Cerritos College
Follow-Up Report

Prepared and submitted by:
Cerritos College
11110 Alondra Boulevard
Norwalk, CA 90650

Submitted to:
Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges,
Western Association of Schools and Colleges

March 15, 2015
Date: March 15, 2015

To: Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges
   Western Association of Schools and Colleges

From: Dr. Linda L. Lacy, President/Superintendent
      Cerritos College
      11110 Alondra Boulevard
      Norwalk, CA 90650

We certify there was broad participation by the campus community, and believe the Follow-Up Report accurately reflects the nature and substance of this institution.

**Signatures**

______________________________
Dr. Linda L. Lacy, President/Superintendent

______________________________
Carmen Avalos, President, Board of Trustees

______________________________
Dr. JoAnna Schilling, Accreditation Liaison Officer/Vice President
   of Academic Affairs

______________________________
Michelle Lewellen, President, Faculty Senate

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Lynn Laughon, President, California School Employees Association

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Dr. Frank Mixson, Accreditation Co-Chair, Faculty

______________________________
Miles Aiello, President, Associated Students of Cerritos College
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This Follow-Up Report is intended to address concerns identified by the Accreditation Commission of Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC) in a letter addressed to Dr. Linda Lacy, Cerritos College President/Superintendent, dated July 3, 2014. The purpose of this report is to demonstrate that the college has taken corrective action to fully resolve the three recommendations of deficiencies, cited as College Recommendations 2, 3, and 4, during the evaluation team visit in March 2014.

Following the evaluation report in July 2014, the college invited the campus community to attend a campus forum on July 22, 2014 to discuss the ACCJC recommendations. At this forum, a timeline for addressing all recommendations was shared, and team leaders identified to develop and oversee a work plan for each recommendation.

At the September 17, 2014 board meeting, the Board of Trustees created a board advisory committee to meet regularly and provide recommendations for action to the entire board. These recommendations were unanimously accepted at the October 15, 2015 board meeting and details of all actions taken to date are provided in this Report.

To ensure ongoing and widespread college involvement in addressing the recommendations made by the Commission, the college convened the College Committee on Accreditation in August 2014 to oversee the work plan for meeting ACCJC Standards by March 2015. The monthly committee meetings included progress reports with regard to the three Recommendations to Resolve Deficiencies addressed in this Follow-Up Report, as well as the eight Recommendations for Improvement of Institutional Effectiveness.

In addition, a staff report on Accreditation progress was provided at each College Committee on Planning and Budget meeting, College Coordinating Committee meetings, and each board meeting beginning with the September 17, 2014 meeting. An executive summary was provided to the campus in October 2014 and is posted on the Accreditation website. Finally, a detailed progress report on Recommendation 2 was provided to the board at the November 12, 2014 board meeting.
The Accreditation committee members, and team members for College Recommendations 2, 3, and 4 are provided below:

**College Committee on Accreditation**

- JoAnna Schilling, Accreditation Liaison Officer
- Frank Mixson, Faculty Co-Chairperson appointed by Faculty Senate
- Kristi Blackburn, Dean of Institutional Effectiveness, Research and Planning
- David Fabish, ACCME President
- Michelle Lewellen, Faculty Senate President
- Dr. Solomon Namala, CCFF President
- Lynn Laughon, CSEA President
- Andrea Wittig, Confidential Representative
- Hector Arellano, ASCC President

**College Committee on Student Learning Outcomes for Recommendation 2: Degree and Certificate Outcomes**

- Frank Mixson, Accreditation Chairperson/SLO Faculty Coordinator
- Jan Connal, SLO Faculty Coordinator
- Peter Moloney, Faculty, Business Division Representative
- Traci Ukita, Faculty, Counseling Division Representative
- Gary Pritchard, Instructional Dean, Fine Arts/Communications Division Representative
- Ann Voorhies, Faculty, Health Occupations Division Representative
- Ana Torres-Bower, Faculty, Humanities and Social Sciences Division Representative
- Lydia Alvarez, Faculty, Liberal Arts Division Representative
- Debra Moore, Faculty, Library and Learning Resource Center Division Representative
- Rebekah Davidson, Faculty, Health, Physical Education, Dance and Athletics Division Representative
- Carolyn Chambers, Instructional Dean, Science, Engineering and Mathematics Division Representative
- Steven La Vigne, Faculty, Student Services Division Representative
- Terrie Lopez, Director of Career and Assessment Services, Management Representative
- Solomon Namala, Faculty, Faculty Union Representative
- Rob Flores, Student Representative
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Board Advisory Committee for Recommendation 3: Leadership and Governance and Recommendation 4: Board Development

