

PEER REVIEW TEAM REPORT

Cypress College
9200 Valley View Street
Cypress, CA 90630

This report represents the findings of the Peer Review Team that conducted a focused site visit to Cypress College September 19, 2024. The Commission acted on the accredited status of the institution during its January 2025 meeting and this team report must be reviewed in conjunction with the Commission's Action letter.

Dr. Jennifer Taylor-Mendoza
Team Chair

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Cypress College
Peer Review Team Roster
TEAM ISER REVIEW

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ACCJC STAFF LIAISON

Dr. Gohar Momjian
Vice President

**Cypress College
Peer Review Team Roster
FOCUSED SITE VISIT**

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Palo Verde College
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ADMINISTRATIVE MEMBERS

Mr. Cory Wathen
Saddleback College
Vice President of Administrative Services

ACCJC STAFF LIAISON

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Vice President

*If applicable, note persons who served on the District review team with an asterisk.

Summary of Focused Site Visit

INSTITUTION: Cypress College

DATES OF VISIT: September 19, 2024

TEAM CHAIR: Dr. Jennifer Taylor-Mendoza

This Peer Review Team Report is based on the formative and summative components of the comprehensive peer review process. In March 2024, the team conducted Team ISER Review (formative component) to identify where the college meets Standards and to identify areas of attention for the Focused Site Visit (summative component) by providing Core Inquiries that the team will pursue to validate compliance, improvement, or areas of excellence. The Core Inquiries are attached to this report.

A four-member peer review team conducted a Focused Site Visit to Cypress College, on September 19, 2024, for the purpose of completing its Peer Review Team Report and determination of whether the college continues to meet Accreditation Standards, Eligibility Requirements, Commission Policies, and U.S. Department of Education regulations.

The team chair and vice chair held a pre-Focused Site Visit meeting with the college CEO, Dr. Scott Thayer on September 4, 2024, to discuss updates since the Team ISER Review and to plan for the Focused Site Visit. During the Focused Site Visit, team members met with approximately eighty faculty, administrators, classified staff and students in formal meetings, group interviews and individual interviews. The team held an open forum, which was well attended, and provided the college community and others with the opportunity to share their thoughts with members of the Focused Site Visit team. The team evaluated how well the college is achieving its stated purposes, providing recommendations for quality assurance and institutional improvement. The team thanks the college staff for coordinating and hosting the Focused Site Visit meetings and interviews and ensuring a smooth and collegial process.

Major Findings and Recommendations of the Peer Review Team Report

Commendations

Commendation 1: The team commends Cypress College for effectively implementing a mission-driven, collegewide data disaggregation strategy to ensure equity disparities are intentionally highlighted, evaluated, and discussed to improve student outcomes in certificate and degree attainment. (I.A.2, I.B.6)

Recommendations

Recommendations to Meet Standards:

None

Recommendations to Improve Quality:

None

District Commendations:

None.

District Recommendations to Meet Standards:

None.

District Recommendations to Improve Quality:

None.

Introduction

Cypress College, established in 1966, is one of two colleges in the North Orange County Community College District. The campus sits on 110 acres with twenty-five buildings, serving approximately 21,000 students annually. Apropos to the college's dairy farm roots, the current 900 employees have nurtured both the growth in the footprint of the campus facilities and student life over the past fifty-eight years. Since 2017, and with the completion of Measure J Bond projects, Cypress' new buildings include a Science, Engineering, and Math building (106,000 square-foot), Student Life and Leadership and Veterans Resource Center, and currently a complete renovation of the three-story Fine Arts building (66,765 square-foot).

Continuous improvement and a steadfast commitment to staying student-relevant are values held fervently by Cypress educators—so much so, they share a mantra, Buen Cypress! We Take This Journey Together embodies the philosophy core to the college's mission. More specifically, Cypress College's Black Lives Matter Taskforce outlined recommendations in the areas of historical programming, community relations, documents and language, curriculum, Black student funding, hiring, and promotions.

An Aspen Institute Recognized Top 150 U.S. institution in 2021, Cypress College student body is over 50% Latino/a. The percentage of students enrolled in 15 or more units has increased from 8.6% in fall 2018 to 11.5% in fall 2022. Out of the Top 10 zip codes, 90% were in cities from the college's service area. The college transforms the lives of students by offering a wide variety of educational programs and career pathways (256 programs, 1 bachelor's degree, 37 associate degrees for transfer, 63 associate degrees, and 155 certificates). The Baccalaureate Degree they offer is in Funeral Services.

Notable accomplishments of Cypress College include Institution-Set Standards for Licensure Exam Pass Rates—aspirational goals for many programs were met. Institution-Set Standards for Employment Rates—nearly all programs (90%) reached their stretch goals. Employment and licensure success data demonstrate that Cypress students obtained high-wage jobs that lead to students increased economic mobility. Instruction developed an ESL Milestone certificate to ensure students make progress in the ESL course sequence.

Institutional Planning and Research includes Guided Pathways data, allowing programs to analyze students' time to completion among other guided pathways related outcomes and the college has implemented a data coaches structure for faculty to rely on in reviewing and assessing access, success, and completion data at the course and program levels.

During the focused site visit while on the campus tour, the site visit team additionally learned about the Charger Experience—Cypress College's promise scholar program, Kinder Caminata—Pre-K pipeline program, the amazing Veterans Resource Center with over 900 military affiliated students, identity centers, student life and leadership program, excellent academic and career education programs, and Pathways for Hope—a partner organization addressing student basic needs.

The team was impressed with Cypress College's accomplishment in having the top ranked Nursing program in the State, with a National Council Licensure Examination pass rate of 100%. In addition to the baccalaureate program in mortuary science, it is noteworthy to mention that

Cypress College recently received approval to offer a second baccalaureate degree program in dental hygiene.

Eligibility Requirements

1. Authority

Cypress College is authorized to operate as a two-year community college under the State of California, the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges, the Board of Trustees of the North Orange County Community College District, and with continuous accreditation by the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC). The college offers and grants degrees and is also authorized to offer a bachelor's degree in Mortuary Science.

The college meets the eligibility requirement.

2. Operational Status

Cypress College has been an active member of the California Community College system since 1966. The college is one of the credit colleges of the North Orange County Community College District (NOCCCD). The college employs approximately 900 individuals and welcomes around 20,000 students annually. Students can choose from over 250 programs, a bachelor's degree, 100 associate degrees, and about 150 certificates.

The college meets the eligibility requirement.

