



SAN DIEGO COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT

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CITY COLLEGE | MESA COLLEGE | MIRAMAR COLLEGE | CONTINUING EDUCATION

THE LITTLE HOOVER COMMISSION

Written Testimony
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Community Colleges and Adult Education

Overview of Community Colleges

The American community college “movement” has from inception included both credit and noncredit educational courses in the mix of programs that are provided for a diverse public. The American Association of Community Colleges records that currently there are 1,173 community colleges in the United States, many with multiple campuses, serving a total of 11.8 million students. Of these students, 6.8 million are taking credit classes, and 5 million are enrolled in noncredit classes. Nationally, 60% of community college students attend part-time and 40% are enrolled as full-time. The average age of community college students is approximately 29, reflecting an extremely broad range of students from teenagers to older adults.

The California Community Colleges system is the largest system of higher education in the nation. It is composed of 72 districts that operate 112 colleges, and annually enrolls more than 2.9 million students, which is approximately one quarter of all community college students in the nation. The primary mission of community colleges is threefold: to provide courses and programs that prepare students for transfer to four-year universities and colleges; to provide career/technical education as preparation for the workforce; and to provide basic skills education to assist students in becoming college-ready. Community colleges have also had a complementary mission to provide focused education for adults, as well as lifelong learning opportunities to ensure a well-educated citizenry.

Following the enactment of the Donohoe Higher Education Act in 1960, which produced the “California Master Plan for Higher Education,” the 1960s and 1970s saw the formation of community college districts that had formerly been part of the K-12 organizations in their local areas. With separate governing boards and a new independence, many community college districts operated single colleges while others

chose to operate multiple institutions within the same district. Their focus was primarily transfer and workforce education. In most cases, K-12 organizations retained the responsibility for offering adult education programs while in other instances, notably the San Diego Community College District and the San Francisco Community College District, adult education became a community college responsibility. Over time, many community colleges have offered some levels of noncredit education for adults, but the concentration of these programs can be found in the following districts: San Francisco, San Diego, North Orange, Rancho Santiago, Mount San Antonio, Glendale, Santa Rosa, and Santa Barbara.

Under California law, there are nine eligible areas for noncredit adult education programs that are supported by the state:

1. Parenting, including parent cooperative preschools, classes in child growth and development and parent-child relationships.
2. Elementary and secondary basic skills and other courses and classes such as remedial academic courses or classes in reading, mathematics, and language arts.
3. English as a second language.
4. Classes and courses for immigrants eligible for educational services in citizenship, English as a second language, and workforce preparation classes in the basic skills of speaking, listening, reading, writing, mathematics, decision-making and problem solving skills, and other classes required for preparation to participate in job-specific technical training.
5. Education programs for persons with substantial disabilities.
6. Short-term vocational programs with high employment potential (includes apprenticeship).
7. Education programs for older adults.
8. Education programs for home economics (known as Family and Consumer Sciences).
9. Health and safety education.

Financing credit and noncredit programs has also metamorphosed over the years. State compensation for credit programs and noncredit programs has fluctuated with differing apportionment rates for credit and noncredit full-time-equivalent-students (FTES). However, a new system of consistent compensation within the community colleges was ushered in under SB 361 in 2006, which not only “equalized”

apportionment funding for credit FTES in the state's community colleges, but also made a significant distinction in the funding of community college noncredit FTES by adding a new funding category: *Career Development and College Preparation (CDCP)*. As a result, community college districts receive apportionment funding based upon three types of FTES generated by three categories of courses (the following is based upon the San Diego CCD First Principal Apportionment Report in 2010-11):

- Credit \$4564.83
- CDCP Noncredit \$3232.07
- Noncredit \$2744.96

About the San Diego Community College District

Like many California community college organizations, the San Diego Community College District (SDCCD) had its beginnings as part of the San Diego Unified School District. Effective July 1, 1970, the San Diego Community College District was established as a separate entity having responsibility for the operation of three community colleges, City College, Mesa College, and Miramar College, and also having responsibility for the Adult Education Division. In November 1972, the voters of San Diego approved a separate governing board, called the Board of Trustees, for the newly-formed district and the first Chancellor was selected. On October 25, 1973, an agreement between the San Diego Community College District and the San Diego Unified School District defined the operation of the adult education programs within the limits of the City of San Diego.

