

# BOARD FOCUS

SPRING 2016

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## The Board-CEO Relationship

*Wanden Treanor, Trustee, Marin CCD*

The League has identified CEO development as a strategic objective. The experiences of our current CEOs will naturally inform the strategies to meet that objective. In this Board Focus, we highlight how trustee leadership in partnering with the CEO, not only supports the CEO to be engaged, challenged and able to reach his/her true potential, but also how it benefits the district.

The Board-CEO connection is an employer-employee relationship and its success can significantly affect the success of one of the community’s greatest public assets, its community college.

Like any relationship, the Board-CEO relationship must be grounded in respect, mutual support and authenticity. A successful relationship requires a level of maturity to honor each other’s strengths and to be able to support each other in taking on new challenges.

Frequent CEO turnover is not in a district’s best interest and board conduct plays a central role in that statistic. Search consultants placing community college CEOs say that the most common question asked of them by a potential candidate is, ‘tell me about the Board’. Good candidates want to know how the board treated the out-going CEO, why he/she is leaving, and if the Board members understand their role in the Board-CEO relationship.

If you want to attract and retain the best candidates, understand the role trustees play in a successful Board-CEO relationship. Ask how trustees can support the professional development of CEOs and identify benchmarks to create and sustain an environment where the health of this critical relationship is monitored and supported. While there isn’t one answer, we can share the collective wisdom of current and past CEOs who have discussed how trustees can strengthen the relationship and become better partners in the success and professional growth of the CEO.

*continued on page 4*

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# President's Message

*by Janet Chaniot*  
*President, CCCT Board*



Dear Friends and Colleagues,  
CCCT Board members are excited and involved as never before on behalf of all California community college trustees and the 2.1 million students we have been elected to serve. With League President/CEO Dr. Larry Galizio, CEO Board members, and League staff and Board representatives, we are moving forward together in addressing three areas of concern to the community college system: access, success, and equity.

We work with the Chancellor and Board of Governors to support legislation in these areas, including AB 288, which allows dual/concurrent enrollment in secondary and college programs. Another bill introducing a pilot program to allow 15 districts to develop baccalaureate degree programs, also supported by trustees, is also being implemented. In addition we have contributed to, and endorsed, recommendations from Chancellor Brice Harris's Initiatives: The Task Force on Workforce, Job Creation, and a Strong Economy and The Task Force on Accreditation. When he retires this year, Chancellor Harris will be honored for his leadership and for strengthening of the community college system.

At our 2015-16 meetings we are sharing reports from many CCCT members who are serving on a task force or committee and lending the perspectives of trustees to the discussion of issues important to community college education. These are: ACCJC Planning Group, Chancellor's Accreditation Taskforce, Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT), California Educational Facilities Authority, Campaign for College Opportunity, Common Assessment Steering Committee, Consultation Council, Institutional Effectiveness Partnership Initiative (IEPI) Advisory Committee, Success Center Advisory Board, and the Workforce Task Force. As committees and task force initiatives are created, trustees are recognized as voices that are needed and valued, such as the addition of a trustee to the EEO and Diversity Committee.

To address the priorities of the League and the CCCT Policy Board, CCCT has taken steps in two directions:

One is to become more active at the national level with the Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT). The ACCT held its annual Congress this year in San Diego, and the League, along with the Chancellor's Office, understanding that, as the largest community college system in the nation, we need to have a greater voice at the national level, supported the CCCT Board's endorsement of five candidates for the ACCT Board and committees. In February the four who were elected, and CCCT members with League President Galizio and other representatives of California and the West Coast Region, traveled to Washington D.C. to participate in the ACCT Legislative Congress.

The other is to recognize individuals, businesses, and other organizations in our communities in a listing of "Community College Connections Supporting Student Success" (CCCSSS). Recommendations in the Student Success and Workforce Task Force Initiatives encourage, and express the need for, colleges to increase and strengthen relationships with their communities. With this in mind, we are collecting, from each CCCT board member, examples of these connections in their districts and the districts they contact in our Communication Plan. This and future lists will be archived in the BoardDocs Library. We will also encourage districts to continue to honor their community partnerships and the role they play in making our colleges "community" learning centers.

The CCCT invites all to become involved in these conversations when we meet this spring.