3. Degrees

Cypress College offers a diverse array of educational offerings, as evident by its total of 256 programs. The college offers one bachelor's degree, 100 associate degrees (AA, AS, and ADTs), and 155 certificates in academic and career education fields. The team confirmed that the bachelor's degree requires at least 120 semester units and the associate degrees at least 60 semester units. All degrees include an appropriate general education component and concentration within a major or area of emphasis. Furthermore, with two-thirds of its students enrolled in a degree program, the team affirms that a substantial proportion of students are enrolled in programs that lead to degrees.

The college meets the eligibility requirement.

4. Chief Executive Officer

Cypress College has a president who is appointed by the governing board to serve as the chief executive officer and possesses the authority to administer board policies and lead the institution to effectively achieve its mission and support student learning. The president cannot serve as the chair of the governing board.

The college meets the eligibility requirement.

5. Financial Accountability

The North Orange County Community College District annually undergoes an external financial audit by a certified public accountant, including a review of compliance with federal Title IV and other applicable federal and state requirements. Audit reports are made available to the public via Board meetings and the district website.

The college meets the eligibility requirement.

Checklist for Evaluating Compliance with Federal Regulations and Related Commission Policies

The evaluation items detailed in this Checklist are those which fall specifically under federal regulations and related Commission policies, beyond what is articulated in the Accreditation Standards; other evaluation items under ACCJC standards may address the same or similar subject matter. The peer review team evaluated the institution's compliance with Standards as well as the specific Checklist elements from federal regulations and related Commission policies noted here.

Public Notification of a Peer Review Team Visit and Third-Party Comment

Evaluation Items:

X	The institution has made an appropriate and timely effort to solicit third party comments in advance of a comprehensive review visit.
X	The institution cooperates with the review team in any necessary follow-up related to the third-party comment.
X	The institution demonstrates compliance with the <i>Commission Policy on Rights, Responsibilities, and Good Practice in Relations with Member Institutions</i> as to third party comment.

[Regulation citation: 602.23(b).]

Conclusion Check-Off (mark one):

✓	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements.
	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements, but that follow-up is recommended.
	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and found the institution does not meet the Commission's requirements.

Narrative:

ACCJC did not receive any applicable third-party comments.

Standards and Performance with Respect to Student Achievement

Evaluation Items:

X	The institution has defined elements of student achievement performance across the institution and has identified the expected measure of performance within each
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	defined element. Course completion is included as one of these elements of student achievement. Other elements of student achievement performance for measurement have been determined as appropriate to the institution's mission. (Standard I.B.3 and Section B. Presentation of Student Achievement Data and Institution-set Standards)
X	The institution has defined elements of student achievement performance within each instructional program and has identified the expected measure of performance within each defined element. The defined elements include, but are not limited to, job placement rates for program completers, and for programs in fields where licensure is required, the licensure examination passage rates for program completers. (Standard I.B.3 and Section B. Presentation of Student Achievement Data and Institution-set Standards)
X	The institution-set standards for programs and across the institution are relevant to guide self-evaluation and institutional improvement; the defined elements and expected performance levels are appropriate within higher education; the results are reported regularly across the campus; and the definition of elements and results are used in program-level and institution-wide planning to evaluate how well the institution fulfills its mission, to determine needed changes, to allocating resources, and to make improvements. (Standard I.B.3, Standard I.B.9)
X	The institution analyzes its performance as to the institution-set standards and as to student achievement and takes appropriate measures in areas where its performance is not at the expected level. (Standard I.B.4)

[Regulation citations: 602.16(a)(1)(i); 602.17(f); 602.19 (a-e).]

Conclusion Check-Off (mark one):

✓	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements.
	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements, but that follow-up is recommended.
	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and found the institution does not meet the Commission's requirements.

Narrative:

The college meets the commission's requirements.

Credits, Program Length, and Tuition

Evaluation Items:

X	Credit hour assignments and degree program lengths are within the range of good practice in higher education (in policy and procedure). (Standard II.A.9)
X	The assignment of credit hours and degree program lengths is verified by the institution, and is reliable and accurate across classroom based courses, laboratory classes, distance education classes, and for courses that involve clinical practice (if applicable to the institution). (Standard II.A.9)
X	Tuition is consistent across degree programs (or there is a rational basis for any program-specific tuition). (Standard I.C.2)
X	Any clock hour conversions to credit hours adhere to the Department of Education's conversion formula, both in policy and procedure, and in practice. (Standard II.A.9)
X	The institution demonstrates compliance with the Commission <i>Policy on Credit Hour, Clock Hour, and Academic Year</i> .

[Regulation citations: 600.2 (definition of credit hour); 602.16(a)(1)(viii); 602.24(e), (f); 668.2; 668.9.]

Conclusion Check-Off (mark one):

✓	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements.
	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements, but that follow-up is recommended.
	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and found the institution does not meet the Commission's requirements.

Narrative:

The team confirmed that the college meets the credit hours and program lengths common in higher education practice. The assignment of credit hours and degree program lengths is verified by the institution and is reliable and accurate across classroom-based courses, laboratory classes, distance education classes, and for courses that involve clinical practice. The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the commission's requirements.

Transfer Policies

Evaluation Items:

X	Transfer policies are appropriately disclosed to students and to the public. (Standard II.A.10)
X	Policies contain information about the criteria the institution uses to accept credits for transfer, and any types of institutions or sources from which the institution will not accept credits. (Standard II.A.10)
X	Transfer of credit policies identify a list of institutions with which it has established an articulation agreement.
X	Transfer of credit policies include written criteria used to evaluate and award credit for prior learning experience including, but not limited to, service in the armed forces, paid or unpaid employment, or other demonstrated competency or learning.
X	The institution complies with the <i>Commission Policy on Transfer of Credit</i> .

[Regulation citations: 602.16(a)(1)(viii); 602.17(a)(3); 602.24(e); 668.43(a)(11).]

Conclusion Check-Off (mark one):

✓	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements.
	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements, but that follow-up is recommended.
	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and found the institution does not meet the Commission's requirements.

Narrative:

The evidence provided demonstrates the college meets the transfer policy requirement.

Distance Education and Correspondence Education

Evaluation Items:

For Distance Education:	
X	The institution demonstrates regular and substantive interaction between students and the instructor in at least two of the methods outlined in the <i>Commission Policy on Distance Education and Correspondence Education</i> .
X	The institution ensures, through the methods outlined in the <i>Commission Policy on Distance Education and Correspondence Education</i> , regular interaction between a student and an instructor or instructors prior to the student's completion of a course or competency.
X	The institution demonstrates comparable learning support services and student support services for distance education students. (Standards II.B.1, II.C.1)
X	The institution verifies that the student who registers in a distance education program is the same person who participates every time and completes the course or program and receives the academic credit.
For Correspondence Education:	
N/A	The institution demonstrates comparable learning support services and student support services for correspondence education students. (Standards II.B.1, II.C.1)
N/A	The institution verifies that the student who registers in a correspondence education program is the same person who participates every time and completes the course or program and receives the academic credit.
Overall:	
X	The technology infrastructure is sufficient to maintain and sustain the distance education and correspondence education offerings. (Standard III.C.1)
X	The institution demonstrates compliance with the <i>Commission Policy on Distance Education and Correspondence Education</i> .

