Senate, division chairs, and other faculty keep the Board informed on student learning programs and services. For example, the Board of Trustees receives regular [compliance and progress reports](#) on the Student Success Scorecard and Institution-Set Standards and reviews progress on student achievement and learning.

The Board of Trustees closely monitors the financial resources of the District. At regular meetings, the Board of Trustees receives detailed [reports](#) on the District's current financial state, progress toward the attainment of specified financial goals, and projections concerning the District's ongoing financial viability. The Board of Trustees' standing Subcommittee on Budget/Finance is charged with carefully reviewing fiscal

matters for the District including the annual independently prepared external audits, the District's tentative and adopted annual budgets, and compliance with state and federal regulations. The Board of Trustees maintains sufficient cash reserves to meet all short-term obligations and to address any unforeseen emergency situations that may occur. In addition, adequate reserves are maintained in order to address long-term obligations to include funding of retiree future health benefits, vacation accruals, insurance deductibles, and the significant increases all districts anticipate to the employer contribution rate expenses for CalSTRS and CalPERS pension obligations. The Board of Trustees is responsible for the final payment of all bills. A budget is adopted in June after it has been developed by Administrative Services in consultation with appropriate governance bodies. The preliminary budget is presented to the Budget Committee of the District Governance Senate for information and input if necessary. The [final budget](#) is adopted by the Board of Trustees in September following the passage of the state's final budget.

For example, the Board of Trustees fulfilled a need for program expansion on the Tulare College Center through a fiscally responsible combination of one-time funds and General Obligation Bonds (GO Bonds). In November 2008, Tulare Area Improvement District #3 passed Measure J authorizing the District to sell up to \$60 million in GO Bonds to fund voter-approved capital projects. The last GO Bond issue to access project funding was completed in June 2016. The District had \$22.8 million in authorized GO Bonds but was unable to access them due to the lack of tax rate capacity in the 2038-2040 range.

However, the District's new financial advisor and its new underwriter worked with the County of Tulare and identified an important tax component that allowed the District to issue the remaining \$22.8 million and stay within the legal limits of \$25 per \$100,000 assessed value.

The District, utilizing the Master Plan 2015-2025, the Tulare Facility Master Plan, and the Resource Allocation process contributed one-time funds towards the construction of the CTE building. This proposal and plans followed District guidelines for approval via participatory governance (Senior Management, Budget Committee, District Governance Senate, and Board of Trustees). The total [CTE project budget](#) was 36.1 million, with 22.8 million funded by GO Bonds and 13.3 million funded by District one-time funds.

The District meets the standard and Eligibility Requirements. Board Policies and guidelines ensure the authority and responsibilities of the Board of Trustees include responsibility for the overall quality and stability of the institution, and the Board of Trustees regularly monitors progress towards its goals and the fiscal health of the District.

**4.5. The governing board selects and evaluates the institution's chief executive officer (CEO). The governing board gives the CEO full authority to implement Board Policies and ensure effective operations and fulfillment of the institutional mission.**

The District's Board of Trustees selects and evaluates the District's Superintendent/President and delegates to that role the full authority to implement Board Policies and ensure effective District operations in fulfillment of the Mission. The District's Board of Trustees adheres to clearly defined [Board Policies](#) in selecting and evaluating the District's Superintendent/President. These policies align with applicable regulations, including Title 5 of the California Code of Regulation and the California Education Code. The [Administrative Procedure](#) on Superintendent/President Selection and the [COS Management Handbook](#) outline the process for selection and the base job description for the position. The Board of Trustees may designate an outside consultant to work directly with the Board to oversee the search process to fill the Superintendent/President position in the event of a vacancy. The [search committee](#) includes two different panels comprised of members of District governance groups and appropriate representatives from the community. The search committee reviews application materials, conducts initial interviews, and makes recommendations concerning all aspects of the search process. The Board of Trustees interviews finalists in

closed session, and the final selection is announced in open session and voted on for approval pursuant to Title 5 and relevant Government Code regulations. For example, in fall 2017, following the announcement of the retirement of the Superintendent/President, the Board of Trustees hired a consultant to assist with the search process. The Dean of Human Resources, in collaboration with the Board of Trustees and Search Consultant, presented the detailed hiring process and solicited [input on the job description](#) from participatory governance groups. The Board of Trustees adopted a hiring process consistent with what is used for hiring senior-level managers and assigned appropriate members to the two hiring committees.