The San Diego Community College District is now one of the largest community college districts in the nation, and the second largest district in California. SDCCD serves approximately 100,000 students each semester at three comprehensive community colleges and six Continuing Education campuses, as well as over 140,000 service personnel at military bases in 24 states. The three colleges, San Diego City College, San Diego Mesa College, and San Diego Miramar College, are separately accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges. The colleges offer associate degrees for transfer and general education, and certificates of achievement in occupational/Career Technical Education (CTE) programs preparing students for the workforce.

San Diego Continuing Education is the largest, community college operated, separately-accredited institution of its kind in the nation. On an annual basis, Continuing Education serves more than 100,000 students representing 140 countries. In the fall 2010, after an 18-month process of self-study and an independent evaluation by peers from across the state, San Diego Continuing Education was granted a full reaffirmation of its accredited status through 2016 by the Western Association of School and Colleges Commission for Schools.

- ***In your opinion, how does continuing education align with the mission of the California community colleges? Is there a skill level below which community colleges should not teach?***

In general, California community colleges have a basic mission of service to provide access to high-quality education for people who are 18 years of age or older and who can benefit from a higher education. These students come to the colleges with a wide range of academic preparation and skills. Some are completely ready for college-level coursework and will progress rapidly to an associate degree, certificate, and beyond. Unfortunately, the majority of students (in many cases over 70% of all entering freshmen), are assessed into pre-college-level (developmental and remedial) reading, writing, or mathematics. These students must pursue and succeed in pre-collegiate coursework before they are ready for college-level coursework. This unfortunate reality accounts for the fact that many students cannot complete a community college program within two years.

In San Diego, Continuing Education significantly aligns with the important and overarching mission of access to a high-quality education because Continuing Education serves as the primary point of entry, both a gateway and a ladder, for students who can complete their developmental education and “transfer” to one of the district’s three colleges. Continuing Education is the largest feeder of all students to SDCCD’s three colleges. More students enter the colleges from Continuing Education than from the combined high schools within the San Diego Unified School District. Structured programs between the credit and noncredit institutions facilitate student migration to college and student success.

Data indicate that Continuing Education is a particularly important gateway for students of color and for students with less fortunate social and economic backgrounds who have low skill levels. Many of these disadvantaged students have limited or no other options to improve workforce readiness or prepare for college. For these reasons, SDCCD has uniquely structured itself so that all adult students, regardless of their academic preparation or skill level, can find an educational pathway to higher learning. Many times, this pathway begins in Continuing Education, where students can prepare for college coursework and be more successful upon enrollment in college.

Data also show that students who fall too far below collegiate-level English and mathematics and who take developmental courses three and four levels below the collegiate floor have extremely high attrition rates, more often than not failing to pursue their college goals. In our opinion, community college credit programs should not include courses more than two levels below the collegiate threshold. Noncredit programs are best positioned to provide developmental education at these levels, both in full-course and modular modes.

- ***In your opinion, should "adult education" or continuing education programs be administered consistently across the state? Is there a need for the state to clarify what types of programs fall under adult education, non-credit instruction and credit instruction?***

In an effort to avoid duplication of services and costs, Senate Bill 765 was enacted in 1972, mandating that local school districts and community colleges develop delineation of function agreements, clarifying which organizations would provide adult education classes in their communities. These agreements were fashioned community by community, all across California. Depending upon local needs, some communities elected to have the K-12 school districts provide adult education. In other communities, the community college districts were assigned this responsibility. In San Diego, the community college district was chosen as the adult education provider, which is carried out by San Diego Continuing Education.

Three common elements govern adult education statewide. First, the nine adult education programs authorized for state support are defined for all providers. Second, curriculum issues and overall standards are addressed by the WASC Accrediting Commission for Schools. Third, the basic funding rate for noncredit instruction is the same for both K-12 and community colleges, although an additional, higher rate was adopted for the category of community college noncredit classes known as Career Development and College Preparation (CDCP), which is not operative in K-12 adult education programs. Beyond this framework, local determinations have prevailed regarding the scope and nature of these programs.

In our opinion, community colleges have the most expertise in educating the adult population, from pedagogy to support services. As a long-term goal, it would seem appropriate to assign this function to community colleges, along with appropriate funding. In the meantime, the state should set standards and strengthen the role of adult education, especially in the area of developmental education leading toward student competency for college-level coursework.

