

Riverside Community College District Responses to Accreditation Recommendations for the District

District Recommendation 1:

The teams recommend that the board of trustees and chancellor develop and implement a district strategic plan that will:

- Align with the district mission statement (Standards IA.1 and IIID.1);
- Provide a framework for the college's/campuses' strategic plans (Standard IB.4); and
- Drive the allocation of district resources for the college, campuses, and district office (Standard IIID.1; Eligibility Requirement 19). The need to connect budget and planning remains unfulfilled from the 2001 accrediting recommendations.

Description:

On October 21, 2008, the Board of Trustees approved the Riverside Community College District Strategic Plan 2008-2012. The plan includes a revised mission statement, one that drives the District's strategic themes and that provides a template for each college's individual mission statements. The overarching themes and strategies in the plan offer a foundation for each college's strategic planning process and also clarify the District's role in the planning process. In addition, the District's Mission Statement confirms, as a general principle, the support role of the District Offices in the planning process.¹ The themes and strategies in the adopted strategic plan, although not identical, parallel and complement the strategic planning initiatives of the California Community Colleges and the three colleges within the District.

The District Strategic Planning Committee, composed of voting members from various constituency groups and the co-chairs of each college's strategic planning committee, addresses planning issues that affect all three colleges.² The specific process for moving items or issues through the District's decision-making processes begins with the program review and strategic planning processes at the college level or with the program review of the District's administrative units. The Office of the Associate Vice Chancellor for Institutional Effectiveness provides the program review templates to the colleges and to the District Offices.³ Each college has adopted individual strategic planning processes that link comprehensive program reviews (every four years) and annual program reviews to the allocation of resources at the colleges.⁴ In 2007-08 and again in 2008-09, the administrative units at the District Offices completed their program reviews. Each unit submitted its program review to the appropriate Vice Chancellor, who prioritized the requests for the Chancellor to consider. The funding for these requests comes from the District Office allocation provided in the budget allocation process, recently adopted and used in 2008-2009 to allocate funds to the colleges and to the District Offices. The budget allocation process allows each segment of the District to distribute new financial resources using the strategic planning processes developed by each college and the District Offices.⁵

The District Strategic Planning Committee (DSPC) reviews and makes recommendations regarding the allocation of state capital outlay and local bond money, any requests not anticipated in original strategic plans, or programs that affect at least two campuses or the District. The DSPC analyzes the impact that new initiatives have on the existing programs

and on budgets, planning, and policies. Once the DSPC makes its recommendation, the new college program is eligible for funding, which appears as a budget line item not previously allocated to the colleges.⁶ Essentially, the District Strategic Planning Committee makes recommendations to the Chancellor, who ultimately makes his recommendation to the Board of Trustees on items or issues that affect all three colleges or the District offices.

The representatives from each college's strategic planning committee serve as the "feedback mechanism" between the college committees and the District Strategic Planning Committee. The agendas for the District Strategic Planning Committee meetings have a place for each college and the District to report their planning initiatives. The individual college representatives also report the activities and actions of the District Strategic Planning Committee to the college strategic planning committees. Again, each college has a place on its strategic planning committee agenda for this purpose.⁷

Evaluation:

With the formal adoption of the Riverside Community College District Strategic Plan and the implementation of the budget allocation process, the District has provided the framework for each college's mission and strategic planning process. The process clearly connects the planning with budget allocations at all levels of District operation. In fact, the budget allocation process reflects many of the District's strategic themes. It also offers incentives for enrollment efficiency and provides resources for new programmatic initiatives.⁸ Moreover, the program review templates supplied by the District and the nature of data made available to various District constituencies have been modified as a result of the recommendations coming from the strategic planning committees at each college.⁹

In March 2009, the District Strategic Planning Committee adopted a process for the annual review of the District's Mission Statement. Moreover, the District's Strategic Plan includes strategies and specific outcome measures to assess the strategic themes identified in the plan. The Office of Institutional Effectiveness will provide a formal "Report Card" assessing the progress on these themes, which will be reported to the Board of Trustees in September 2009 and annually thereafter.¹⁰ Because the data used to validate the progress of most of the District's strategic themes derive from the college activities (in fact, the District folded the strategic initiatives of the three colleges into the District's plan), it is critical that each college continue to align its strategic initiatives with the District themes. At present only informal processes at the college level exist to align the District themes and the colleges' strategic planning initiatives. A more formal alignment will occur as the District and colleges assess their strategic planning outcomes.