The Superintendent/President's contract includes a provision for annual evaluation to be conducted by the Board of Trustees. The [Board Policy](#) on Evaluation of the Superintendent/President outlines the expectations for evaluation. The evaluation process begins in the spring semester of each academic year as the Superintendent/President prepares and submits a Midyear Progress Report for the Board of Trustees. This report includes a status update on the progress being made on each of the annual Board priorities. In addition, each Board of Trustees member completes a Midyear Review of the Superintendent/President and submits an individual evaluation review to the Board President. The Board of Trustees engages in a comprehensive discussion/analysis of this progress during Closed Session at their regular meetings in the spring. The Board of Trustees' evaluation of the Superintendent/ President's work is measured, in part, on progress in achieving the Board priorities.

As the evaluation process continues through the spring, the Board of Trustees solicits input/feedback from Vice Presidents and other members of Senior Management Council. Board of Trustees meet in [Closed Session](#) during the spring months to discuss the Superintendent/President's performance in conjunction with the written/verbal feedback being presented. The Board of Trustees reaches a consensus on commendations and recommendations and prepares a written feedback summary to review with the Superintendent/President to clarify all expectations and information.

The Board President completes the annual evaluation process no later than June 30 by preparing a written summary letter of evaluation and meets personally on behalf of the full Board of Trustees to present and review this information with the Superintendent/President. Both the Board President and Superintendent/President sign this evaluation letter, and all other Board members provide their initials as evidence of completion of the final evaluation letter. This letter is then placed in the Superintendent/President's personnel file in Human Resources.

The District's Superintendent/President has primary responsibility for the quality of the District. Consistent with the Board Policy on Delegation of Authority, the Superintendent/President reports to the Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees delegates executive responsibility for administering the policies adopted by the Board of Trustees and executing all decisions of the Board requiring administrative action. The [Governance and Decision-Making Manual](#) describes that the Board of Trustees determines the Superintendent/ President's role and authority in governance and decision-making.

The Board of Trustees delegates full authority to the Superintendent/President, who in turn has responsibility for oversight of District operations and the autonomy to make decisions without interference. Per the District [Board Policy](#) on Delegation of Authority, trustees specifically agree to participate in the development of District policy and strategies. [Board duties and responsibilities](#) include the delegation of power and authority to the chief executive to effectively lead the District.

The District meets the Standard. The Board of Trustees adheres to existing policies when evaluating the performance of the Superintendent/President and appropriately holds them, as their sole employee, accountable for all District operations. These practices have effectively empowered the

Superintendent/President to manage the operations of the District and provide a structure by which the Board holds the Superintendent/President accountable.

**4.6. The governing board functions effectively as a collective entity to promote the institution’s values and mission and fulfill its fiduciary responsibilities. The governing board demonstrates an ability to self-govern in adherence to its bylaws and expectations for best practices in board governance. (ER 7)**

The District’s Board of Trustees functions effectively as a collective entity to promote the District’s Mission and fulfill its fiduciary responsibilities. The Board of Trustees sets and follows clear annual priorities, demonstrating an ability to self-govern in adherence to its policies and procedures, including adherence to a Code of Ethics and conflict of interest policies.