- ***In your experience, how has your district's role as the primary purveyor of adult education strengthened your district? What challenges has the responsibility presented?***

As stated previously, Continuing Education is the primary feeder to the San Diego Community College District's three colleges. As such, Continuing Education provides a significant gateway for San Diego community members to participate in higher-level learning. Data collected over the last six years show that students of color and students with social and economic disadvantages find their pathway to the colleges through Continuing Education more than through any other route. SDCCD has recognized this critical component and the additional importance of Continuing Education and has embraced the integration of this pathway into the district's overall operation and strategy.

One of the greatest challenges SDCCD has faced in establishing the leadership role of San Diego Continuing Education has been the absence of statewide regulations, guidelines, and incentives promoting collaborative work between credit and noncredit programs. The models under which each segment operates are separate, from fees to funding to faculty preparation to curriculum and program requirements. Forging a collaborative structure has required innovation and internal funding priorities on the part of the district.

- ***What aspects of your model might work for other community college districts?***

Whether community colleges elect to utilize a separate structure for adult/continuing education or to include this as a department or division within their broader instructional organization, four aspects of the San Diego Community College District model would be useful, as follows:

1. A clear delineation of function and assigned levels for developmental education should be developed for credit and noncredit programs;
2. Instructional “ladders” should be constructed for course and program alignment between credit and noncredit offerings, including articulation agreements;
3. Institutions should be encouraged to increase the number and percentage of the noncredit offerings under the CDCP category (e.g., 80% of SDCCD’s noncredit courses are CDCP);
4. Student transition and migration models should be utilized to promote the noncredit program as a feeder to the credit program, which would include priority registration for noncredit students who matriculate into the credit program; and
5. Leadership positions for the noncredit program should be equal in level and compensation to the comparable leadership positions in the credit program.

- ***What shaped your decision to have your continuing education program separately WASC-accredited?***

Generally, adult education programs can be unaccredited, share in the broader accreditation of a comprehensive community college, or be separately accredited. When the San Diego Community College District separated from the San Diego Unified School District in 1970, this not only shifted responsibility for adult education but also provided other mandates. The SDCCD also offers a joint high school diploma program, as well as the GED, which is why the WASC Commission on Schools serves as the accreditor. Meeting the high standards and requirements of separate accreditation has also been important to the credibility of the Career Technical Education certificate programs. The accreditation process and review covers all aspects and programs of

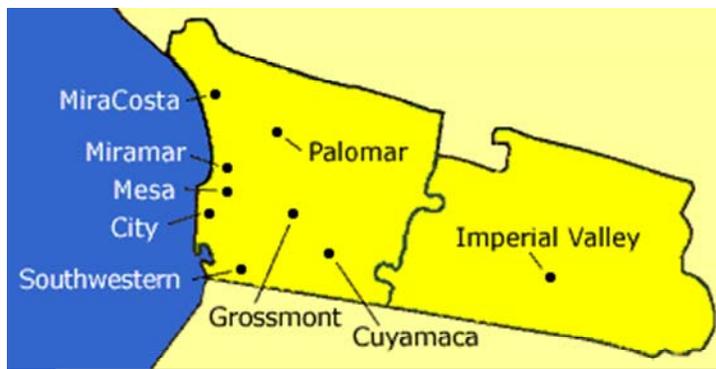
Continuing Education and is a significant quality assurance feature of the adult education operation.

- ***What are the benefits of having separate salary schedules for your community college and continuing education faculty?***

Because the state compensation rates differ significantly between credit FTES apportionment and the two levels of noncredit FTES apportionment, it has historically been the practice in the district to have separate salary schedules for credit and noncredit faculty, which have been periodically addressed and adjusted during the bargaining process. Lack of state funding has made planned increases in the noncredit schedule not possible. This is a matter that is subject to collective bargaining and must be negotiated between the SDCCD and the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) Guild, Local 1931. Currently, one Continuing Education faculty category, counseling faculty, is on the same salary schedule as college faculty.