- Carmen Avalos, Board President
- Marisa Perez, Board Secretary
- John Paul Drayer, Board Member

In January 2015, a draft of the Follow-Up Report was distributed to the campus community with a request for review and feedback. A draft was also provided to the College Committee on Accreditation, College Coordinating Committee, managers’ groups, Faculty Senate, Associated Students of Cerritos College and to the Board of Trustees at the January 21, 2015 board meeting. Comments and corrections were reviewed and integrated into the final document. The final draft of the Follow-Up Report was presented to the campus community, constituent leadership groups, and the Board of Trustees, which reviewed and accepted the Report at the February 4, 2015 board meeting.

Dr. Linda L. Lacy
President/Superintendent
Recommendation #2: Degree and Certificate Outcomes

In order to meet the standard, the team recommends the college establish program student learning outcomes for all degrees and certificates, assess student achievement of the program student learning outcomes, and use the results of the assessment to make improvements to the programs. (II.A.2.f)

Overview

Prior to receiving the above Recommendation, Cerritos College was assessing student learning outcomes (SLOs) at the course, program, and institutional level; however, the college defined program, not by department, but by educational track. That is, for the assessment of program SLOs, the college defined three large programs: Developmental Education, General Education (GE), and Career and Technical Education (CTE). For each program, the college developed four competencies. For each competency, the college developed four to six SLOs. It was this broad definition of program that the visiting team found did not meet the Standard for assessing degrees and certificates.

Action Steps

In response to the Recommendation by the visiting team, the SLO committee reviewed the Recommendation and reorganized the SLO structure. Previously, the SLO structure included three levels of assessment: course level, program level, and institutional level. The new structure would eliminate two of the broad programs and include the program degrees and certificates so that the college would be assessing at four levels: course; program, degrees, and certificates; general education; and institutional.
Cerritos College chose not to conflate GE SLOs with Institutional SLOs because GE SLOs only address those students who receive a degree or transfer to a four-year institution. The college has outstanding CTE programs with a variety of certificates. These students would not be included in the GE assessment; however, the college does wish them to achieve the knowledge, skills, and values that are reflected in the Institutional Competencies and concomitant SLOs. For this reason, students who earn a degree or certificate are assessed in the institutional competencies.

Once the new structure was defined, the ALO and SLO coordinator created a plan for writing degree and certificate SLOs, mapping course SLOs to degree or certificate SLOs, analyzing the assessment results of the degree or certificate SLOs, and, based on that analysis, creating improvement plans. The ALO and SLO coordinator determined that if the college were to complete an assessment cycle of the degree and certificate SLOs by the March 15, 2015 deadline, the college would need to make full use of eLumen, the college’s SLO management software, and complete the full assessment cycle by the end of the fall semester.
To facilitate better use of eLumen, the SLO Coordinator demonstrated the software program to
several departments on campus, created instructions for each step of the process, and posted
these instructions on the SLO webpage [1], summarized as follows:

**Figure 2: Instructions and Deadlines for Degree and Certificate SLOs**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Completion Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Write SLOs for each degree and/or certificate offered by the department</td>
<td>October 3, 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Complete the Degree and Certificate SLOs</td>
<td>October 3, 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Map Course SLOs to Degree and/or Certificate SLOs</td>
<td>November 14, 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Print Degree and Certificate Assessment Results; and Input Improvement Plans</td>
<td>December 5, 2015</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The SLO Coordinator shared the plan and its progress with the College Coordinating Committee [2 – Item VII] and the Board of Trustees [3 – Item 5].