[Regulation citations: 602.16(a)(1)(iv), (vi); 602.17(g); 668.38.]

Conclusion Check-Off (mark one):

✓	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements.
	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements, but that follow-up is recommended.
	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and found the

	Institution does not meet the Commission's requirements.
	The college does not offer Distance Education or Correspondence Education.

Narrative:

Team members reviewed a subset of online courses to verify that the college meets this regulation. The college does not offer correspondence courses.

Student Complaints

Evaluation Items:

X	The institution has clear policies and procedures for handling student complaints, and the current policies and procedures are accessible to students in the college catalog and online.
X	The student complaint files for the previous seven years (since the last comprehensive review) are available; the files demonstrate accurate implementation of the complaint policies and procedures.
X	The team analysis of the student complaint files identifies any issues that may be indicative of the institution's noncompliance with any Accreditation Standards.
X	The institution posts on its website the names of associations, agencies and governmental bodies that accredit, approve, or license the institution and any of its programs, and provides contact information for filing complaints with such entities. (Standard I.C.1)
X	The institution demonstrates compliance with the Commission <i>Policy on Representation of Accredited Status</i> and the <i>Policy on Student and Public Complaints Against Institutions</i> .

[Regulation citations: 602.16(a)(1)(ix); 668.43.]

Conclusion Check-Off (mark one):

✓	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements.
	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements, but that follow-up is recommended.
	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and found the institution does not meet the Commission's requirements.

Narrative:

The team confirms that Cypress College offers and maintains clear policies and procedures for handling student complaints, and these policies and procedures are accessible to students, as well as clear communication of these policies through a diverse approach, i.e. in written form and/or linked documents/webpages. Additionally, the team affirms that Cypress College provides for the maintenance of all student complaints, which should allow the institution to store all student complaints for at least seven years.

Institutional Disclosure and Advertising and Recruitment Materials

Evaluation Items:

X	The institution provides accurate, timely (current), and appropriately detailed information to students and the public about its programs, locations, and policies. (Standard I.C.2)
X	The institution complies with the Commission <i>Policy on Institutional Advertising, Student Recruitment, and Policy on Representation of Accredited Status</i> .
X	The institution provides required information concerning its accredited status.(Standard I.C.12)

[Regulation citations: 602.16(a)(1))(vii); 668.6.]

Conclusion Check-Off (mark one):

✓	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the Commission’s requirements.
	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the Commission’s requirements, but that follow-up is recommended.
	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and found the institution does not meet the Commission’s requirements.

Narrative:

The college meets the regulation.

Title IV Compliance

Evaluation Items:

X	The institution has presented evidence on the required components of the Title IV Program, including findings from any audits and program or other review activities by the U.S. Department of Education (ED). (Standard III.D.15)
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X	If applicable, the institution has addressed any issues raised by ED as to financial responsibility requirements, program record-keeping, etc. If issues were not timely addressed, the institution demonstrates it has the fiscal and administrative capacity to timely address issues in the future and to retain compliance with Title IV program requirements. (Standard III.D.15)
X	If applicable, the institution's student loan default rates are within the acceptable range defined by ED. Remedial efforts have been undertaken when default rates near or meet a level outside the acceptable range. (Standard III.D.15)
X	If applicable, contractual relationships of the institution to offer or receive educational, library, and support services meet the Accreditation Standards and have been approved by the Commission through substantive change if required. (Standard III.D.16)
X	The institution demonstrates compliance with the <i>Commission Policy on Contractual Relationships with Non-Accredited Organizations</i> and the <i>Policy on Institutional Compliance with Title IV</i> .

[Regulation citations: 602.16(a)(1)(v); 602.16(a)(1)(x); 602.19(b); 668.5; 668.15; 668.16; 668.71 et seq.]

Conclusion Check-Off:

✓	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements.
	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements, but that follow-up is recommended.
	The team has reviewed the elements of this component and found the institution does not meet the Commission's requirements.

Narrative:

The college meets the regulation.

Standard I

Mission, Academic Quality and Institutional Effectiveness

I.A. Mission

General Observations:

Cypress College's mission to "transform lives through lifelong learning with educational opportunities, including transfer to four-year institutions, associate degrees, certificates, and a baccalaureate degree" succinctly encapsulates the college's purpose, target audience, and the range of degrees it offers. This mission statement is widely disseminated among the governance groups, encompassing all constituency groups on campus. Utilizing various student outcomes and institutional data, the college assesses its effectiveness in achieving its mission, with data insights discussed and communicated across diverse constituencies. Institutional standards are established, and strategic planning processes are employed to showcase progress. Cypress College ensures alignment of its programs and services with its mission.

Findings and Evidence:

Cypress College's mission to "transform lives through lifelong learning with educational opportunities, including transfer to four-year institutions, associate degrees, certificates, and a baccalaureate degree" describes the college's purpose, intended population, types of degrees it offers. The mission encompasses the college's commitment to forging academic and career pathways, primarily aimed at supporting student achievement. In the 2019-20 academic year, the college underwent a mission/vision revision, embedding it within its strategic planning efforts. This process involved the campus community by conducting surveys and holding a retreat. The revisions mainly centered around fostering equity. The college seems to embody fulfilling its mission through the adoption of Guided Pathways, aiming to promote students' completion. (I.A.1)

Cypress College uses various student outcomes and institutional data to determine its effectiveness in accomplishing its mission. The data is shared via dashboards in guided sessions and in its Institutional Effectiveness report. The data is discussed and communicated to the board. In addition, the college sets institutional standards. Cypress College employs its strategic planning processes, showcasing increases in most of the Vision for Success metrics. (I.A.2)

Cypress College aligns its programs and services with its mission, as evident through alignment in resources and program review processes to the mission statement. Cypress College's decisions go through participatory governance committees, such as distance education, dual enrollment, guided pathways, institutional effectiveness, student equity and achievement, technology, and other bodies, such as academic senate. (I.A.3)

The mission statement is widely published via the college website, catalog, and is posted in high-visibility areas throughout the district. The mission is also widely distributed through the

governance groups, which consist of all the constituency groups on campus. The currently revised mission statement was approved by the college governance process in 2020, including a workgroup for this purpose. (I.A.4)

Conclusion:

The college meets the standard.