Planning Agenda:

- District Strategic Planning Committee will review the District mission statement annually in the fall and forward its recommendation to the Board of Trustees. (Office of Institutional Effectiveness)
- District Strategic Planning Committee will annually review in fall the status of the outcome measures related to the District's Strategic Plan and reporting findings to the Board of Trustees. (Office of Institutional Effectiveness)

- District Strategic Planning Committee will meet and discuss the alignment of the District and college strategic plans annually in November. (Office of Institutional Effectiveness)

District Recommendation 2:

The teams recommend that the district and college/campuses develop, implement, and assess a resource allocation model that

- Is open, transparent, and inclusive (Standards IB and IVB.3c);
- Is widely disseminated and reviewed periodically for effectiveness (Standards IIID.2b and IIID.3);
- Is linked to the strategic plans at the district, college, and campus levels (Standards IA.1, IIID.1a-d, and IVB.3c).

Description:

In September 2007, a District task force made up of the chief business officers from each college and the District along with representatives from various college constituencies and campuses developed a Budget Allocation Model (BAM) that the District adopted in Fall 2008. The task force disseminated the proposed model with its various permutations throughout the District for comment and revision.¹¹ In fact, the model continues to be refined and modified as each college assesses its processes. To ensure continued assessment and review, the original task force has evolved into the District Budget Advisory Council (DBAC), formed in Spring 2009, that meets regularly and addresses budget-related issues. In addition, this committee continually evaluates and revises the adopted BAM process to make it more effective. The results of this evaluation are reported to the various college and District strategic planning committees. The District used the model to allocate financial resources for the 2008-09 academic year, and the District budget (2008-09) outlines the rationale and provides the allocations to each District entity in the introductory material.¹²

Evaluation:

The budget allocation process, a model that continues to be improved as the District assesses its effectiveness, provides an open and transparent method for allocating resources. The process aligns closely with the strategic planning processes at both the District and college levels.

Discussion about the budget allocation process continues in several key areas. First, the unspent money at each college cycles back to the District's reserves at the end of each academic year and is re-allocated. The District Budget Advisory Council (formerly the BAM Task Force) has begun discussion about the possibility of "college" reserves and is evaluating a process by which colleges can retain positive budget variances in select expenditure categories.¹³ Second, the DBAC continues to discuss the process used to budget "set-asides" and/or money for other District initiatives before the District allocates funds to the various District entities, including the three colleges.¹⁴ Third, the District determines the number of new faculty positions for each college and allocates funds as part of the budget allocation process. While District and college oversight must occur to ensure compliance with the 50% law and with the full-time faculty obligations required by the state chancellor's office, at present the colleges, while they do have the ability to fund new positions from

internal savings and cost-cutting measures, do not have the authority to fill those positions. For the 2008-09 academic year, the District allocated new faculty positions to the colleges.¹⁵ However, unfilled positions from retirement and resignations remain under the control of the colleges. Fourth, the amount of money allocated to District entities continues to be a concern. Once the District inserted the actual financial amounts allocated to the various District entities, over 30% of the unrestricted fund went to the District offices in 2007-2008. The District Budget Advisory Council and the Chancellor's cabinet discussed and reviewed the District's organizational structure and, as a result, reduced the amount to about 20% in 2008-09 by further clarifying the District and college functions and by reallocating positions and offices to the colleges.

Because this process of separating District functions from college functions is ongoing, budget allocations continue to be revised.¹⁶ It should be noted, however, that a significant part of the 20% allocated to the District supports operations at the colleges, for example, information technology services and human resources. Although the District continues discussion on these issues, the District in consultation with the colleges has implemented a budget allocation process that undergoes revision and modification within a basic philosophical framework. More important, it is a process that allows for, in an open and transparent manner, continued discussion of budget issues as they surface.

Planning Agenda:

- The District Budget Advisory Council will continue to assess the budget allocation process. (On-going, District, Office of Administration and Finance, College, Vice President of Business Services)

District Recommendation 3:

The teams recommend that college, campus, and district administrators and faculty delineate, document, and assess:

- The roles and responsibilities between and among the district's entities (Standard IVB.3; Policy and Procedures for the Evaluation of Institutions in Multi-College/Multi-Unit Districts or Systems);
- The roles and scope of authority of the CEOs at the district and college/campus levels (Standard IVA.2);
- A feedback loop between and among the entities on key issues, such as planning, staffing priorities, etc. (Standards IVA.2, IVB.3, IVB.4, and IVB.6).