The District’s Board of Trustees abides by a [Code of Ethics](#) that ensures high ethical standards of conduct for members, including the exercise of authority “*only as a board*” and that all Board members support majority decisions, regardless of their individual interests. Board of Trustees meetings are conducted in accordance with standards codified in the Ralph M. Brown Act, ensuring Board members may engage in a thorough discussion before taking final action on an item, transparency in agendas and discussion, and that Board members receive all [materials](#) well in advance of meetings. Once a decision is made, Board Policies and Standards of Practice ensure the full Board of Trustees supports the decision. The Board’s commitment to high standards and acting as a whole is reflected in the Board Policy [Code of Ethics/Standards of Practice](#). The policy states that Board members recognize that legal and effective functioning is by the Board as a whole. Further, the policy states, “*When speaking to members of the public, Board members should always clarify whether they are speaking as a member of the Board or as a private citizen.*”

The governing Board demonstrates support for its own policies and procedures by ensuring they are carefully followed. The Board of Trustees ensures that Board Policies and Administrative Procedures are regularly [reviewed](#) so that they are current and align with state and federal laws. The District’s Board of Trustees consistently acts in accordance with its policies and procedures. New Board members participate in a comprehensive [orientation](#), along with attending statewide trustee training to ensure a thorough understanding of their role as trustees, as well as an understanding of the Board Policies and Administrative Procedures pertaining to Board operations. For example, at its 2024 conference, the [CCLC](#) honored Board Member Cardoza for her twenty years of service to the COS Board of Trustees.

Board of Trustees meetings are conducted in accordance with Board Policy. [Regular](#) and [closed session](#) meetings as well as [special and emergency](#) meetings are conducted in accordance with Board Policies. [Minutes](#) and formal Board reports reflecting the actions of the Board are published after each meeting. The conduct of the meetings, meeting minutes, and Board reports demonstrate that the Board’s actions are consistent with its policies.

The Board of Trustees regularly reviews and evaluates its ability to function effectively, achieve priorities in alignment with the District’s Mission, and self-govern in adherence with best practices for Board governance. For example, in their [annual planning retreat](#) in January 2023, the Board discussed priorities for 2022-2023 and completed a self-evaluation in a closed session.

The District meets the Standard. The Board of Trustees functions effectively and collectively to set priorities in alignment with the District’s Mission, regularly evaluates its actions, engages in training to ensure best practices in Board governance, and adheres to its policies and procedures in conducting Board business.

## C. Required Documentation

### Standard 1: Mission and Institutional Effectiveness

Required Item	Documentation
i. Documentation of institution’s authority to operate as a post-secondary educational institution and award degrees (e.g., degree-granting approval statement, authorization to operate, articles of incorporation) (ER 1)	<a href="#">BP 2010 – Board Membership</a> <a href="#">ACCJC Accreditation Reaffirmation Letter</a>
ii. Procedures/practices for periodic review of mission/mission-related statements, including provisions for revision (if/when revisions are needed) that allow for participation of institutional stakeholders, as appropriate for the character and context of the institution	<a href="#">AP 1200 – Mission Statement</a>
iii. Documentation of the governing board’s approval of the institutional mission (ER 6)	<a href="#">Board of Trustees – Meeting Minutes for 03-08-2021</a>
iv. Procedures/practices for setting institutional goals, including provisions for the inclusion of input from relevant institutional stakeholders, as appropriate for the character and context of the institution	<a href="#">Integrated Planning Manual 2022</a>
v. Documentation that the institution has established standards and goals for student achievement (i.e., Institution-Set Standards), including but not limited to standards and goals for course success, degree and certificate attainment, transfer, job placement rates, and licensure examination pass rates, at the institutional and program levels (ER 2, ER 11)	<a href="#">Institution-Set Standards Presentation</a>

