



Reaffirmation of Core Values and Principles

Adopted by the Board of Trustees on June 11, 2014

In response to severe budget reductions that began in 2002 and continued for several years, the Board of Trustees adopted a "Reaffirmation and Recommitment to Core Values and Operating Principles" statement in 2004 that was intended to help guide faculty and staff decision-making regarding necessary budget reductions. As economic circumstances faced by California Community Colleges continued to decline, that statement was re-examined, edited, and re-adopted in December 2009 and again in June 2012.

The District's financial situation has stabilized within the last 18 months and even begun to improve due to several factors. In June 2010, voters in San Mateo County approved the first-ever California Community College parcel tax, a four-year measure which helped alleviate some of the downward budget pressures the District had been experiencing. Over the past 18 months, the demise of local Redevelopment Agencies (RDAs) has returned millions in property taxes to the District. Most recently, achievement of "community supported status" (where the District's operating funds are derived primarily from local property taxes and student enrollment fees) has provided a much more stable and growing source of income than that derived from State Apportionment.

Given these changed economic circumstances, the San Mateo County Community College District has a unique opportunity to commit itself to a bold vision of expanding educational opportunities to meet the community's needs and to provide the staffing and resources to fund it. The San Mateo County Community College District Board of Trustees commits itself to the following Core Values and Principles:

- **Student-Centered Mission:** The Board recognizes each individual's right to education and commits itself to providing the occasions and settings that will allow our students to develop their minds and skills, engage their spirits, broaden their understanding of social responsibilities, increase their cultural awareness and realize their individual potential. The Board recognizes that our core mission is to provide transfer education and career/technical training to as many students as possible. Basic skills classes which are focused on preparing our students for our core mission courses as noted above are also necessary and appropriate.

Lifelong learning classes which had long been an important part of the community college mission were necessarily curtailed during difficult budget years. The Board asserts that, given the District's financial outlook at this time, the College should consider restoring some of these programs - through contract education, not-for-credit programs, community education and hybrid community education/credit courses.

In order to insure that all programs and courses offered remain relevant, necessary and are serving student needs, the District's programs and classes should be regularly examined and updated based upon student, employer and community need as determined through surveys, focus groups and other measurements.

Student support services and staff are also important and help ensure the success of our

students in their pursuit of a postsecondary education. The Board is committed to providing a wide array of student services that are necessary and that support student success and that do not unnecessarily duplicate services offered in the community.

- **Support for Innovation/Expanding Educational Opportunities:** The Board believes that its long-standing support for innovation and creative approaches to serving the educational needs of the community has been essential to ensure that the Colleges are offering the appropriate balance of academic programs and in maintaining the academic excellence of these programs. With the changed financial status of the District, the Board encourages the Colleges to seek out underserved populations; evaluate their educational needs and provide courses and programs to serve them. Using the Business and Community Needs Assessment data, the Board also encourages the Colleges to provide new classes, certificate programs or AA/AS degrees that will meet those identified needs. The Colleges should also continue efforts to expand programs that extend access to new populations of students, many of whom cannot attend traditional college classes. Finally, the Board is interested in maintaining/expanding unique programs at the Colleges that serve broad community needs and draw that community to our campuses.
- **Employment Philosophies:** The Board subscribes to the principles of human resource management which promote: equal access; equal opportunity; equal treatment and fairness; staff development and training opportunities; competitive compensation that draws the best candidates to the District; and accountability. The Board reaffirms the long-standing District policy that it always seeks to employ the most qualified applicant for each job and does not make decisions about employment, retention, compensation, promotion, termination or other employment status which would discriminate on the basis of national origin, religion, age, gender identity, gender expression, race or ethnicity, color, medical condition, genetic information, ancestry, sexual orientation, marital status, physical or mental disability, pregnancy or because they are perceived to have one or more of the foregoing characteristics, or based on association with a person or group with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics.
- **Participatory Governance:** The Board is deeply committed to the participatory governance process as it has been established in this District, and believes that this process can produce decisions that are comprehensive, fair and in the best interests of students, the community and employees. The Board encourages and expects the participation of all constituents in decision-making and governance and recognizes participatory governance as the means for having the voices and opinions of various constituencies heard.
- **Final Decision-Making Authority:** In this participatory governance environment, the Board, as the elected representatives of the people of San Mateo County, will ultimately make the final decision and sets policy on issues based upon what it believes is in the best interests of the District as a whole. In reaching its decisions, the Board acts independently, but considers the informed viewpoints of all participants and constituencies and relies on the research, advice, experience and expertise within the District.

The Board believes that adherence to these core values and operating principles will allow the District to be one of the most innovative and progressive in the State, and that these values and principles will continue to support the District and advance the interests of students, faculty, staff and the San Mateo County community.