**Results and Analysis**

The instructions to create degree and certificate SLOs were written and posted to the SLO webpage during the first part of summer 2014. At that time, the SLO coordinator started meeting with individual departments to help them write their degree and certificate SLOs. A few departments met over the summer and provided invaluable examples of local degree and certificate SLOs; they, in turn, shared with their colleagues that the process was neither arduous nor time consuming. As a result of this faculty support and cooperation, the college created SLOs for 160 degrees and certificates, 94 degrees, and 66 certificates by October 2014 and is summarized by division in the following table:
After writing the degree and certificate SLOs, the next step of the process required departments to work through a curriculum mapping process in which course SLOs were linked to degree or certificate SLOs. In this way, the departments identified which courses addressed each of the SLOs so that they began to see how each course fed into each of the degree SLOs. In working through this mapping process, departments began to identify gaps in their degree or certificate SLOs and the course SLOs.

For example, one department identified a degree SLO as “Students will be able to serve patients of all cultures and ethnicities”; however, when mapping its course SLOs to its degree SLOs, the department discovered that none of its courses addressed explicitly the issue of cultural diversity. Instead of capitulating and eliminating the degree SLO, the department identified the courses in which the issues of diversity were being addressed and revised the SLOs to reflect more accurately the content of the course [4].

After mapping the course and degree or certificate SLOs, the departments printed an assessment report for each of their degrees and certificates. The report provided the departments with assessment results for each semester’s SLO assessments, and it totaled the results for each degree or certificate SLO [5]. The departments analyzed the assessment data and subsequently completed improvement plans.
The departments developed generalized improvement plans that consist of two requests for information:

1) After reviewing the assessment reports for each of the department’s degrees and/or certificates, the department identified the SLO(s) that students need to improve upon.

2) For each degree and/or certificate, the department referred to the curriculum map and considered the courses that address the degree or certificate SLOs that students need to improve upon. The department then explained what it will do in those courses to help students improve their understanding of the knowledge or skill identified in the SLO(s).

The departments submitted their improvement plans in the first two weeks of December, and the plans reveal a wide variety of improvement efforts. A number of departments discovered gaps in their assessment process and plan to improve those processes so that they can improve the quantity and quality of their assessments and their assessment data.

Other departments focused on the results for specific degree or certificate SLOs, and they plan to implement specific solutions to help students improve their understanding of those SLOs. The Economics Department provides an example of this type of improvement plan:

Around 15% of the students were found to be deficient in this SLO (Students define basic principles of a market economy). Essentially we have to explain the role of incentives, private property and the role markets play as an allocative mechanism. The best way to perhaps reach the students is through perhaps role playing activities and exercises that bring out the principles of a market economy.

Some departments requested resources to help students improve their understanding of one or more of the SLOs. An example of this comes from the Mathematics Department:
The math department recommends integrating a CAS [computer algebra system] program in appropriate lectures. CAS will increase the students understanding on how the graph of each function is generated; enhance their ability of seeing the connection between a tangent to the graph of a given function and the derivative of that function at any given point (appropriate for Math 170 and Math 190). CAS will also help the students to visually see the graphs of complicated functions and relations in 2D and 3D (appropriate for math 220). CAS will help students in performing tedious, cumbersome, and long mathematical steps (appropriate for Math 250 course).

Finally, some departments are wishing to improve, not just knowledge or skills, but values. In the case of the Dental Assisting Department, faculty want to prepare their students to work well with a diverse population of patients [10]. To accomplish this, they will be making the following improvements:

Courses that address this SLOs are DA 61, DA 62, DA 65, and DA 75 as they begin to work on patients. These courses are offered in the spring semester and the program will help students to understand that how they are working with a various patient populations. This will be addressed in a lecture format as we discuss social and cultural diversity as well as lab work by students working in various groups among themselves.

This initial assessment of degree and certificate SLOs was accomplished in a compressed cycle, from August 2014 to December 2014, in order to complete the work and write the Follow-Up Report by March 15, 2015. Moving forward, the review of degrees and certificate assessment data and development of improvement plans will be integrated into strategic planning through the annual program review process. That process will begin again in fall 2015 with the assessment of course SLOs.

