

## Chapter 3 – Draft 2/3

### DISTRICT GOALS

#### 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. (Reaffirmed by the COS Board of Trustees on March 8, 2021.)

#### DISTRICT GOALS 2025-2035

**DISTRICT GOAL I.** College of the Sequoias will increase student enrollment relative to population growth and labor market/workforce demands, with an intentional emphasis on underserved populations within our community.

**DISTRICT GOAL II.** College of the Sequoias will improve student success (e.g. transfer, learning, and achievement outcomes) and close the achievement gap for all students represented within our diverse student population.

**DISTRICT GOAL III.** College of the Sequoias will provide equitable academic offerings and student support services in response to the diverse needs of our students.

**DISTRICT GOAL IV.** College of the Sequoias will continuously improve policies, practices, and systems to ensure a high quality and affordable education for the community we serve.

#### OVERVIEW

This Master Plan is based on an analysis of the current programs and services and how well the institution has performed in fulfilling our Mission. It is also based on an analysis of the District's position in the state, and campus and community members' input, perceptions and vision for the future. The analysis in the previous chapter highlighted four primary challenges the institution needs to address to adhere to its mission.

#### CHALLENGE #1:

Provide equitable access across all District campuses to meet local community needs.

#### CHALLENGE #2:

Improve student success for our diverse student population

#### CHALLENGE #3:

Align academic offerings and provide equitable student support services to respond to the needs of our diverse student population.

#### CHALLENGE #4:

Continuously improve our policies, practices, and systems to provide a quality affordable education and support the community we serve.

Based on steps identified in *Data-Informed Goal Development for the College of the Sequoias Master Plan 2025-2035*, the four District Goals were initially developed by a six-member brainstorming group, represented by the Research Office, IPEC, and Master Plan Taskforce, in January 2024. Furthermore, the goals were refined with input from the Master Plan Taskforce and feedback gathered from COS community members via an open forum. Although the goals are numbered, the numbers do not convey a priority status; each goal is of equal priority.

**I. College of the Sequoias will increase student enrollment relative to population growth and labor market/workforce demands, with an intentional emphasis on underserved populations within our community.**

To promote equitable access to higher education that meets the community needs, COS must increase student enrollment relative to population growth and labor market/workforce demands while making an intentional effort to increase student enrollment among underserved population within our community.

Over the next ten years, enrollment at COS is projected to increase by 1% each year. Based on increases in both headcounts and FTES over the past year and projected increases in the number of college-aged individuals (18-24 years old) in both Tulare and Kings Counties, student demand is projected to increase. The projected increase in the Hispanic population in the area is more likely to increase student demand for COS, as a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI).

COS is continuing to grow. The addition of the University Center expands 4-year degree options via partnerships with local universities. Given that the community has expressed more favorable opinions of COS in comparison to local 4-year universities, and community members have voiced a desire for better 4-year degree options in the area, student demand is projected to increase.

Vision 2030 calls for increased educational access to underserved populations. Therefore, intentional efforts to recruit and enroll members from these groups are essential.

Efforts to increase enrollment, specifically in programs related to the largest/fastest growing employment opportunities, are necessary to meet labor market/workforce demands of the local community.

This goal provides evidence for the District's commitment to increasing educational access and enrollment to meet labor market/workforce demands and local community needs.

**II. College of the Sequoias will improve student success (e.g. transfer, learning, and achievement outcomes) and close the achievement gap for all students represented within our diverse student population.**

To ensure students reach their full educational potential, COS must focus on improving student success across our diverse student population.

Specifically, overall course success rates have declined, and course success rates for specific populations consistently fall below the District average. Additionally, even with promising increases in transfer-level math and English completion rates, most of COS students do not complete this requirement by the end

of their first year. Furthermore, while COS has seen increases in degree recipients and the proportion of students achieving the vision goal definition of completion over the past five years, and COS students transfer at similar rates to all California Community College students, its degree/certificate completion rates as well as transfer rates are not likely to meet projected workforce/labor market needs. Therefore, to ensure COS students are reaching their full educational potential, COS will engage in intentional efforts to improve course success rates, transfer-level math and English completion, degree/certificate completion, and transfer outcomes among COS's diverse student population.

This goal provides evidence for the District's commitment to improving student success for our diverse student population.

### **III. College of the Sequoias will provide equitable academic offerings and student support services in response to the diverse needs of our students.**

To ensure students have equitable access to a rigorous, culturally responsive education and the supports needed to reach their full educational potential, COS must align academic offerings and student support services with the needs of our diverse student population.

COS must provide access to quality academic programs that offer flexibility in modality and scheduling to meet the educational needs of the diverse student population COS serves. Specifically, the demand for online and hybrid courses as well as meeting the scheduling needs of our part-time students, many of whom are trying to balance work and school, must be addressed while also considering success rates.

Given the lower course success rates for online and hybrid courses when compared to face-to-face courses and the low rate of Kings and Tulare Counties 12<sup>th</sup> grade graduates completing all courses required for UC and/or CSU entrance, COS must provide access to quality academic resources regardless of modality, and these resources must be tailored to students' differing levels of academic preparedness.

Many COS students come from low-income households where English is the second language, and the majority of our students are first-generation college students. Additionally, COS students face a multitude of educational barriers/challenges with the most challenging being balancing work and school, financial/money issues, balancing family and school, and medical/mental health issues. Other challenges faced by COS students included transportation issues, childcare issues, food insecurity, computer/internet issues, and housing instability. Therefore, COS must provide access to student support services that respond to our students' intersecting identities (multiple demographic characteristics) which can intensify educational obstacles/challenges.

This goal provides evidence for the District's commitment to providing academic offerings and student support services that are responsive to our students' needs.

### **IV. College of the Sequoias will continuously improve policies, practices, and systems to ensure a high quality and affordable education for the community we serve.**

To ensure COS continues to provide an excellent higher education in a spirit of equity for our diverse student population, the District must engage in continuous improvement efforts.

The continuous improvement efforts discussed at the 2025-2035 District-wide Master Plan Summit included navigating the impact of legislation, engaging in professional development opportunities, identifying data needed to support the District's mission, and navigating the state/local economy.

This goal provides evidence for the District's commitment to continuously improve the District's policies, practices, and systems to ensure we provide a quality affordable education.