## Standard 2: Student Success

Required Item	Documentation
<p>i. Documentation that the institution’s practices for awarding credit reflect generally accepted norms in higher education, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commonly accepted minimum program lengths for certificates, associate degrees, and baccalaureate degrees</li> <li>• Written policies for determining credit hours that are consistently applied to all courses, programs, and modalities</li> <li>• Adherence to the Department of Education’s standards for clock-to-credit hour conversions, if applicable (ER 10)</li> </ul> <p>(See Commission <a href="#">Policy on Credit Hour, Clock Hour, and Academic Year</a>)</p>	<p><a href="#">BP 4090 – Unit/Credit Hour Configuration</a>  <a href="#">AP 4090 – Unit/Credit Hour Configuration</a></p>
<p>ii. Documentation that the institution’s transfer of credit policies include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any established criteria the institution uses regarding the transfer of credit earned at another institution</li> <li>• Any types of institutions or sources from which the institution will not accept credits</li> <li>• A list of institutions with which the institution has established an articulation agreement</li> <li>• Written criteria used to evaluate and award credit for prior learning experience including, but not limited to, service in the armed forces, paid or unpaid employment, or other demonstrated competency or learning</li> </ul> <p>See <a href="#">Policy on Transfer of Credit</a></p>	<p><a href="#">Transfer Policy</a>  <a href="#">BP 4235 – Credit for Prior Learning</a>  <a href="#">AP 4235 – Credit for Prior Learning</a>  <a href="#">AP 4050 – Articulation</a>  <a href="#">BP 4050 – Articulation</a>  <a href="#">2024-2025 Catalog – Transfer and External Exam Credit</a>  <a href="#">Transfer and External Credits</a>  <a href="#">ASSIST</a>  <a href="#">TES</a></p>
<p>iii. Documentation of the institution’s advertising and recruitment policies, demonstrating alignment with the <a href="#">Policy on Institutional Advertising and Student Recruitment</a> (ER 16)</p>	<p><a href="#">2024-2025 Catalog</a>  <a href="#">AP 5010 – Admissions</a>  <a href="#">BP 5010 – Admissions</a>  <a href="#">AP 5011 – Admissions and Enrollment of High School and Other Young Students</a></p>
<p>iv. Documentation of clear policies and procedures for handling student complaints, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evidence that these policies/procedures are accessible to students in the catalog and online;</li> <li>• Evidence that that institution provides contact information for filing complaints with associations, agencies and governmental bodies that accredit, approve, or license the institution and any of its programs</li> </ul>	<p><a href="#">AP 5530 – Student Rights and Grievances</a>  <a href="#">Catalog – Student Rights and Grievances</a>  <a href="#">Catalog – Accreditation Contacts</a>  <a href="#">ACCJC Complaint Process</a>  <a href="#">COS Complaint Process</a></p>
<p>v. Verification that the institution maintains files of formal student complaints received throughout the current accreditation cycle (i.e., since the last site visit), demonstrating:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accurate and consistent implementation of complaint policies and procedures</li> <li>• No issues indicative of noncompliance with Standards</li> </ul>	<p>No link required; to be verified by the team during in-person site visit</p>
<p>vi. Verification that student records are stored permanently, securely, and confidentially, with provision for secure backup</p>	<p>No link required; to be verified by the team during in-person site visit</p>

Required Item	Documentation
vii. Documentation of the institution’s policies and/or practices for the release of student records	<a href="#">BP 5040 – Student Records and Directory Information</a> <a href="#">AP 5040 – Student Records and Directory Information</a>
viii. Documentation that the institution’s policies and procedures for program discontinuance provide enrolled students with opportunities for timely completion in the event of program elimination	<a href="#">AP 4021 – Program Discontinuance</a>
<b>FOR TITLE IV PARTICIPANTS:</b>	
ix. Documentation of institution’s implementation of the required components of the Title IV Program, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Findings from any audits and program/other review activities by the U.S. Department of Education (ED)</li> <li>• Evidence of timely corrective action taken in response to any Title IV audits or program reviews</li> </ul> See <a href="#">Policy on Institutional Compliance with Title IV</a>	<a href="#">Financial Aid Annual Audit</a>
<b>FOR INSTITUTIONS WITH DISTANCE EDUCATION AND/OR CORRESPONDENCE EDUCATION:</b>	
x. Documentation of institution’s : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Procedures for verifying that the student who registers in a course offered via distance education or correspondence education is the same person who participates in the course and receives academic credit</li> <li>• Policies and/or procedures for notifying students of any charges associated with verification of student identity (if applicable)</li> <li>• Policies regarding protection of student privacy</li> </ul> See <a href="#">Policy on Distance Education and on Correspondence Education</a>	<a href="#">AP 4105 – Distance Education and Student Authentication Process</a> <a href="#">2025 ACCJC Accreditor’s Handbook and Review Guide</a>
<b>REQUIRED ONLY IF APPLICABLE</b>	
xi. Documentation demonstrating how the institution distinguishes its pre-collegiate curriculum from its college-level curriculum	<a href="#">Course Numbering System</a>
xii. Documentation of policies and/or procedures for awarding credit for prior learning and/or competency-based credit	<a href="#">AP 4235 – Credit for Prior Learning</a> <a href="#">BP 4235 – Credit for Prior Learning</a>
xiii. Documentation of agreements with other external parties regarding the provision of student and/or learning support services	<a href="#">NetTutor Agreement</a> <a href="#">Mental Health Agreements</a>
xiv. Policies and/or other documentation related to institutional expectations of conformity with any specific worldviews or beliefs	N/A