Cerritos College intends to assess each course on an annual basis. The majority of the assessment occurs in the fall semester, but some assessment occurs in the spring semester, focusing primarily on spring-only courses. Through the spring semester, faculty will input their data into eLumen, review the results, and develop improvement plans.
Once the course level assessments are complete and input into eLumen, the degree and certificate assessment cycle begins. The data from the course level assessments rolls up into the degree and certificate SLOs through the curriculum mapping. The department prints the degree and certificate SLO assessment report, analyzes the data, and develops an improvement plan for the degrees and/or certificates.

The departments’ degree and certificate assessment data and improvement plans will become an integral part of the annual program review process. Departments will upload the degree and certificate assessment reports into the data section of the annual program review. They will also include a written analysis of the assessment data in their analysis of their strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. Finally, they will include their degree or certificate improvement plans as part the “Goals and Activities” section. Based on the goals and activities, departments make their resource requests.

In the final step of the process, the departments will align their goals and activities to their strategic goals. The college considers resource requests based on the strategic goals and priorities. If a resource meets a strategic goal with a high priority, the resource is likely to be funded, if funds are available. In the following year, the first step in the new academic year’s process is also the conclusion of the previous academic year’s process. The department begins its annual program review process by reviewing its goals and activities from the previous year.
### Evidence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Description/Hyperlink</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Instructions for Creating Degree and Certificate SLOs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Coordinating Committee Minutes - 9/22/14</td>
<td>Page 2-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Board Meeting Minutes - 11/12/14</td>
<td>Page 2; Item 5 (SLO Update) Page 6; Item 32 (BP/AP 2745)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Course Mapping Example</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Degree and Certificate SLO Assessment Reports</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Improvement Plans</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Improvement Plan - Welding</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Improvement Plan - Economics Department</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Improvement Plan - Mathematics Department</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Improvement Plan - Dental Assisting Department</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Recommendation #3: Leadership and Governance

In order to meet the standard, the team recommends the members of the governing board demonstrate compliance with their policies on the appropriate roles of the Board and the Superintendent/President, the requirements of Standard IV, and adopted Board Policies 2410, 2040, 2510, 2200, 2430, Administrative Procedure 2410, and the Shared Governance Handbook.

Recommendation #4: Board Development

In order to meet the Standards, the Board should, through its behavior and actions, demonstrate compliance with Board policies and Accreditation Standards.

Overview

Over the past four years, the Cerritos College Board of Trustees has undergone significant changes, both in its electoral process and its membership. The first significant change came on December 7, 2011 when the board unanimously approved a measure to divide the Cerritos Community College District into seven trustee areas. In doing so, trustees would no longer be elected at large from throughout the district; instead, they would be elected from one of the seven established trustee districts. In the November 2012 election, the college utilized the trustee areas for the first time, and four new board members were elected and subsequently installed to the board.

A consequence of changes in the board composition was varying degrees of miscommunication as the college and its board struggled to understand one another’s role in support of student learning. The college and the board have worked hard to find common ground and mutual understanding, but it takes time to for a large institution to adapt and change. At the time of the team visit, the board and the college were still adapting; as a result, the visiting team found some incidents of the board not following their written policies, and expressed their concerns in the External Evaluation Report by providing the college with two Recommendations aimed at improving board development, leadership, and governance at the college. The college believes that positive change and mutual understanding has occurred in the past year, as is demonstrated by the action plans in this report.
Action Plan

The Board of Trustees, under the leadership of Board President Carmen Avalos and President/Superintendent Dr. Linda Lacy, responded immediately and decisively. On September 3, 2014, the board adopted Board Goals 2 and 6.b.a to “Ensure that the District and the Board meet the ACCJC Accreditation Recommendations” and “Improve protocols and practices for effective Board and President/Superintendent communications and relations.” [11 - Item 31,12] Moreover, at the September 17, 2014 board meeting, the Board of Trustees approved to establish board advisory committees (BACs) in accordance with Board Policy 2220 [13 - Item 42]. The Accreditation BAC was established and consists of Board President Carmen Avalos, Board Secretary Marisa Perez, and Board Member John Paul Drayer.