*Moving Forward!*

*Janet Chaniot*

# 'Strong Workforce' Task Force: Doing What MATTERS

California's employers, like those of most states, face a troubling dynamic. With an improved economy, they have lots of jobs to fill, but not enough available skilled workers to fill them. It's projected that by 2025, 30 percent of all job openings in California – or a total of 1.9 million jobs – will require some form of postsecondary education short of a four-year degree. California has a skills gap that must be closed for the state's residents, business and economy to thrive.

The Board of Governor's Task Force on Workforce, Job Creation and a Strong Economy ('Strong Workforce' Task Force) is a collection of leaders from across the community college system, the business community, labor, public agencies involved in workforce training, K-12 education policy, community based organizations, and other groups tasked with making recommendations for change that will ensure a California workforce with relevant skills and quality credentials that meet employer needs. Quantitatively, the task force's goal is one million more associate's degrees, certificates or industry-valued credentials awarded within 10 years.

The Strong Workforce Task Force's efforts culminated in 25 recommendations that support seven broad areas – student success, career pathways, workforce data and outcomes, curriculum, faculty, regional coordination and funding. In November 2015 the Board of Governors unanimously approved the recommendations.

## Five actions you can take to get involved and support the work of the Strong Workforce Task Force

1. When reviewing curriculum changes submitted for Board approval, ask for career and workforce outcomes. Also ask how industry input has been infused into the curriculum.
2. Ask whether your Board is timely with its review of CTE curriculum.
3. When reviewing the biannual CTE reports to the Board, ask questions about impact and outcomes.
4. When reviewing proposals for new certificates and awards, ask how they connect to others that are in existence. This move toward the goals of stackable credentials.
5. Engage community businesses to provide work-based learning and job shadowing opportunities, such as Linked Learning.

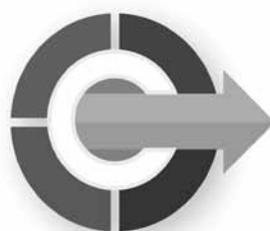
For more information about the Strong Workforce Task Force, visit the website [<http://www.doingwhatmatters.cccco.edu/StrongWorkforce.aspx>] or contact Linda Wah, Trustee designee on the Task Force at [LSWAH@pasadena.edu](mailto:LSWAH@pasadena.edu). ■



Linda Wah  
Trustee  
Pasadena CCD

*"If we don't get it right  
in California, not only  
California but the  
country stands to lose its  
global competitiveness."*

*Brice W. Harris,  
Chancellor, California  
Community Colleges*



CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGES

**Task Force on  
WORKFORCE**

JOB CREATION AND A STRONG ECONOMY

# The Board-CEO Relationship

*continued from cover*

## A Good Relationship Requires Both Parties to Work at It

If the Board is working to maintain a healthy CEO relationship, the individual board members need to understand the board's role and must conduct themselves such that they 'stay in their lane' as Dr. Helen Benjamin explains in the box about "What CEOs want from Trustees".

If the Board is not working to maintain a healthy CEO relationship, they risk the district having to look for a new CEO and the fact that CEO turnover can negatively impact the district. The cost of the search, the lost opportunities that might have come with continuity of leadership and the time required to get a new CEO functioning at his/her optimum, are all factors that weigh on the board and district during a CEO transition. You can never predict if the transition will be short or prolonged. It may be that you will have an interim CEO for a year while you conduct a search, and/or you may not get a 'good fit' in the first round of the search and find that you must go out again. Whatever happens, it is time-consuming and it comes with a cost.

If the CEO is not effectively working on a healthy relationship with the Board, it is important to have honest communication, in closed session, about the CEO's performance. Recognize the demands of job; provide good feedback, but always critique in private. Before leaping to the conclusion that the relationship is not salvageable, spend time together to work through, in a supportive, collaborative manner identifying what steps might help to improve the CEO's skills. Professional development and/or engaging a sage outside coach/mentor are but two ways to build the CEO's skills to meet the demands of the job. If the CEO is coming from out of state, it is particularly important to understand that he/she may not

know all the nuances of our unique system and that additional support early on may be necessary to maximize the talents of a capable leader.