Commendation 1: The team commends Cypress College for effectively implementing a mission-driven, collegewide data disaggregation strategy to ensure equity disparities are intentionally highlighted, evaluated, and discussed to improve student outcomes in certificate and degree attainment. (I.A.2, I.B.6)

I.B. Assuring Academic Quality and Institutional Effectiveness

General Observations:

Cypress College engages in substantive and collegial dialogue, focusing on student outcomes, equity, academic quality, institutional effectiveness, and continuous improvement. The institution emphasizes the importance of Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) and Assessment of Institutional Effectiveness (AUOs) in its improvement plan. Cypress College establishes Institutional Set Standards (ISS), concentrating on course success, awards, transfer rates, employment outcomes, and licensure exam passing rates. The commitment to its mission is evident in robust program reviews, guided pathways dashboards, and integration of an equity question into the Instructional Program Review. While prioritizing hiring based on data analysis, survey data highlights concern about funding perception and program support, prompting a discussion on the effectiveness of these strategies.

Cypress College conducts comprehensive reviews through committees and specialized groups, ensuring a six-year cycle review of board policies. The institution communicates results, fostering a shared understanding of strengths and weaknesses, and employs a comprehensive planning process centered on the Strategic Plan, integrating program reviews and resource allocation with a focus on equity.

Findings and Evidence:

Cypress College demonstrates sustained, substantive, and collegial dialogue about student outcomes, student equity, academic quality, institutional effectiveness, and continuous improvement of student learning and achievement. The college has engaged in robust dialogue regarding equity, bringing forward an equity framework within the strategic planning space. The college has also engaged stakeholders in the analysis of student data, enrollment loss, and marketing campaigns to overcome the losses. The information is discussed in retreats, planning, and focused meetings on guided pathways, as well as flex days. Additionally, the college has formed a task force for the support of Black students and faculty. (I.B.1)
The institution defines and assesses student learning outcomes for instructional programs and student learning support services per its stated cycles. During the focused site visit, the team

learned that Cypress College has created an Accreditation and Institutional Effectiveness Committee that facilitates how the institution works with program review data along with Instruction and Student Services. Various leads and coordinators are in charge of looking at the language in their programs and receive coaching from a recently created AUO Lead, and the college appears to be embracing the opportunity to rewrite/refresh information as needed. The college recognizes the importance of the review cycle and has implemented an improvement plan that also impacts resource allocation and the significance of examining how the data informs the measurement of student success. (I.B.2)

Cypress College establishes Institutional Set Standards (ISS) to oversee students' achievements, focusing on course success, awards earned, transfer, employment outcomes, and licensure exam passing rates. These standards are deliberated on in the Academic Senate, and the President's Cabinet and are easily accessible on the college research website. Identified issues with course success and bachelor awards under these standards prompted the college to formulate the College Outcomes' Assessment (COA) plan. (I.B.3)

Cypress College has a strong repository of data via dashboards to track students' achievement. The two main tools observed in the evidence are guided pathways and instructional program review dashboards. In addition, there are surveys to assess institutional processes such as the Veterans' survey. The college also seems to focus on state reports such as Perkins V and prepares a Student Equity Achievement plan to advance their goals. (I.B.4)

Cypress College's evidence demonstrates the reflection of its mission through the program review process, incorporation of Student Learning Outcomes and monitoring of student achievement. The evidence shows strong data infrastructure for quantitative data disaggregated for analysis by program type. Cypress College relies on surveys to include the students' voice and incorporation of self-reflections on the program review. (I.B.5)

Cypress College dissects outcomes among various student populations. The evidence reveals a robust process through guided pathways dashboards, gap detection in the student equity plan, and the institutional effectiveness report. The college also integrated an equity question into the Instructional Program Review. The team noted that despite having established processes for prioritizing hiring based on data analysis, survey data indicated concerns regarding the perception of funding and support for certain programs, along with sentiments of a heavy workload. (I.B.6)

Cypress College conducts a review of its processes in different committees and specialized groups. The board policies are reviewed in a six-year cycle. The college also conducted climate surveys that include questions about decision-making and instructional evaluation processes to ensure their effectiveness in supporting academic quality and the mission's accomplishment. (I.B.7)

The college uses several channels to broadly communicate the results of all its assessments, surveys, and evaluation activities so that the institution has a shared understanding of its

strengths and weaknesses and sets appropriate priorities. The college uses large-scale reports, focused reports, team meetings, formal reports on focused meetings, such as Academic Senate, and retreats for a deep dive. In addition, the Institutional Research and Planning website hosts surveys, dashboards, and reports. (I.B.8)

Cypress College has a comprehensive planning process. The core vehicle used is the Strategic Plan. This plan lays out the roadmap with six strategic directions focused on students, employees, resources, partnerships, and facilities. In addition, the institution integrates its program review process with resource allocation and highlights equity efforts as a reflection on the program plans and in connection with its mission. (I.B.9)

Conclusion:

The college meets the standard.

See Commendation 1.

I.C. Institutional Integrity

General Observations:

Cypress College has worked on improving the clarity, accuracy, and integrity of information on its website since the last accreditation visit, addressing issues stemming from a 2022 data breach. The institution's identity guide ensures consistency in messaging, colors, logos, and marketing tools. The institution uses dashboards and reports via the Institutional Research website for documentation, supported by an administrative procedure, and communicates results effectively. Program Student Learning Outcomes (PSLO) are incorporated in the catalog, with the college requiring programs to include both degree requirements and SLOs. Policies related to academic freedom, responsibility, and integrity are well-documented, and the college is actively addressing concerns regarding Open AI and academic integrity through a task force. Professors' academic freedom is emphasized, aligning with the instructor code of ethics. While Standards I.C.10 and I.C.11 are not applicable, Cypress College demonstrates compliance with Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards, and Commission policies, maintaining collegiality with external agencies.