Description:

The District's organizational structure delineates the roles and responsibilities among the District entities. A review of the District's organizational charts elucidates the areas of responsibility and reporting lines in a clear and coherent manner.¹⁷ In addition, each college has its own organizational chart that clarifies the areas of administrative responsibility. Each college has a president and vice presidents, which have different titles at the colleges, to administer the areas of business services, academic affairs, and student services. Moreover, each of the administrative positions in the District and those at the colleges have job descriptions. The job descriptions of the CEOs of the colleges and of the Chancellor

underwent revisions before the District advertised for a college president at Riverside City College and for a Chancellor.¹⁸ Both positions were filled in 2009. The organizational structure of each college differs slightly based on the specific needs of the college. The CEOs of each college have authority to manage their institutions, and they serve as members of the Chancellor's cabinet, which has bi-monthly meetings to discuss District and college issues and also serves to complete the feedback loop between the District and the colleges.

To ensure that the District clarifies the areas of responsibility for each entity, the academic affairs/education services vice presidents of each college and the academic affairs associate vice chancellors at the District office developed a "Function Map" that illustrates in detail the distribution of responsibility between and among the colleges and the District entities.¹⁹ The maps show which entities have primary, secondary, and shared responsibilities. Assessment and feedback on how well the District entities provide service occur through annual Administrative Program reviews, which include assessments in the form of surveys of all District administrative units.²⁰

Faculty, staff, and students participate in the decision-making process by serving on the strategic planning committees and other specific committees at the college level and on the District Strategic Planning Committee. (See responses to Recommendation 1 and Recommendation 2 for more information about how the feedback loops work in the areas of planning and budget allocation.) In addition, several District-wide committees exist in the areas such as curriculum, assessment, budget advisory, and program review. Each of these committees has clear charges. A complete list of District-wide committees as well as their charges and membership undergo annual updates.²¹ The District Academic Senate addresses issues affecting all three colleges, and the students have likewise developed their own college and District governance processes.²²

Evaluation:

The District and the individual colleges have delineated and clarified the roles and responsibilities among the District entities within each college. Moreover, the District continues to assess and to separate District functions from college functions. For example, the Open Campus Office, which was located on the Riverside City College Campus but provided the infrastructure for alternative delivery courses in the entire District, has relocated to a facility off the campus in close proximity to the District Office. The District Budget Advisory Council continues to review, assess, and improve the resource allocation process.²³ As the changes occur, each college assesses the impact of the changes on its internal processes. Moreover, each college has its own mechanism for assessing its internal processes.

As the District continues to decentralize some services (while maintaining centralized services in areas where it is appropriate and efficient) and as each entity undergoes additional cycles of program review and administrative unit assessment, the District and the colleges uncover new issues and concerns. The evolution of the campuses into colleges required change and reorganization, but is complete as each campus now operates as an independent college. As the multi-college district matures, discussions will continue to be collaborative and passionate. The administrative and instructional program reviews, both comprehensive

and annual, provide an opportunity for the various college and District entities to have open discussion, to assess the relationship between District and college autonomy in an effort to maintain an optimum balance and effectiveness, and to propose changes through the strategic planning and committee processes now in place.

The effect of these changes and of clarifying the roles and responsibilities among the District entities has strengthened autonomy of the three colleges and has allowed a clearer understanding of the role of the District to provide support for the educational and student service activities at each college. In Fall 2009, to ensure that the changes are effective, the Office of Institutional Effectiveness will send a survey to the employees of the District to assess their awareness of the lines of authority and their evaluation of the effectiveness of the functions and the lines of authority as delineated at the individual colleges and at the District offices. The results will be disseminated to District and college constituencies and will be used to inform future planning.

Planning Agenda:

- In Fall 2009, the District will survey all employees to assess the effectiveness of the functions and the lines of authority as delineated at the individual colleges and at the District office. The results will be distributed to all District and college constituencies and will be used to inform future planning. (Office of Institutional Effectiveness)

District Recommendation 4:

The teams recommend that the district clearly specify personnel selection procedures for district administrators including the position of chancellor. These selection processes must include input from the various college/campuses constituent groups (Standard IIIA.1, Standard IIIA.3, and IVB.1).