### Standard 3: Infrastructure and Resources

Checklist Item	Documentation
i. Written policies and procedures for human resources, including hiring procedures	<a href="#">BP 7120 – Recruitment and Hiring</a> <a href="#">AP 7120 – Recruitment and Hiring</a> <a href="#">Management Hiring Procedures Faculty</a> <a href="#">Hiring Procedures Confidential</a> <a href="#">Employee Hiring Procedures</a> <a href="#">Classified Employee Hiring Procedures</a>
ii. Employee handbooks or similar documents that communicate expectations to employees	<a href="#">COS Management Handbook</a> <a href="#">COS Confidential Employee Handbook</a> <a href="#">COSTA Master Agreement</a> <a href="#">COSAFA Master Agreement</a> <a href="#">CSEA Master Agreement</a>
iii. Annual financial audit reports - 3 prior years (include auxiliary organizations, if applicable) (ER 5)	<a href="#">Audit – Fiscal Year 2022-2023</a> <a href="#">Audit – Fiscal Year 2021-2022</a> <a href="#">Audit – Fiscal Year 2020-2021</a> <a href="#">Audit – Foundation 2022-2023</a> <a href="#">Audit – Foundation 2021-2022</a> <a href="#">Audit – Foundation 2020-2021</a>
iv. Practices for resource allocation and budget development (including budget allocation model for multi-college districts/systems)	<a href="#">BP 6200 – Budget Preparation</a> <a href="#">AP 6200 – Budget Preparation</a> <a href="#">BP 6250 – Budget Management</a> <a href="#">AP 6250 – Budget Management</a> <a href="#">Resource Allocation Manual</a>
v. Policies guiding fiscal management (e.g., related to reserves, budget development)	<a href="#">BP 6300 – Fiscal Management</a> <a href="#">AP 6300 – Fiscal Management</a>
vi. Policies, procedures, or agreements (e.g., AUAs) related to appropriate use of technology systems	<a href="#">AP 3720 – Computer and Network Use</a> <a href="#">BP 3720 – Computer and Network Use</a> <a href="#">AP 6360 – Technology Procurement</a>
<b>FOR TITLE IV PARTICIPANTS:</b>	
vii. Documentation that the institution’s student loan default rates are within the acceptable range defined by ED, or – if rates fall outside the acceptable range - documentation of corrective efforts underway to address the issue	<a href="#">Cohort Default Rate – FY 2020</a> <a href="#">Cohort Default Rate – FY 2021</a> <a href="#">Cohort Default Rate History</a>
<b>REQUIRED ONLY IF APPLICABLE</b>	
viii. Documentation of any agreements that fall under ACCJC’s <i>Policy on Contractual Relationships with Non-accredited Organizations</i>	<a href="#">MOU - Cosmetology</a>
ix. Written code of professional ethics for all personnel including consequences for violations	<a href="#">AP 3050 – Institutional Code of Ethics</a> <a href="#">BP 7360 – Discipline and Dismissal – Academic Employees</a> <a href="#">BP 7365 – Discipline and Dismissal – Classified Employees</a> <a href="#">COS Management Handbook</a> <a href="#">COS Confidential Employee Handbook</a>