Findings and Evidence:

Since the last accreditation visit, the institution has worked to improve the clarity, accuracy, and integrity of information provided via the website. In early 2022, the college underwent a data breach resulting in many broken links. The website has pages to support current and prospective students and external visitors. The college has an identity guide that facilitates the incorporation of messages, colors, logos, and other marketing tools for consistency and ensures accuracy of information it provides to the public. (I.C.1)

Cypress College has the catalog available as a PDF for students and prospective students, providing current information on all facts, requirements, policies, and procedures. The college

and district appear to be working together in having coordinators update the information that students encounter, and data is being collected regarding student use of the website/clicks. The college includes the total cost of tuition, fees and other required expenses in their catalog. (I.C.2)

Cypress College uses dashboards and reports via the Institutional Research website to document assessments, program review, survey results, and student learning outcomes, among other institutional aspects. This process is supported by an administrative procedure. The information is accessible via the website to students, prospective students, and the public. The college's research and planning office also publishes an institutional effectiveness report annually with information about students' achievement. (I.C.3)

Cypress College indicates the incorporation of Program Student Learning Outcomes (PSLO) in the catalog. There is evidence showing examples of degrees and the requirements to achieve them. The college now requires all programs to include both degree requirements and SLOs in their handbook, and they appear in the catalog. (I.C.4)

The college has a Board Policy (BP) and Administrative Procedure (AP) review cycle that is followed by the district to ensure compliance with this requirement to ensure integrity of information provided on its mission and programs to the public. (I.C.5)

Cypress College provides students with several resources that can help them assess their college costs for tuition and materials. The college makes charts available to clarify expenses and provides the students with a Net Price Calculator program. Additionally, a Bookpass program ensures that students will not have to spend more than \$100 for course materials. (I.C.6)

Cypress College included evidence of policies regarding academic freedom and responsibility. Additionally, the college provides evidence of policies promoting honesty, responsibility, and academic integrity. In response to questions and concerns raised by faculty and students regarding Open AI and academic integrity, the college is addressing the issue by forming a task force. (I.C.8)

Cypress College includes evidence that speaks to professors' academic freedom while ensuring students' rights to learn in an environment characterized by civility, open inquiry, and rigorous attention to the search for the truth, free of unlawful discrimination. This is also outlined in the instructor's code of ethics. (I.C.9)

I.C.10 and I.C.11 are not applicable to Cypress College.

Cypress College has board policies and administrative procedures in place to comply with Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards, Commission policies. The college has an accreditation website and shows commitment with the importance of integrating this process within their regular constituencies' efforts. (I.C.12)

Cypress College communicates with accrediting bodies and maintains collegiality with external agencies, ensuring honesty and integrity in its relationships, including adherence to their recommendations. (I.C.13)

Cypress College reflects in various documents financial transparency for budget allocations and Board Review of financial activity, and as a public institution demonstrates its commitment to high quality education with student support, student advocacy, and assessment that informs expenditures. (I.C.14)

Conclusion:

The college meets the standard.

Standard II

Student Learning Programs and Support Services

II.A. Instructional Programs

General Observations:

Cypress College offers 256 programs, including one bachelor's degree, 37 associate degrees for transfer, 63 associate degrees and 155 certificates. The college has a robust Career and Technical educational portfolio including programs in Air Conditioning & Refrigeration, Hotel, Restaurant, and Culinary Arts, and Mortuary Science. All the institution's instructional programs are offered in fields of study consistent with the college mission and purpose as a higher education institution. Instructional programs are developed through faculty led curricular processes and faculty regularly conduct program reviews and assess student learning outcomes to ensure academic and professional standards are met and continuously improved. The college uses instructional program review to ensure the relevancy, appropriateness, and currency of its programs. The institution also identifies, publishes, and assesses student learning outcomes for courses, programs, certificates, and degrees. The college has focused on effectively delivering instruction in an equitable and flexible manner to meet students' needs. For example, through the Guided Pathways initiative, the college has made a commitment to improve all aspects of the student experience.

Findings and Evidence:

The team confirmed that all instructional programs are offered in fields of study consistent with the college's mission and appropriate to higher education. All programs, regardless of location or delivery, culminate in student attainment of student learning outcomes and result in achievement of degrees, certificates, employment, or transfer. The faculty lead curriculum committee ensures course content, methods, and programs meet all requirements and standards.

The team was impressed with the robust Career and Technical Education (CTE) offerings and the focus on providing a wide variety of CTE programs to serve the local community in high wage occupations. This includes a baccalaureate degree in Mortuary Science. The college noted enrollments in this program have been low, and the team encourages the college to continue its work to grow enrollments in this program to promote fiscal viability (II.A.1)

The faculty led program review process uses analysis of student achievement data and course (CSLO) and program (PSLO) assessment results to continuously improve instructional courses and programs, ensuring program currency, relevancy, and appropriateness. The curriculum committee is responsible for ensuring the content and methods of instruction meet generally accepted academic and professional standards and expectations. The college utilizes Instructional Program Review (IPR) Annual Reports that provides feedback on each program's

program review form and presentation. The feedback includes a summary evaluation, including commendations, recommendations, and compliance status. (II.A.2)

The team confirmed that the college identifies and regularly assesses learning outcomes for courses, programs, certificates, and degrees using established institutional procedures. The college processes are documented in the Student Learning Outcomes (SLO) Handbook which details the established process for regularly assessing learning outcomes for courses (CSLOS), programs (Department PSLOs), and certificates and degrees (Degree & Certificate PSLOs). The college noted that faculty participation has increased in recent years and current documentation shows participation at over ninety (90) percent. Cypress College has clearly defined processes for developing and maintaining officially approved and current course outlines that include student learning outcomes and which include collection and review of course syllabi by the division deans. (II.A.3)

Cypress College offers pre-collegiate level curriculum that includes non-credit and non-degree credit courses. These courses are elective courses designed to prepare students for success in college-level courses and these courses are not part of the sequence leading to college-level courses. The college ensures that the pre-collegiate level curriculum is distinguished from the college level curriculum because it is differentiated by the course numbering system printed in the College Catalog. (II.A.4)

The institution's degrees are consistent with the standards of American higher education, including minimum degree requirements. Accordingly, college A.S. or A.A. degrees require a minimum of 60 degree-eligible units with a minimum GPA of 2.0. For the B.S. in Funeral Service, students must satisfactorily complete at least 40 upper division semester units or equivalent, including the major and general education courses, and a total of 120 semester units. The regulations for breadth, depth, rigor, course sequencing, time to completion, and synthesis of learning are consistent with and set by board policies and administrative procedures. (II.A.5)

Through the Guided Pathways initiative, Cypress College has made a commitment to improve all aspects of the student experience, but specifically, to help students identify academic pathways for timely completion of their degrees or certificates. The college schedules courses in a manner that allows students to complete certificate and degree programs that is consistent with established expectations in higher education. Data is used by the scheduling deans to evaluate enrollment management trends, including time-to-completion data. (II.A.6)

To fulfill the college's mission, vision and values, the college continually seeks to understand the diverse and changing needs of its students through the regular administration of surveys and updates to planning documents. The team confirmed the college uses delivery modes, teaching methodologies, and learning support services effectively. The college utilizes an established Instructional Program Review (IPR) process to regularly assess the effectiveness of delivery modes, teaching methodologies, and learning support services, and for continuous improvement planning. Furthermore, the college examines equity data and the college

Instructional Program Review Committee (IPRC) reviews and recognizes programs for their Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) work. (II.A.7)