Description:

The District has developed “Administrative Procedures” (AP) to implement Board Policies that clearly specify personnel selection procedures for all categories of employees. All of the procedures include input from appropriate college/campus constituent groups. In fact, during the 2008-2009 academic year, as a result of wide-spread discussion among and between various District and college entities, the District refined and used the newly developed CEO selection procedures to hire a District Chancellor and a president at Riverside City College. In Fall 2008, the Office of Diversity and Human Resources began the process of collecting and revising all hiring policies and labeling them with an appropriate Administrative Procedure number.²⁴ The processes for hiring the Chancellor and the CEOs of the colleges have separate Administrative Procedure numbers. Each of these procedures needed revision to reflect the changes necessary for a multi-college District. In Spring 2009 all of these procedures went through the shared governance process to receive input from the appropriate District entities before the District adopted them. In addition, the Board of Trustees had previously adopted BP 3420: Nondiscrimination to honor its commitment to equal

opportunity in educational programs, employment and access to institutional programs and activities.

Evaluation:

Prior to the 2008-2009 academic year, the District's hiring policies and procedures existed in various policies and documents. For example, the hiring processes for full-time tenure track faculty, for management (administrative) employees, and for classified employees were included in the regulations for Affirmative Action Policy 3099/4099. The temporary/one-year faculty hiring policy existed in an agreement with the Academic Senate, and the part-time faculty hiring procedure in the collective bargaining agreement. Also, no formal procedures existed for hiring CEOs in the District. Now all District recruitment and hiring procedures have been collected and formalized as part of official Board Policy and Administrative Procedures. These procedures now include a separate process for hiring administrative positions, the CEOs of the colleges, and the Chancellor. Moreover, the Board of Trustees adopted a formal process for the periodic review and assessment of all Board Policies/Administrative procedures (Board Policy/Administrative Procedure 2410).

Planning Agenda:

- None needed. Periodic reviews will be conducted to maintain optimum effectiveness. (Vice Chancellor Diversity and Human Resources)

District Recommendation 5:

As recommended by the 2001 accreditation visiting team, the teams recommend that the board of trustees implement its recently approved process for self-evaluation (Standard IVB.1g)

Description:

On July 28, 2008, at a special Board of Trustees meeting, Dr. Narcisa Polonio, a consultant from the Association of Community College Trustees, led a follow-up discussion of the Board's self-assessment on April 26, 2008, which included a discussion of the Board's self-assessment tool.²⁵ The discussion at the July meeting built upon the Board's Special Planning Meeting of April 26th. At the June 11, 2008, Special Board Meeting, the Board met with Interim Chancellor Buysse and new Interim Chancellor Hendrick to discuss the goals and priorities for the Chancellor's Office. As a result of the April 26th and the June 11th discussions, at the July 28th meeting the Board directed Interim Chancellor Hendrick to address five (5) goals and priorities.²⁶ These goals, which closely align with the District's strategic themes and initiatives, result from the Board's self assessment. Also, in May 2009, the Board of Trustees again applied Board Policy 2745 to assess itself. Each member of the Board completed an anonymous self-assessment instrument.²⁷ Then, at a special Board meeting on May 19, 2009, Dr. Cindra Smith, who is recognized nationally for her expertise in governing boards and trustee development, facilitated a discussion of Board effectiveness based on the results of the self-assessment tool.²⁸ At the 16 June 2009 meeting, the Board reported plans and actions based on the results of its self-assessment.²⁹

Evaluation:

The Board of Trustees implemented its self-assessment process in 2008, but no formal reporting of the results was conducted. However, during the Special Meetings of April 26, June 11, and July 28, 2008, the Board structured part of its discussion on one of the seven dimensions of Board effectiveness, Management Oversight, by assessing its relationship with the Interim Chancellor and focusing on the Chancellor's search. Given the issues facing the District in 2008, it was particularly relevant that the Board focused its attention on one dimension over the others and worked closely with the Interim Chancellor. Additionally, the specific goals and priorities given to the Interim Chancellor reflect other dimensions of the Board's self-assessment process. Moreover, the Board's willingness to listen to constituency groups and to modify its search process for the Chancellor (a clear example of the Board's self-assessment activities related to Constituency Interface and District Policy Leadership), resulted in a successful Chancellor search and in codifying the search process into Administrative Procedures 2431.³⁰