## Standard 4: Governance and Decision-Making

Checklist Item	Documentation
i. Governing Board Policies/procedures for selecting and regularly evaluating its chief executive officer	<a href="#">AP 2431 – Superintendent-President Selection</a> <a href="#">BP 2431 – Superintendent-President Selection</a> <a href="#">BP 2432 – Supt-President Succession</a> <a href="#">BP 2435 – Evaluation of Superintendent-President</a>
ii. Documentation or certification that the institution’s CEO does not serve as the chair of the governing board (ER 4)	<a href="#">BP 2010 – Board Membership</a> <a href="#">BP 2210 – Officers</a>
iii. Governing Board Policies/procedures/bylaws related to Board Ethics	<a href="#">BP 2715 – Code of Ethics-Standards of Practice</a>
iv. Governing Board Policies/procedures/bylaws related to conflict of interest	<a href="#">AP 2710 – Conflict of Interest</a> <a href="#">BP 2710 – Conflict of Interest</a> <a href="#">AP 2712 – Conflict of Interest Code</a>

## Other Federal Regulations and Related Commission Policies

Checklist Item	Documentation:
i. Documentation of the institution’s appropriate and timely effort to solicit third party comment in advance of the Focused Site Visit and – if applicable - cooperate with the review team in any necessary follow-up  See <a href="#">Policy on Rights, Responsibilities, and Good Practice in Relations with Member Institutions</a> , Section D	<a href="#">AP 3200 – Accreditation</a> <a href="#">BP 3200 – Accreditation</a> <a href="#">Accreditation Workgroup Timeline</a> <a href="#">Convocation Presentation – Fall 2024</a>
ii. Documentation that the institution provides accurate information for the public concerning its accredited status with ACCJC on its institutional website, no more than one page (one click) away from the home page  See <a href="#">Policy on Representation of Accredited Status</a>	<a href="https://www.cos.edu/en-us">https://www.cos.edu/en-us</a>  <a href="https://www.cos.edu/en-us/administration/accreditation">https://www.cos.edu/en-us/administration/accreditation</a>