On September 18, 2014, a special Accreditation board study session was held. At this study session, a former ACCJC Commissioner presented information on the role of Accreditation in supporting excellence at the college; the presenter then provided an analysis of the 2014 Team Report and of the 2014 ACCJC Action Letter, explaining in detail the board’s role in supporting excellence expected by the ACCJC. This study session also included presentations by two trustees from local community colleges who shared their experiences addressing Accreditation sanctions at their respective colleges [14].

Next, the Accreditation BAC met with members of the College Committee on Accreditation, which included the Accreditation Liaison Officer, Faculty Co-Chair, and a committee member. Together, the group reviewed the visiting team’s findings, analyzed and interpreted the Recommendations, and developed plans for addressing each of the Recommendations. To begin, the group distinguished between Recommendation 3 and 4, determining first that they both address a concern that the board is not following its written policies. The group also determined that the difference between the two is that Recommendation 3 addresses the appropriate roles of the board and the President/Superintendent, whereas Recommendation 4 addresses more general board policies.
Results and Analysis of Recommendation 3

Having made the distinction between the two Recommendations, the group addressed first Recommendation 3. To do so, the group worked to clarify the appropriate roles of the Board of Trustees and the President/Superintendent. The group discussed at length the board’s role in relation to the president, focusing particular attention on the difference between the board’s role in policymaking and the president’s role in operations. Through these discussions, the advisory committee members agreed that the roles of each party should be delineated and reinforced periodically during board meetings. The Accreditation BAC also developed several recommendations to address Standard IV deficiencies, which were approved by the Board of Trustees at its October 15, 2014 board meeting [15 - Item 15],[16].