## Change Is Good – Create a Great Launch

This article is not saying that change at the helm is bad. Change can be good and new opportunities will come with new leadership. However, the launch of a new CEO requires thoughtful planning. The sooner a new CEO can hit the ground running with college constituencies, with business and civic

leaders, with community partners and educational leaders, the better for the district. Each district has its unique communities and internal groups so no one approach will work for all; however, it is clear that internal and external forums and/or receptions are critical to introduce a new CEO. The Board plays an important role as ambassadors in identifying the 'connectors' in the community and making those introductions for the new CEO. The Board can also invite

## What the CEOs Say They Want From Trustees

For the past several years, the League has been fortunate to have Dr. Helen Benjamin, Chancellor of Contra Costa Community College District, candidly share her perspective of what CEOs want in the Board-CEO relationship in the Board Chair Workshop. Dr. Benjamin shared her own experiences, as well as she wove in suggestions from other CEOs throughout the State. Many of the CEO tips relate to the importance of the Board understanding its role, but also emphasize the need for the Board to support professional development and to recognize that the CEO needs to 'have a life' outside of the 24/7 job with the district.

A few highlights include:

- The Board needs to remain in their policy-setting "lane" by relegating responsibility and authority to the CEO to implement and administer board policies without interference;
- Operate on principle of "no surprises";
- No "end runs" that bypass the administration;
- Respect that the CEO works only for the board as a whole, so that the CEO does not have to respond to individual board member agendas;
- Ensure that decisions are based on what is best for the district and the students and not on special or personal interests;
- Think about and protect the long-term interests of the district;
- Be open, forthright and even-handed, be trust-worthy by maintaining confidentiality – personal & personnel;
- Hold the CEO accountable; set annual goals, ensure regular evaluation based on mutually agreed upon parameters; avoid at all times public criticism of the CEO by the board;
- Serve as sounding board; be a good listener; and,
- Review the CEO's contract regularly to ensure provisions are fair and competitive.

While most of the above suggestions are covered in the League's Excellence in Trusteeship Program training as 'best practices' for trustees in understanding our role and responsibility, it is important to note that these characteristics were presented as what talented, experienced CEOs are saying they want from their board. Therefore, it is fair to conclude that a talented CEO will expect all board members to operate at that level and, if they don't, the CEO will look for other opportunities to thrive, personally and professionally.

the new CEO to community events, such as nonprofit fundraisers, so that the CEO can be introduced and so direct contact can be made with community leaders and potential partners.

### CEOs Rejuvenation

The CEO is human, so don't forget that he/she needs a life outside of the job to be happy and healthy. The CEO's job requires him/her to be available seven days of a week, 24 hours a day, but that doesn't mean he/she should have to respond to the Board non-emergency issues 24-7. The demands of the job are such that it is likely the CEO works on the weekends and into the evening, but it should be something he/she controls, not to be at the beck and call of a trustee. Sure, we all have great ideas at all times of the day or night, just think before calling or emailing if it is necessary right then, or if it can wait.

CEOs must take vacations. A genuine break from the demands of the job will be refreshing and essential to the CEO's health and well-being. The world we live in is continually connected so it is very hard to completely disconnect. The board should own a shared ethic, supporting and encouraging the CEO to take the time. There will never be a perfect time for the CEO to be gone, but part of the job requires making sure there is a succession plan and that competent administrators are prepared to step up and take charge when needed to do so. If the CEO gets away, the district will benefit from his/her renewed energy and creative ideas that will flow from the CEO's rejuvenation.

Finally, while the CEO has a very important job to do and he/she is the board's only employee, don't forget to have fun together and have a sense of humor. ■

## Advancing Our Advocacy: A Renewed Focus on College Affordability



*Lizette Navarette  
Vice President*

*Strategy and Policy Development*

As the second year of the 2015-16 legislative session unfolds, college affordability has emerged as a key focus for the legislature – a focus that is applauded by the League. The League Government Relations Office continues its efforts to represent the trustees' voice through advocacy efforts in two key areas – policy and budget.

In the policy area, the League is currently tracking over 100 bills that affect California Community Colleges ranging from campus safety, textbooks, Cal Grants, to CTE. Specifically, in support of the legislature's focus on college affordability, the League is sponsoring two bills, AB 1721 (Medina) and AB 1892 (Medina), that support the California College Promise initiative by reforming Cal Grants to adequately serve community college students. Community college students receive less than 10 percent of the resources distributed by the Cal Grant program. This lack of investment has forced our students to take fewer classes, work more and ultimately sacrifice their opportunity to be academically successful. Throughout the spring and summer, we will encourage trustees' advocacy in support of AB 1721 and AB 1892.