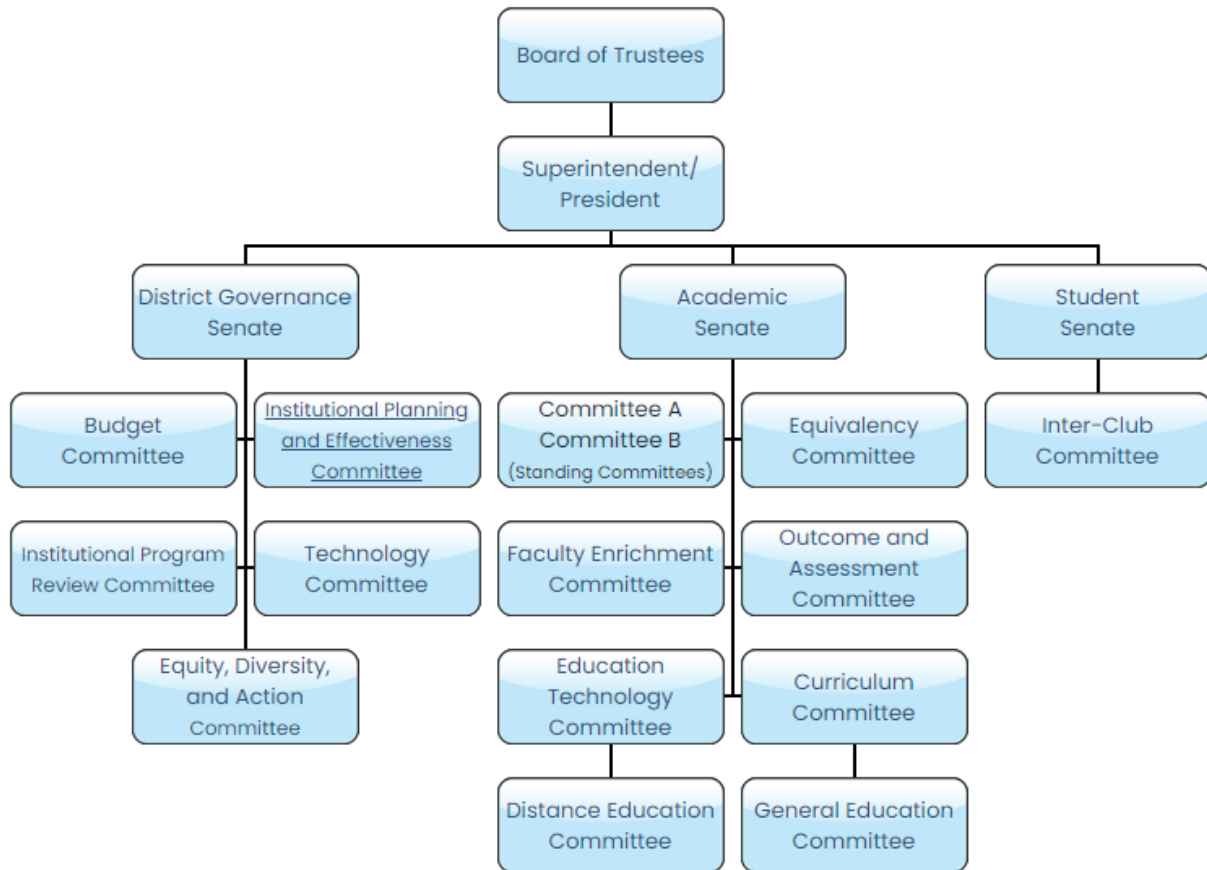
## D. Appendix 1: Verification of Catalog Requirements (ER 20)

REQUIRED ELEMENT	CATALOG LOCATION
<b>General Information</b>	<a href="#">2024–2025 Catalog PDF</a>
Official Name, Address(es), Telephone Number(s), and Website Address of the Institution	Page 6, 9
Educational Mission	Page 7
Representation of accredited status with ACCJC, and with programmatic accreditors, if any	Page 8
Course, Program, and Degree Offerings	Page 124-128, 611-705
Student Learning Outcomes of Programs and Degrees	See program pages
Academic Calendar and Program Length	Page 34-35
Academic Freedom Statement	Page 72
Available Student Financial Aid	Page 60-64
Available Learning Resources	Page 64-66
Names and Degrees of Administrators and Faculty	Page 10-21
Names of Governing Board Members	Page 22
<b>Requirements</b>	
Admissions	Page 36-54
Student Tuition, Fees, and Other Financial Obligations	Page 40-42
Degrees, Certificates, Graduation and Transfer	Page 99-123
<b>Major Policies and Procedures Affecting Students</b>	
Academic Regulations, including Academic Honesty	Page 72-98
Nondiscrimination	Page 8
Acceptance and Transfer of Credits	Page 89-98
Transcripts	Page 36, 38, 97, 98
Grievance and Complaint Procedures	Page 42-43
Sexual Harassment	Page 45-49
Refund of Fees	Page 42
<b>Locations or Publications Where Other Policies May be Found</b>	
Board Policies and Administrative Procedures	<a href="#">LINK</a>

## E. Appendix 2: Organizational Structure

# College of the Sequoias

## PARTICIPATORY GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE



### Organizational Charts

- [District Administration](#)
- [Administrative Services](#)
- [Academic Services](#)
- [Student Services](#)

## **F. Appendix 3: Approved Locations**

Students may complete 50% or more of a degree or certificate program at the following locations:

### **Visalia Campus**

915 South Mooney Boulevard  
Visalia, California 93277

### **Tulare College Center**

4999 East Bardsley Avenue  
Tulare, California 93274

### **Hanford Educational Center**

925 13th Avenue  
Hanford, California 93230