In order to ensure that these roles are delineated and reinforced, the board approved an Accreditation BAC recommendation to review and discuss one board policy each month from Chapter 2 of the college’s Board Policies and Administrative Procedures. In particular, to clarify the role of the Board of Trustees in relation to the President/Superintendent, the board will discuss BP 2430, “Delegation of Authority to President/Superintendent,” BP 2510, “Participation in Local Decision-Making,” and BP 2200, “Board Duties and Responsibilities.” The college has developed a board policy review schedule in which Chapter 2 of the college’s policies and procedures will be reviewed by the board in 2015, summarized as follows:
### Figure 4: 2015 Board Policy Review Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Board Meeting</th>
<th>Board Policy</th>
<th>Administrative Procedure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| January 21    | BP 2340 - Agendas  
               | BP 2510 - Participation in Local Decision-Making | AP 2340 - Agendas  
               | AP 2510 - Participation in Local Decision-Making |
| February 4    | BP 2200 - Board Duties and Responsibilities  
               | BP 2410 - Policy and Administrative Procedure  
               | BP 2430 - Delegation of Authority to President/Superintendent | AP 2200 - Board Duties and Responsibilities  
               | AP 2410 - Policy and Administrative Procedure  
               | AP 2430 - Delegation of Authority to President/Superintendent |
| February 11   | BP 2715 - Code of Ethics/Standards of Practice  
               | BP 2710 - Conflict of Interest  
               | BP 2712 - Conflict of Interest Code  
               | BP 2716 - Political Activity  
               | BP 2717 - Personal Use of Public Resources | AP 2710 - Conflict of Interest  
               | AP 2714 - Distribution of Tickets or Passes |
| February 18   | BP 2550 - Authority and Relationship of Board and District Negotiation Teams with Exclusive Bargaining Units  
               | BP 2315 - Closed Sessions  
               | BP 2610 - Presentation of Initial Collective Bargaining Proposals | AP 2550 - Authority and Relationship of Board and District Negotiation Teams with Exclusive Bargaining Units  
               | BP 2315 - Closed Sessions  
               | BP 2610 - Presentation of Initial Collective Bargaining Proposals |
| March 4       | BP 2740 - Board Education  
               | BP 2735 - Board Member Travel  
               | BP 2750 - Board Member Absence from the State | AP 2740 - Board Education  
               | BP 2735 - Board Member Travel  
               | BP 2750 - Board Member Absence from the State |
| April 1       | BP 2431 - President/Superintendent Selection  
               | BP 2432 - President/Superintendent Succession  
               | BP 2435 - Evaluation of President/Superintendent | AP 2431 - President/Superintendent Selection  
               | BP 2432 - President/Superintendent Succession  
               | BP 2435 - Evaluation of President/Superintendent |
| May 6         | BP 2105 - Student Trustee  
               | BP 2725 - Board Member Compensation  
               | BP 2730 - Board Member Health Benefits | AP 2105 - Student Trustee  
               | BP 2725 - Board Member Compensation  
               | BP 2730 - Board Member Health Benefits |
| June 3        | BP 2305 - Annual Organizational Meeting  
               | BP 2310 - Regular Meetings of the Board  
               | BP 2320 - Special and Emergency Meetings  
               | BP 2330 - Quorum & Voting | AP 2305 - Annual Organizational Meeting  
               | BP 2310 - Regular Meetings of the Board  
               | BP 2320 - Special and Emergency Meetings  
               | BP 2330 - Quorum & Voting |
| July 15       | BP 2345 - Public Participation at Board Meetings  
               | BP 2350 - Speakers  
               | BP 2355 - Decorum  
               | BP 2365 - Recording  
               | BP 2720 - Communications Among Board Members | AP 2345 - Public Participation at Board Meetings  
               | BP 2350 - Speakers  
               | BP 2355 - Decorum  
               | BP 2365 - Recording  
               | BP 2720 - Communications Among Board Members |
| September 2   | BP 2010 - Board Membership  
               | BP 2210 - Officers  
               | BP 2100 - Board Elections | AP 2010 - Board Membership  
               | BP 2210 - Officers  
               | BP 2100 - Board Elections |
| October 7     | BP 2220 - Committees of the Board  
               | BP 2110 - Vacancies on the Board  
               | BP 2900 - Naming of Facilities | AP 2220 - Committees of the Board  
               | BP 2110 - Vacancies on the Board  
               | BP 2900 - Naming of Facilities |
In addition to clarifying its role in relation to the President/Superintendent, the board intends to make a public acknowledgement of its role as policy maker and the president’s role as overseeing operations. To do this, the Accreditation BAC is currently reviewing a first draft of a compact between the board and CEO, clearly delineating roles and responsibilities, as well as defining the terms of collegiality and respect in the governance process, and affirming positive communication. Once the advisory committee finalizes the wording of the compact, it will be forwarded to the full board for consideration of approval.

Moreover, the Accreditation BAC intends that the board support the spirit of the compact with the actions of the trustees, for the advisory committee discussed the need for the board to govern its own members when a one appears to be violating board policy. In order to more effectively manage trustee conduct, the Accreditation BAC recommended – and the board has approved – that the board attend a parliamentary procedure workshop. Finally, the board will further fulfill the spirit of the compact by scheduling quarterly updates between the President/Superintendent and board regarding the progress of the board and CEO goals to promote better board/CEO communications and relations. These items have been incorporated into the 2015 board meeting schedule [17].

Finally, in relation to Recommendation 3, the visiting team also noted a specific action that it considered to be undermining the President/Superintendent’s authority. In particular, the visiting team found that board “members directed their district legal counsel to participate in college site level operational meetings including the President’s Cabinet and the College Coordinating Committee.” This action was thought to be in direct violation of Board Policy and Administrative Procedure 2430 “Delegation of Authority to President/Superintendent,” which delegate “to the President/Superintendent or designee the authority to implement the policies of the district and oversee the operational functions of the district.”

In discussions with the Accreditation BAC, it became clear that the presence of legal counsel was not intended to challenge the President/Superintendent’s authority; rather, the legal counsel was initiated to educate the board members, new and old, regarding the legal consequences of their decisions. Nevertheless, the board, rather than have the appearance of an impropriety, no
longer has the legal counsel attend “operational meetings such as Coordinating Committee,” though counsel continues to attend meetings of the President’s Cabinet, which is a group that reviews board meeting agendas as part of the agenda development process. The President/Superintendent has requested general counsel to attend the meetings to be familiar with agenda items in order to answer potential questions from board members.