Cypress College does not use examinations shared by an entire course or program to determine student completion. (II.A.8)

The college awards course credit, degrees, and certificates based on student attainment of learning outcomes. Units of credit awarded are consistent with the college's policies and reflect generally accepted norms in higher education. The team reviewed policies, procedures, the college's catalog, and course outlines of records. The college follows federal regulations for clock-to-credit hours conversions as defined by Board Policy 4020. (II.A.9)

To facilitate mobility of students without penalty, the college has clearly stated transfer-of credit policies and procedures articulated in Board Policy 4050 and Administrative Procedure 4050. Transfer-of-credit policies and procedures are in the college catalog, the student handbook, and on the website. The team confirmed the college develops articulation agreements and those agreements are appropriate to the college's mission. The institution has many articulation agreements in place. (II.A.10)

The Student Learning Outcomes (SLO) Handbook outlines the SLO mapping process, the assessment cycle, and the review of Course Student Learning Outcomes (CSLOs), Program Student Learning Outcomes (PSLOs), and Institutional Student Learning Outcomes (ISLOs). Board Policy 4025 provides the philosophy and criteria for associate degree and general education curriculum. The team encourages the Degree and Certificate PSLO workgroup to continue their assessment and continuous improvement work. The college states that: *"Beginning fall 2027, after all instructional programs have completed their next program review cycle, and therefore have newly created degree and certificate PSLOs, the Institutional Research & Planning Office will provide data on the program review form that summarizes the results from the ADCAP survey so that departments can review, analyze, and respond for ongoing and continuous improvement."* (II.A.11)

Cypress College follows a philosophy of general education that has been developed with the reliance on advice from faculty in the Academic Senate. The college relies on faculty expertise to determine the appropriateness of each course for inclusion in the general education curriculum, based upon student learning outcomes and competencies appropriate to the degree level. The district's general education philosophy and purpose statements are published in Board Policy 4025, Administrative Procedure 4025. General education requirements are clearly stated in the catalog and in the Program Mapper. (II.A.12)

Degree programs include focused study in one or more areas of inquiry or in an established interdisciplinary core. The college curriculum process ensures programs are based on student learning outcomes and competencies. Specialized courses in an area of inquiry or interdisciplinary core include mastery at the appropriate degree level of theories and practices

within the field of study. Board Policy 4100 establishes the certificate and degree requirements for graduation to include subject requirements. (II.A.13)

The college determines competency levels and measurable student learning outcomes based upon faculty expertise and input from industry representatives. Cypress College utilizes Advisory Committees to ensure program competencies are relevant and current. Specifically, the advisors inform faculty of the skill sets, licensing requirements, certifications, labor union requirements, career pathways, and other factors that contribute to the development of learning outcomes. College Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs are formally reviewed every two years, through the Instructional Program Review process. Cypress College tracks student success and employment opportunities in CTE areas (II.A.14)

Policies and procedures are in place to ensure students can complete their education in a timely manner if the program is eliminated or significantly changed. Administrative Policy 4021 provides information about Program Discontinuance. (II.A.15)

The college regularly evaluates and improves the quality and currency of all instructional programs, including baccalaureate, collegiate, and career and technical courses and programs, regardless of delivery mode or location. The college has established a program review calendar and schedule for report submissions and presentations. There is a regular cycle for review that is maintained by the IRP office. Continuous improvement efforts to enhance program quality and student learning, appear to be systematic. The IPR Annual Report provides a summary of each semester's program review reports highlighting success and recommending resources for improvement. This report also includes formal recommendations that inform program- and institution-level decision making and are directly tied to budget requests and funding. (II.A.16)

Conclusion:

The college meets the standard.

II.B. Library and Learning Support Services

General Observations:

Cypress College demonstrates that it provides adequate library services and other learning support services. Campus constituents are collegially consulted on the appropriate educational resources needed to support student learning and student needs. Additionally, the institution appears to have formal agreements that reflect collaborative relationships with other institutions. Learning support services and Library services are aligned and support attainment of the college's mission.

Findings and Evidence:

Cypress College enhances student learning and achievement through a comprehensive suite of library and learning resource services (L/LRC) that are accessible across multiple modalities, ensuring that all students, irrespective of their location or program, can benefit. For example,

Cypress College offers a range of support services through both physical and digital channels. The L/LRC building is central to on-site support, providing a hub for a variety of learning resources, including a computer lab, one-on-one tutoring, and specialized centers like the Educational Support Center (ESC), Math Learning Center (MLC), and Supplemental Instruction (SI). (II.B.1)

Cypress College centralizes its library services in its Learning Resource Center (LRC) and reflects that it has taken intentional steps towards developing policies, evaluating and selecting materials, and supporting services to enhance student learning and success. For example, Library faculty and staff establish guidelines that ensures a systematic and quality-focused approach to resource management and service provision. Additionally, Librarians are integrated within academic divisions as content specialists, guided pathways representatives, and curriculum advocates, which promotes strong collaboration and communication between library faculty and instructional faculty, ensuring that library collections, services, and resources effectively support instructional needs and student learning outcomes. (II.B.2)

Cypress College engages in institutionalized efforts to evaluate and improve its library and other learning support services in alignment with accreditation standards. Cypress College Library and LRC utilize institutional research reports and program review processes to evaluate how they support the continuous improvement of services and resources in alignment with the college's mission and student learning objectives. SLO data appears in the program reviews along with observations about DEI and goals for improvement. The LRC services also conducts student satisfaction surveys and collects data on student success, attendance, and usage connected to the services. The institution's systematic approach to collecting and using data for continuous improvement, alongside specific initiatives to enhance tutoring effectiveness, illustrates a robust framework for ensuring that support services are responsive to student needs and conducive to achieving desired learning outcomes. (II.B.3)

The library has loan agreements with Cal-West and CSULB. Several contract service invoices are evident for the search database subscriptions that are listed on the library website. The college appears to have some evaluation of the use of services in the Library/ESC/MSL/tutoring/and SI reports when relevant. (II.B.4)

Conclusion:

The college meets the standard.

II.C. Student Support Services

General Observations:

Cypress College demonstrates a commitment to providing quality student services that are comprehensive, support student success, and align with the institution's mission. Services are offered in various modalities, and the college uses data to improve its programs and services. The institution offers co-curricular and athletic programs that conform with district and college

policies. A variety of counseling services provide students with an appropriate level of access and support. The college evaluates admission, and placement instruments and maintains student records in accordance with the relevant Board Policies and Administrative Procedures.