- ***Do you partner with neighboring districts to align curriculum in basic skills, workforce needs or transfer opportunities? Has your district shifted resources to better accommodate regional needs? How can the state or the Chancellor's Office incentivize more regional approaches?***

The San Diego and Imperial Counties Community Colleges Association (SDICCCA) functions as a regional consortium of community colleges (i.e., Region X) that spans a broad geographic area that extends from the Southern California coast to the Arizona border. The consortium is composed of six community college districts and nine colleges, as indicated on the map below:



Through the SDICCCA organization, numerous regional partnerships and collaborative efforts take place within Region X, and communication is greatly enhanced by the monthly meetings. In terms of curricular development, a recent example of coordination is represented by a collaborative SDICCCA grant application for the Department of Labor (DOL), Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) grant. In essence, the DOL TAA grant is focused on helping displaced workers be re-trained and re-employed. Basic

skills instruction is a critical component of this training. The Region X colleges recognized the basic skills leadership and effectiveness of San Diego Continuing Education; therefore, Continuing Education serves as the hub of basic skills instruction for all the participating regional colleges. The concept is to enroll students in career technical programs who test below a particular level of basic skills in classes provided by Continuing Education, which will be provided both online and in the classroom, depending upon student preference. Overall, Continuing Education will provide all basic skills training for the colleges of Region X. This is a unique learning-community basic skills model that could be replicated across areas of California—and the nation—for basic skills instruction.

- ***What role do the trustees play in identifying local economic and workforce needs and guiding the content of the district's continuing education certificate programs?***

The district leadership and governing board work closely with the Regional Chamber of Commerce, with City of San Diego planning agencies, with school and university organizations, and the San Diego Workforce Partnership to obtain information regarding regional economic and workforce needs. Board members review such needs at meetings and also through the vehicle of their Trustee Advisory Council, Corporate Council, Vocational Program Advisory Groups, and other sources of input.

- ***In your district, how do students who enter continuing education programs prior to enrolling in a community college fare compared to students who directly enroll in a community college? Is it common for students to concurrently enroll in non-credit and credit courses?***

Because of the San Diego Community College District's concerted effort to transition noncredit students to the colleges, a significant effort is expended to track related data. Each of the last six years, the district's research and planning division has collected related student performance data. A detailed analysis of this data is formally presented to the Board of Trustees each year.

District researchers have established a straight-forward research design to monitor noncredit student performance at the colleges. Specifically, cohort data are collected from students who start in Continuing Education and then transition to the colleges. This data is then compared against student performance for all other college students, who did not first attend Continuing Education classes.

The results of this research have consistently and unequivocally indicated that students who first attend Continuing Education classes before attending the colleges have greater success rates than those who start at the colleges directly without first attending Continuing Education. This success is seen in higher placement assessment scores in reading and writing; greater persistence rates semester to semester; greater retention rates within the classes; greater unit completion rates; and greater overall success rates. Clearly, college students have an advantage when they begin at Continuing

Education. For all these reasons, Continuing Education students are given priority registration in the application process at the colleges.

In terms of concurrent enrollment in noncredit and credit courses, there are over 1,000 students each semester who concurrently enroll in college classes and Continuing Education classes. The course-taking patterns and performance of these students are currently under review.

- ***In your district, do students use the same enrollment procedures and entrance assessments to enroll in the continuing education program and the community colleges? Do these same procedures/assessments align with other regional districts?***

The procedure to enroll in noncredit classes is different than that for the colleges. A mandatory orientation is required for all noncredit students wanting to enroll in Continuing Education. The orientation session is conducted by a counselor or instructional faculty member. This is an important step since many noncredit students have been out of school for considerable periods of time and need an orientation to assist them in re-entering the learning environment.

Assessment is multifaceted and includes counselor review of student academic history; educational planning based on student goals; and the use of *TABE* (Tests of Adult Basic Education) results. For classes and programs where a certificate of completion is not available, students generally enroll directly with the instructional faculty, who provide an orientation.

Credit student enrollment routinely includes an appointment with a counselor and an assessment using *Accuplacer*. Classes are recommended to the student based on assessment scores; however, under California regulations, students may choose to enroll in classes other than those recommended.

In general, there is alignment regarding enrollment procedures and processes between Continuing Education and the district's colleges.