Results and Analysis of Recommendation 4

The Accreditation BAC was equally diligent in addressing Recommendation 4, which, like Recommendation 3, addresses the concern that the board was not following its written policies. However, whereas Recommendation 3 focuses specifically on the board not following policies with respect to the appropriate roles of the board and the President/Superintendent, Recommendation 4 addresses the board not following its written policies when conducting its self-evaluation, when placing items on board meeting agendas, and with regard to board members visiting faculty and staff.

The Accreditation BAC reviewed the visiting team’s findings, analyzed and interpreted the Recommendations, and developed plans for addressing each. Through this process, it became clear to the group that concerns expressed by the visiting team resulted more from the board’s misunderstanding of the policies, rather than from an attempt to circumvent them. Nevertheless, the BAC members discussed each incident carefully and outlined actions that have been embraced by the entire board to ensure that policies and procedures are followed in the future [16].

One concern expressed by the visiting team was how board members placed items on the board meeting agenda. In particular, they identified an instance of placing of an item on the agenda for the August 13, 2013 meeting as a violation of Board Policy 2340 “Agendas.” To address the visiting teams concerns, the policy has been reviewed by the board; the board has expressed a commitment to follow its policy. The Accreditation BAC and Board Policy BAC reviewed the policy and proposed revisions, which was ultimately approved by the Board of Trustees at its January 21, 2015 board meeting.
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Another concern expressed by the visiting team was that one “board member visited offices, staff, and departments throughout the college distributing personal business cards and inviting all staff, faculty to contact them individually with any issues they desire.” The visiting team identified this action as violating Board Policy 2715 “Code of Ethics/Standards of Practice,” which “describes the board’s role to function as a whole and responsibility to interact and govern openly in public through their governing board meetings.”

The Accreditation BAC discussed this point at length and agreed that a study session on ethics would benefit the board. During this study session, currently scheduled for February 11, 2015, the board will discuss BP 2715 Code of Ethics, which includes set protocols for interacting with the public and staff as well as corrective action that the board can take. In this way, board members will be able to distinguish their role as a board member and as a private citizen, and thereby recognize that board members have authority only when they are meeting as a board in a public setting.

The visiting team also believed that the board members violated Board Policy 2550, “Authority and Relationship of Board and District Negotiation Teams with Exclusive Bargaining Units,” when they “directed each of the employee negotiating teams to appear before them in closed session to engage in direct contact negotiations.” The team believed this action violated the board policy because “current board policy indicates that the board shall engage in employee negotiations expressly through their direction and input to the district negotiating team.”

At a quick glance, it might be understandable how these events may have been misconstrued by the visiting team to suggest that the board engaged in direct negotiation with the unions. However, when explored more closely, it was clear that the board did not intend to engage in direct bargaining; instead, it scheduled a special board meeting on November 20, 2013 for the expressed purpose of “receiving clarification and rationale for their respective outstanding bargaining proposals in current negotiations.” [18]

To accomplish this, District counsel advised the board to schedule presentations by both union and district bargaining representatives in a special closed study session. The board scheduled a
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40-minute presentation by the Cerritos College Faculty Federation (CCFF), followed by a 40-minute presentation by the district’s bargaining representatives for CCFF negotiations. The board also heard a 40-minute presentation by California School Employees Association, Chapter #161, followed by a 30-minute presentation by the district’s bargaining representatives for CSEA negotiations [19].

As the schedule suggests, the meeting was used, not as a means to engage in direct negotiations with the employee unions, but as an opportunity to better understand each group’s bargaining position. Moreover, at the conclusion of the meeting, the board scheduled time to provide “guidance . . . on bargaining issues to district negotiating team.” As such, the board correctly set policy for the negotiating team and then allowed the negotiating team to implement the policy without interference.

Nevertheless, in order to avoid giving the appearance of impropriety, in the future, the board will explicitly utilize the appointed district negotiating teams to act as its representative in negotiations and rely primarily on their negotiating teams to provide them with regular progress reports. When it is appropriate to hear from the bargaining units, the board will hear the presentations in open session and within clearly defined parameters in accordance with Board Policy 2550 “Authority and Relationship of Board and District Negotiation Teams with Exclusive Bargaining Units” and Government Code, Section 3540.