At its 19 May 2009 meeting, the Board again initiated its self-assessment process and reported the results of that process to the various entities in the District. The Board asked staff to collect material (topics and presentations) from its regular Board meeting agendas and from its committee meeting agendas that reflect the seven (7) dimensions of Board effectiveness outlined in Board Policy 2745.³¹ Additionally, the calendars of Board members reflect their attention and commitment to several dimensions of their effectiveness including the Constituency Interface, Community College System Interface and Economic/Political System Interface. The President of the Board of Trustees summarized the way in which the Board has used these presentations and discussion topics along with sessions/meetings with leaders at the local, state, and federal levels to gain a sense of the Board's effectiveness and asked the members of the Board to complete a self-assessment survey, and to begin the self-assessment discussion in open session during the May 19, 2009, Special Board Meeting.³² The results of this self-assessment process were then reported to the public and the institution at the June 16, 2009, Board meeting.³³

Planning Agenda:

- The self assessment of the Board of Trustees will become part of the Board's annual calendar. In May of each year, the Board of Trustees will conduct its self-evaluation and report the results, plans, and action, if any, in June. (Office of the Chancellor)

List of Supporting Documents and References*

- ¹ See the Riverside Community College District Strategic Plan 2008-2012.
- ² See the Operational Guidelines for the Riverside Community College District Strategic Planning Committee (revised and formally adopted February 27, 2009) for a complete list of voting members.
- ³ See the program review templates provided by the Office of Institutional Effectiveness.
- ⁴ See the flow charts for each college's strategic planning process in the Operational Guidelines for the Riverside Community College Strategic Planning Committee.
- ⁵ See the Operational Guidelines for the Riverside Community College District Strategic Planning Committee for a complete overview of the operating procedures and function of the RCCDSPC and of the roles and processes of the campus committees and District Offices.
- ⁶ See the District Budget 2008-2009 for the line items for new initiatives.
- ⁷ Review the minutes the strategic planning committees of the District and the three colleges.
- ⁸ See the Introduction to the Riverside Community College District Budget for 2008-2009 for an explanation of the budget allocation process used to provide resources to the colleges and District Offices.
- ⁹ See the Riverside City College suggested changes to the program review templates as an example. The District Program Review Committee addresses the recommended revisions.
- ¹⁰ At the time of this report, March 2009, the data for "Report Card" has not been collected. The Visiting Teams will have access to this report when they visit in October 2009.
- ¹¹ See the Riverside Community College Budget Allocation Model Information—i.e., the membership, the minutes, including the various revisions of the model, and actions of the BAM committee.
- ¹² See the Introduction to the Riverside Community College District Budget 2008-09.
- ¹³ See the minutes of DBAC for February and March, 2009.
- ¹⁴ See Exhibit G of the Riverside Community College Budget 2008-2009 for details.
- ¹⁵ See Exhibit G of the Riverside Community College Budget 2008-2009 for details.
- ¹⁶ Review the Riverside Community College Function Map.
- ¹⁷ See the District's and each college's organizational charts.
- ¹⁸ See the job descriptions for the president of Riverside and for the Chancellor.
- ¹⁹ Review the Riverside Community College District Function Map.
- ²⁰ See sample survey from administrative program reviews.
- ²¹ See the Academic Senate web page for a complete list of committees, membership, and charges.
- ²² See the various student government organizational charts.
- ²³ Even though a review of the minutes of the Budget Allocation Model Committee and the District Curriculum Committee indicate areas of disagreement, the minutes also demonstrate an open and transparent discussion to resolve those differences.
- ²⁴ See index of Board Policies and Administrative Procedures that specify the hiring procedures for all categories of employees in the District. Except for the position of Chancellor (AP 2431) and the position of President (AP 7121), all other procedures for recruitment and hiring fall under Board Policy/Administrative Procedure 7120.
- ²⁵ See the Board Self-Assessment Form.
- ²⁶ See the minutes of the Special Board of Trustees meeting of April 26, 2008, and of July 28, 2008, for the results of the planning meeting and a list of the goals for the Chancellor.
- ²⁷ See the Board self-assessment packet.
- ²⁸ See RCCD Board of Trustees Self Assessment Highlights
- ²⁹ See the minutes of the June 16, 2009, Board meeting.
- ³⁰ See AP 2431 – Chancellor Selection
- ³¹ See BP 2745 – Board Self Evaluation
- ³² See Agenda and Minutes for May 19, 2009 Special Board Meeting
- ³³ See Agenda and Minutes for June 16, 2009 Board Meeting

**Copies of documents and evidence to support the foregoing narrative are available in the Team Room at all three colleges as well as at the District office.*