

Equity in Access



LGBTQIA2+ Student Programs

ISSUE

Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, asexual, and other identities individuals encounter familial, social, economic and educational instability, which inhibit their ability to succeed academically and holistically. According to student success data provided by the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, asexual and other identity (LGBTQIA2+) students are

experiencing disproportionate rates of retention, completion of college-level math and English in the first year, completion of a degree or certificate, and transfer to a four-year university.

LGBTQIA2+ students have challenges in being expressed accurately in equity data decisions due to difficulty in ascertaining the total LGBTQIA2+ population and the community expanding across multiple intersections. LGBTQIA2+ students experience higher rates of

mental illness and food and housing insecurity; feel campuses are less welcoming and safe; and report a lower sense of belonging than their peers (Hope Center, 2019; JED Foundation, 2016; Undergraduate Student Experience in the Research University Survey, 2016). National data show an upward trend of people identifying as LGBTQIA2+, and about 70 percent of community college LGBTQIA2+ students are students of color who face additional barriers.



- Develop legislation that creates and funds LGBTQIA2+ resource centers on each campus for students to access resources and network with each other;
- Support the creation of dedicated sponsorships targeted toward LGBTQIA2+ students in order to provide opportunities similar to their peers;
- Establish a policy to support LGBTQIA2+ students' need for Free Applications for Federal Student Aid dependency override wherein LGBTQIA2+ students have parental abandonment or neglect that may not result in environments that have additional considerations attached to them;
- Support and fund the creation of LGBTQIA2+ learning community programs;
- Support and fund the professional development opportunities associated with the LGBTQIA2+ community; and
- Support funding to provide LGBTQIA2+ specific mental health services and basic needs.

BACKGROUND

The State Legislature previously passed bills in support of the LGBTQIA2+ population, which enhanced efforts to support the needs of the LGBTQIA2+ population at the District colleges.

- Assembly Bill 620 (Block): California community colleges must collect and transmit aggregate data regarding sexual orientation and gender;
- AB 1018 (Reyes): California community colleges must include LGBTQIA2+ students in their Student Equity Plan;
- AB 132 (Ting): \$10 million is appropriated in one-time funding to the California community college; and
- AB 2315 (Arambula): Students' and employees' affirmed name and gender must be included in records where legal names are not legally required.

REQUESTS

Riverside Community College District requests the following actions to expand and enhance LGBTQIA2+ student services to reduce barriers and increase retention and completion:

- Support funding to hire at least one dedicated permanent, full-time, qualified professional employee at each college to oversee LGBTQIA2+ students' needs and improve educational outcomes;
- Improve accurate data gathering regarding students' sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression, so that colleges are positioned to access data to further develop informed services;
- Develop legislation to increase the number of all-gender restrooms and locker rooms, and require new builds have at least one gender-inclusive restroom per floor;