- ***Do your continuing education courses articulate with credit courses taught through the district community college programs? If so, how do you work with your partners in the community colleges to ensure that continuing education programs bridge with credit courses to make a seamless transition for students? Also, what lessons could other community college districts apply to improve articulation between non-credit and credit courses?***

Within the San Diego Community College District, several articulation agreements have been approved between Continuing Education and the colleges. All agreements are in career technical fields and provide a seamless pathway for students to transition from noncredit to credit programs. The agreements specify that a certain amount of college credit will be granted upon the completion of a noncredit program within a specific

program of study. There has also been work to develop parallel classes where both noncredit and credit students would attend the same class and receive instruction. In this case, noncredit students would have an opportunity during the semester to transition to the credit class or remain in the noncredit class.

Current articulation agreements between Continuing Education and the colleges include:

- Automotive Technology
- Business Information Technology/Office Systems and Multimedia
- Culinary Arts
- Fashion Technology
- Machine Technology

Additional noncredit to credit transition strategies include:

- ESL Transition Academy
 - Bridging Lab at Mesa College
 - Accelerated English noncredit/credit coursework sequence
 - Continuing Education Days and the work of the “college ambassadors”
 - Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) to Licensed Vocational Nurse (LVN) curricular bridge between Continuing Education and San Diego City College
- ***How do you work with local industry to ensure programs are meeting immediate workforce needs? How quickly are your continuing education programs able to respond to changing industry needs?***

All of San Diego Continuing Education’s 30 Career Technical Education (CTE) programs have program advisory boards of professionals from the various fields that meet twice each year. These advisory boards are made up of as many as 30 community members, representing government, business, and industry. Many of these members are currently employed in the occupational field or service. Their role is to update Continuing Education programs on current and projected labor markets, define occupational competencies, relate industry standards, and frame aptitudes necessary for entry-level employment and/or upward mobility for incumbent workers.

They make recommendations on curriculum and program quality, facilities, equipment, and materials to ensure that our programs are meeting the changing business and industry requirements. Because of the noncredit nature of Continuing Education, curricular adjustments can be made quickly. San Diego Continuing Education is one of the most agile institutions of its kind.

- ***Do you work with regional partners outside of your district, such as K-12 or community college districts, to align curriculum with San Diego’s continuing education program?***

San Diego Continuing Education works with several regional partners outside of the district. First, Continuing Education has maintained a long-standing, successful Joint High School Completion Program with San Diego Unified School District. This program accommodates adult students who did not finish high school. Nearly 200 students graduate from this program each year.

In addition, Continuing Education is involved in several regional grant projects with the local Workforce Investment Board (WIB) for workforce development. An example of this is an American Recovery and Reinvestment Act green technology, sustainability grant. Through the state-of-the-art S.T.A.R. (Sustainability Training and Resource) Center, Continuing Education provides energy auditing and weatherization training for the San Diego region. This program includes working very closely to align curriculum with Cuyamaca College in the Grossmont-Cuyamaca Community College District.

- ***How has your experience in Washington with I-BEST model shaped the way you approach the continuing education program in San Diego?***

Comment Specifically from Dr. Beebe: Washington State has been successfully using the Integrated Basic Education Skills Training (I-BEST) model since 2002. I-BEST is now one of the leading basic skills models in the nation. In essence, I-BEST is a learning community that pairs Career Technical Education with contextualized basic skills instruction. I was fortunate to have served as a community college Vice President for Instruction and Student Services in the Washington state community college system, implementing the pilot stages of the I-BEST model. When I came to San Diego, I introduced the I-BEST model and faculty readily embraced the concepts and began offering related classes, becoming the first in California to offer I-BEST programs.

A critical lesson learned from the I-BEST experience relates to connectedness. Specifically, the idea that students must first complete all levels of basic education before they can begin workforce training or move on to more sophisticated academic learning is misdirected and even detrimental to student progress and learning. I-BEST confirmed what we have known for more than a thousand years: Students do not learn in isolation; they must make personal world-view connections with new learning.

The essence of the I-BEST model is that basic education is taught in the context of the new subject material. This, for example, has been extremely effective teaching Career Technical Education (CTE) subjects. In these cases, a CTE faculty team teaches with a basic skills faculty member, tightly and thoroughly integrating their curricula. The payoff is that students learn both topics more quickly, making sense of the importance of the two topics and how they fit together. This contextualized and integrated learning represents a fundamental shift in basic skills instruction. Students are afforded a highly relevant educational experience that motivates them to be more successful.