The budget continues to be a key policy driver for Governor Brown. The proposed 2016-17 is a positive step in recognizing the indispensable role community colleges play in closing achievement gaps and in training California's workforce. However, we feel that the budget misses an opportunity to focus on overall educational quality by failing to allocate general operating resources. Making the case for general operating funds is the League's primary budget priority. More specifically, we are concerned about our colleges' ability to address state imposed increases to PERS/STRS contribution rates, and increases to employer health insurance rates and energy costs. These ongoing cost pressures are estimated to be as high as \$400 million annually. General operating funds help stabilize and better prepare colleges for the "roller coaster" revenues that are likely to occur in future years. An increased base allocation can ensure that core student programs are unaffected by these growing cost pressures. Budget hearings in spring will help legislative leaders address outstanding questions about the Governor's proposed budget and allow both the Senate and Assembly to identify their budget priorities. As the Legislature considers the budget, we will emphasize the importance of investing in the totality of our colleges.

With so many important policy topics on the horizon, the League continues to recognize that coalition building is one of its most effective advocacy tools to ensure the needs of community colleges are recognized. Trustees are a key component of these coalitions. The League Government Relations staff will provide opportunities for involvement, including League Alerts requesting letters and phone calls. In addition, legislative updates are available through the monthly newsletter. We encourage trustee awareness and involvement in these important legislative issues. ■



*Pamela Haynes  
Trustee, Los Rios CCD  
Member, Board of Governors  
California Community Colleges*

# A CALL TO ACTION: We Know Why Equity Matters and We Are the Key to How to Get It Done

As trustees, we must be the example, by having courageous conversations and discussions with our colleagues on our boards, in dialogue with faculty, staff and our CEOs. We must be asking the hard questions, engaging in difficult conversations about race, ethnicity, income disparities, cultural differences and implicit biases. The partnership between the board and the CEO is critical in developing the focus on doing this work.

It is essential that we ask questions about the representation of our faculty and staff. Diverse representation on our campuses matter. Questions such as what constitutes a diverse faculty and staff and how do we ensure that our colleges are hiring faculty of color across disciplines are both appropriate and an imperative.

We must be rigorous in our pursuit of answers that are anchored in real time measurable data, analysis and evaluation. As trustees, the guide in our decision-making process and our policy deliberations and discussions must be actionable data.

These conversations must not be just about who these students are but must also be about how well they function and are able to navigate within our institutions. How collaborative are our faculty and administrative staff in working with students of color? Is there collaboration and cooperation within and across departments?

The data confirms that most academically unprepared students of color are not likely to enroll in a college level math or English course even after taking traditional developmental education courses. We must ask how proactive are our colleges in targeting and identifying these students and ensuring that they

are actively engaged in supportive campus programs?

One example of such a collaboration is Sacramento City College's ESTEEM Project (Essential Support Teams for English, ESL and Math). ESTEEM is a collaboration in which a counselor, tutor, and a classified member will visit basic skills classrooms providing timely information about support programs, services and deadlines through weekly visits. Students are provided resources that help them to persist and succeed by building connections with more people on campus. It is also helping to build stronger relationships between instruction and classified staff.

Other successful examples have been on many of our campuses for years, but have never been sufficiently funded - the Puente Project, MESA, EOPS, Umoja, Summer-Bridge and TRIO. These programs are designed to help students succeed, be engaged, persist and to transfer to 4-year colleges. These critical programs need to be fully funded and scaled up.

Our students consistently tell us that they don't do optional. What kinds of activities are we mandating that students participate in? And what incentives are we providing that create opportunities for students to be successful? How are faculty and staff introducing intentional intrusive engagement with students of color? What types of strategies, if any, have been implemented? To what extent are these strategies effective with these students?

We have an opportunity to target and allocate both Student Success and Student Equity funds on programs that reflect best practices and show promise, especially with historically under-represented students. Are we scaling up successful programs

**A**s trustees we have a mandated responsibility to provide oversight, direction and fiscal accountability to the residents of our communities, the faculty and staff who are employed at our colleges and most importantly to the students who come to our colleges seeking an education.