Findings and Evidence:

The college offers comprehensive student support services that support student success and align with the college mission and planning documents. The college uses the Program Review cycle to evaluate the quality of programs and services through strategic planning. Program Review is aligned with the college mission and considers the student experience. The program review cycle is conducted every four years in spring terms. Cypress College uses various student surveys in special programs to provide evidence of program evaluation. (II.C.1)

Cypress College uses the Student Learning Outcomes assessment to assess and evaluate student services and learning support outcomes for students. SLOs data is incorporated in the Program Review process. The college aligns SLOs and Program Review with a theme established for the student services division. Cypress College notes that not all programs have maintained the annual assessment cycle, with some programs requiring extensions. This led to discussion of assessing one SLO per year, per program for the program review cycle. (II.C.2)

Cypress College provides access to various services for students. The programs and services are available both face-to-face and online, with “virtual front counters” available for all programs. Cypress College provides technology to students and a soft-phone option for employees off-site. Appropriate services are provided to students to ensure equitable access. (II.C.3)

The College Student Government and Athletic programs align with college policies and procedures and athletic guidelines for the OEC and CCCAA. The handbook provides guidelines and processes for coaches. The Constitution and Bylaws provide clarity and direction for student government. Each programmatic area is aligned with the college mission. The evidence provided supports the college’s adherence to regulatory guidelines and oversight of co-curricular programs. (II.C.4)

Counseling services are available to students through both face-to-face and virtual appointments. The departments offer robust services and course work to help students meet their educational goals. Both general counseling and special programs counseling provide students appropriate access and planning. Cypress College hosts “Charger Fridays” to help incoming students become acclimated and registered for classes. The Division hosts professional development and training opportunities to ensure counselors are well-versed in processes and any changes. (II.C.5)

The college adheres to Board Policies and Administrative Procedures regarding student admission. The information is clearly documented in the college catalog and web pages. This includes information for the general student population and special populations ranging from early admission to programmatic acceptance (certificates, BA). The college catalog defines programs of study, and each instructional program webpage hosts the Program Mapper tool

that provides detailed information about specific certificate, degree, and transfer pathways. (II.C.6)

The college adheres to applicable policies and procedures regarding placement. While the college uses the CELSA for ESL (English as a Second Language), there is an assessment committee that continues to validate results of tests. This validation was only applicable through June 30, 2023—evidence of a successful transition into the existing Guided Self-Placement (GSP) was not available. (II.C.7)

The college maintains student records securely and confidentially and has appropriate data security processes. Student records are maintained in accord with BP, AP, and FERPA (Family Educational Rights to Privacy Act) practices. The district ERP, Banner, provides secure storage of student records. Cypress College also provides training to employees and discloses FERPA rights in the college catalog. (II.C.8)

Conclusion:

The college meets the standard.

Standard III

Resources

III.A. Human Resources

General Observations:

Cypress College employs a sufficient number of qualified administrators, faculty, and staff to support its programs and services and accomplish its mission. The district provides effective Human Resources support to assist the college's personnel with policies, information, and development opportunities. Dialogue and respect seem extended through various supports for groups and perspectives, especially through DEI efforts. Training, webinars, and evaluations of programs are regularly scheduled and embedded in campus life.

Findings and Evidence:

The college assures the integrity and quality of its programs and services by employing qualified administrators, faculty, and staff. Board Policy specifies that the Chancellor establishes selection procedures and qualifications, faculty (regular and adjunct) and administrator equivalencies, and the detailed hiring process. Hiring toolkits and timelines chart the process for classified, management, and faculty. Recruitments are advertised widely to attract a diverse pool of highly qualified applicants through online portals with clear job descriptions. An Equal Employment Opportunity Plan 2019-22 is in place and managed by the district Human Resources office. Screening committee members must sign a confidentiality and conflict of interest statement. (III.A.1)

Faculty qualifications include subject matter knowledge and requisite skills, including development and review of curriculum and assessment of learning, as defined in the job descriptions. Information is posted about minimum qualifications. The college follows the baccalaureate degree program specifications for faculty teaching curriculum. Adjunct and contract academic employees have the same qualifications applied per Board Policy. Hiring processes are detailed as above in III A 1. A collective bargaining agreement 2018-21 is an example clarifying the relationship of faculty and the campus administration. A local union exists. HR informs employees of their disciplines via notification. A reference form for faculty hiring is used. (III.A.2)

Administrators responsible for educational programs and services possess qualifications necessary to sustain institutional effectiveness and academic quality as demonstrated by Board Policies and a hiring toolkit for managers, which establish minimum qualifications and equivalency guidelines and processes and procedures for recruiting and hiring qualified candidates. (III.A.3)

Cypress College assures that degrees held by faculty, administrators, and other employees to

meet minimum qualifications defined in BP and APs are from institutions accredited by recognized U.S. accrediting agencies and uses NACES to verify the authenticity of non-U.S. degrees. A supplemental application for equivalency form is available, and an equivalency committee exists at the district level. Minutes from an example meeting show detailed considerations looked at when addressing equivalency circumstances. (III.A.4)

Written criteria and timelines for evaluating employees are identified in collective bargaining agreements and administrative procedures (managers). Goal setting forms encourage documentation of achievements during evaluation cycles. Employees up for evaluation are on an automated notification list, which is monitored by District Human Resources (DHR) to ensure that evaluations are consistently performed for all employees in compliance with the criteria. (III.A.5)

Cypress College maintains enough qualified faculty to assure the quality of educational programs and services to achieve the mission. Full time faculty numbers are determined by the district's compliance with the CCCCO Faculty Obligation Number, which requires a minimum number of full-time faculty based on the district/college's FTES. In fall 2022, the college had 227 regular (full-time, tenure-track) and 385 temporary (part-time/adjunct) employees, which was adequate to meet the student demand for class sections and to fulfill other faculty responsibilities. The Funeral Service B.S. program has a full-time faculty member, who serves as the program coordinator, while the Mortuary Science department with both B.S. and A.S programs has three full-time faculty and five adjunct faculty. (III.A.7)

The college, with support from DHR, has employment policies and practices, including prescribed onboarding procedures, to support adjunct faculty with orientation, oversight, evaluation, and professional development, and provides opportunities to integrate them into the life of the institution. An onboarding email introduces adjunct faculty to a list of resources, and orientations include presentations on DEI, Title IX, Risk Management (Workers' Compensation), Payroll, and Benefits. Divisions and departments provide assignment-specific information and professional development opportunities are available through EdVantage. (III.A.8)

Cypress College has sufficient qualified staff to support its programs and services to accomplish its mission. The program review process provides each area to assess and request additional staff to meet their goals and support the college's mission. Blank forms for campus service, specialized service, student services, and instructional service evaluations/annual reports are provided as examples of review. A classified position prioritization process document, hiring specifications, and position rubric appear to be in line with the board policy on recruitment and hiring. (III.A.9)