The visiting team also found that, due to a variety of reasons, all board members were not able to attend all training opportunities. To address this issue, the Accreditation BAC discussed the responsibilities of the board members to be involved in continuous board development. For this reason, the advisory committee recommended, and the board approved, that when board members attend conferences, they should provide summaries of the meetings and copies of any written materials from conferences/workshops so that all of the board may benefit from the information received.

To ensure compliance with this recommendation, the board will formalize this process by modifying Board Policy 2740, “Board Education,” to include the following language: “Board
members should provide summaries of and materials from conferences/workshops that they
attend so that all of the board may benefit from the information received.” While the policy is
currently being developed, the board has already put the spirit of the policy into practice. At the
December 10, 2014 board meeting, two board members gave a report of conference activities [20
- Item 32].

Moreover, the Accreditation BAC discussed the importance of board members attending training
sessions. In doing so, they acknowledged that scheduling conflicts arise due to other employment
and family conflicts; nevertheless, if a board member is unable to attend a training session, for
whatever reason, they are expected to review the training session and any accompanying
material. The review of training sessions is particularly easy now that the college films all board
meetings and uploads a copy of the broadcast to the board’s webpage [21].

Finally, the visiting team found that the board had not completed the process for establishing
board goals and conducting its self-evaluation. In this instance, the visiting team identified board
action taken on June 19, 2013 “to appoint a board subcommittee to draft board goals, set a public
study session to discuss and approve board goals, develop a new board self-evaluation survey
and propose any revisions to Board Policy 2745.” However, after reviewing the minutes for the
remainder of 2013, the visiting team could not find any further evidence that the board
completed the work outlined in the board action.

In response to the visiting team’s report, at the June 11, 2014 special board meeting, the board
established the Board Goals and Self Evaluation Board Advisory Committee and charged it with
responsibility to review the 2013 Board Self Evaluation and Goals [22 - Item 2]. In addition, this
advisory committee summarized deficiencies noted by the ACCJC to identify areas of
improvement. After reviewing the 2013 process, the Board Goals and Self Evaluation BAC s
distributed a survey titled, "2013 Board Goals and Activities Evaluation"; on August 14, 2014;
on September 3, 2014, the board reviewed the survey results and provided opportunity for public
feedback [11 - Item 29,23].
As a result of the work done by the Board Goals and Self-Evaluation BAC, this year’s process for establishing board goals and reviewing self-evaluation results was much improved. Indeed, the Board Goals and Self-Evaluation BAC also reviewed the results of the 2014 Board Self Evaluation. On June 11, 2014, the board conducted a special board meeting to discuss the results of the self-evaluation and provided an opportunity for public feedback [26]. Afterwards, each member of the Board Goals and Self Evaluation BAC drafted board goals for the 2014-15 academic year, which were gathered into a single list. At the September 3 and September 17, 2014 board meetings, the 2014-15 Board Goals were presented, discussed, and approved by the board [11 - Item 31, 13 - Item 31].

The Accreditation BAC also reviewed Board Policy 2745 “Board Self-Evaluation.” The advisory committee suggested that board develop its annual goals prior to the development of the President/Superintendent’s goals, so that the president’s goals align with those of the board. In order to formalize these changes, the board recommended revisions to AP 2745.

The Board Policy Advisory Committee reviewed the documents on October 30 and the College Coordinating Committee reviewed the additional proposed revisions on November 3 [24 - Item VIII]. The board adopted the revised policy and reviewed the administrative procedure at the November 12, 2014 board meeting [3 - Item 32]. To complement the board’s review of board policies, the college has scheduled a board study session on board ethics.

In response to the team’s recommendations, the college and its board have worked together to address each recommendation in a thoughtful and systematic manner. In doing so, the college and its board have come to a much better understanding of each other’s roles in support of student learning and, as a result, are in a good position to continue to move forward in a positive, collaborative, and cooperative manner that ultimately benefits student achievement.
### Evidence (in progress)

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