The greatest challenge for colleges is producing equitable outcomes. But the greater challenge for trustees is in creating a system that holds colleges accountable for equitable educational outcome for students of color.

We are all grappling with how we ensure that the achievement gap is narrowed and ultimately eliminated for our historically under-represented students. And the reality is that narrowing the gap will require significant changes in our institutions, in our perspectives and in our strategies when working with these students.

A good place to start is an assessment of our current institutional policies that may act as barriers for students of color. What are our policies on hiring a diverse faculty and staff? Have we reviewed our strategic plans recently? Are our plans setting direction and goals that are outcome-driven? Are there equitable outcomes for students of color that are articulated in a way that is explicit, unambiguous and reflects that the goals are a top priority? Are we setting targets for each student sub-group?

and ensuring that we are targeting significant funding to those programs serving students who are in the most need of support, engagement and assistance?

American River College has been piloting STATWAY which is a two-semester alternative that reduces the number of semesters in remedial math. Algebra and Statistics are taught as an integrated course working with real-world problems in a cooperative group setting. This course is showing real promise and real success with students of color. In the fall, all four Los Rios colleges are exploring the use of STATWAY.

However, there is work that still needs to be accomplished. The routine transfer of this course to colleges within the California State University system remains challenging at times. As trustees, we play an invaluable role in advocating for programs and courses that have a documentable track record in changing the academic trajectory of students of color.

When talking about equity, there can be a discomfort that emerges when race, ethnicity and class are part of the discussion. These are not easy conversations. We sometimes lack the skills and have different perceptions of racial and ethnic progress. As well meaning as we are, no one wants to be judged or labeled. But it is imperative that these conversations around equity be open, authentic, respectful and truthful, in an atmosphere that builds trust. So if help is needed in facilitating these discussions, seek it out.

If courageous conversations around equity are authentic, candid and honest, I believe that it will be easier to have conversations that open a dialogue around equity and what kinds of programs work for different segments of our student population. Only then can we expect and get outcomes that lead to transformational changes on our campuses and that change the academic trajectory for many students of color. ■

## ETP 2.0

The Excellence in Trusteeship Program (ETP) is completing its third-year having launched at the 2013 Annual Trustees Conference. Since then trustees from 49 districts have participated in ETP with 63 trustees completing and another 61 going through the program. Ventura County CCD still holds the record for being the only district to have the entire board complete the program. This past year at the 2015 Annual Trustees Conference the Recertification Program was launched.

The Recertification Program is intended for trustees to complete in the following election term. The program is a total of 12-units to include Brown Act and Ethics training and can be completed within 6-months. The goal of ETP is to provide the foundation for excellent board governance while providing a process for fulfilling the accreditation requirement of continuing education for board members.

*The Excellence in Trusteeship Program provides a way to collect data for evidence of compliance in the accreditation report of the WASC Accreditation Standard IV.C.9, "The governing board has a program for board development and new member orientation."*

One way to ensure boards are on track with continuing education is to state in board policy the commitment to continuing education. That's how the Ventura County CCD board completed ETP and are now enrolled in the Recertification Program to continue their education. Another way to incorporate ETP into board continuing education goals and plans is by introducing it to newly elected/appointed trustees and immediately enrolling them in the program.

As other states are legislating board education, California boards are self-regulating by voluntarily participating in the Excellence in Trusteeship Program and upholding their commitment to Excellence in Leadership and Governance. ■



*Carmen T. Sandoval  
Director, Education Services  
and Leadership Development*

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### Congratulations to the most recent ETP graduates!

- Kenneth Brown, El Camino CCD
- Jim Moreno, Coast CCD
- Mary Ann Pacheco, Rio Hondo CCD
- Gloria Harrison, San Bernardino CCD
- Claudia Moreno, San Joaquin Delta CCD
- Janet Rivera, San Joaquin Delta CCD
- Richard Vasquez, San Joaquin Delta CCD
- Nancy Palmer, Sierra Joint CCD
- Bobby Kahn, State Center CCD
- Nickolas W. Zoumbos, San Bernardino CCD

#### *Recertification*

- Greg Pensa, Allan Hancock College

COMMUNITY COLLEGE LEAGUE  
OF CALIFORNIA

# BOARD FOCUS

*Published to provide locally-elected  
trustees and chief executives with  
information and strategies for  
effective boardsmanship.*

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