The college has sufficient qualified administrators to lead and support its programs and services and accomplish its mission as shown by manager to faculty and staff ratios. Hiring policies and procedures regarding vacancies are in place and allow for the hire of interim administrators/managers as needed to support the continuity of leadership and support. A

sample reorganization proposal for the Health Sciences and Student Services divisions shows the dialogue taking place about improvements to organizational structure to best serve students. (III.A.10)

The college has formal personnel policies and procedures in BPs and APs, which are consistently and equitably administered. They are available on the district website and are regularly reviewed and revised as needed through a participatory governance process that includes representation from all constituency groups, as indicated by District Consultation Council summaries, to ensure alignment with Education Code and accreditation standards. Equal opportunity and unlawful discrimination policies are in place. (III.A.11)

Cypress College creates and maintains appropriate programs, practices, and services to support its diverse personnel. The institution regularly assesses its record in employment equity and diversity consistent with its mission—Institutional Commitment to Diversity Report and multiple Faculty Senate Association documents. Policies for diversity and equal opportunity are echoed in the college’s mission, vision, and value statements and the EEO plan for 2019-22. Guidelines and training are in place for search committee members with emphasis on diversity sensitivity in hiring. Toolkit/checklists assist with hiring for various employment positions. The district shows awareness of gathering resources to share regarding DEI concepts and reflects on its demographics for the institutions and the community, noting its progress in hiring diverse persons and looking forward to improving the diversity of the hiring pools. Calendars of events reflect DEI themes. The district supports diverse faculty associations. At Cypress College, a Black Lives Matter Task Force generated recommendations collected from six committees to address campus culture, personnel, violations, evaluations, curriculum, public relations, the Legacy Program, funding, and representation on hiring committees. (III.A.12)

A code of ethics and whistleblower protections exist in both BP and APs. Disciplinary actions are outlined. A sample of minutes addressing fraudulent financial aid distribution is provided. (III.A.13)

The district supports a professional development committee. There is a mentorship program, management development program, classified professionals training academy, and a leadership academy to facilitate relationships. Workshops and orientations are provided to promote professional development for various employees and to give voice to various groups in the community. Development is also embedded into FLEX days. New faculty have seminars dedicated to their development as well. Feedback is sought from attendees of retreats, and there appear to be plans to share the information. (III.A.14)

Protocols about reports and reporting are in place as well as employee access and record management. Employees are notified about adverse/derogatory materials prior to filing. (III.A.15)

Conclusion:

The college meets the standard.

III.B. Physical Resources

General Observations:

Cypress College and the North Orange County Community College District work collaboratively to regularly and systematically evaluate, plan, build, and maintain the college's physical resources to assure that they are safe, accessible, and sufficient to support its mission, and programs and services at all locations. Long-range plans support the college's goals and consider the total cost of ownership.

Findings and Evidence:

Cypress College and the North Orange County Community College District regularly assess and plan physical resources at all locations to assure that they are sufficient, safe, and accessible as demonstrated by the: NOCCCD 2020-2030 Educational and Facilities Master Plan; NOCCCD Five Year Capital Outlay Plan, which is updated annually; Facilities inventory (Fusion); NOCCCD 2015 ADA Transition Plan, which is currently being updated; facilities maintenance protocol (Facilitron); Citizens Oversight Committee minutes and reports for the Measure J General Obligation bonds; and Scheduled Maintenance project list. The team noted that the college's insurance provider had not conducted a safety inspection since 2016. At the time of the site visit, a safety inspection had been performed by the District Risk Management and the college was waiting for the report. However, the college had regular internal processes to assess and ensure that facilities were safe and well maintained, which was evident in the condition of facilities observed by the team during the site visit. To support continuous improvement, the team suggests that the college reinstate regular independent safety inspections by their insurance provider. (III.B.1)

The district and college collectively plan, build, and maintain physical resources for effective utilization and quality to support programs, services, and the mission through regular assessments, including: a Facilities Condition Assessment, which is performed every 3 years; Five Year Capital Outlay Plans, which are approved by the board annually; recurring updates to the Scheduled Maintenance projects; regular updates to the Citizens Oversight Committee for Measure J projects; and use of an online work management tool. (III.B.2)

The district and college regularly plan and evaluate facilities and equipment using utilization and other data to assure feasibility and effectiveness as demonstrated by the use of facilities utilization tools such as Fusion and Dabblefox and other evidence cited previously. The district calculates and monitors the Capacity to Load ratios established by the Chancellor's Office to assess both sufficiency and efficiency of its facilities inventory. (III.B.3)

The District's Educational and Facilities Master Plan is used to align long range plans for the college with institutional goals. The Five-Year Capital Outlay Plans, reports to the Citizens Oversight Committee for Measure J projects, and Scheduled Maintenance project lists demonstrate links between long range facility planning and resource allocations. Total Cost of Ownership is projected for the Student Housing project and considered when evaluating the

impact of other capital projects on the college's operating budget using industry standards such as APPA for facilities staffing. (III.B.4)

Conclusion:

The college meets the standard.

III.C. Technology Resources

General Observations:

The college and district provide employees and students with technological resources to help support teaching, learning, and mission attainment. The IT governance framework at the district level is the organizational structure used to integrate college needs and priorities into districtwide plans, policies, and guidelines. Technology needs, safety, and quality are regularly reviewed and updated. Training and IT support is available to both students and employees. Cypress College also has local policies and procedures in place that support the appropriate use of technology. The organization provides professional development on college information technology.

Findings and Evidence

The college and district ensure that technology and service needs are properly identified by delineating appropriate responsibilities for the district and the college, which is documented in a functional map and in a variety of other planning documents. The College Distance Education Plan documents the technology training and support goals for the latest planning cycle and describes updates and additions to training. Assessment of the appropriateness of organizational technology is conducted regularly. Specifically, the district's Information Services completes a District Services Administrative Review, and the College's Academic Computing Services (ACS) completes a Campus Service Program Review. Cypress College has completed a significant networking infrastructure refresh and has a Disaster Recovery and Business Continuity Plan in place. (III.C.1)

The college and district continuously plan for updates and replacement technology to ensure its technological infrastructure has the quality and capacity to adequately support its mission. The North Orange County Community College District Educational and Facilities Master Plan discusses key survey findings regarding districtwide technology needs, identifies programmatic recommendations to ensure adequate technology access, and outlines the district approach to online learning. The district also has a computer replacement plan that documents the minimum replacement cycles. Post-pandemic planning and resource allocation at the college has identified the need to expand and improve technology infrastructure for students, staff, and faculty and to better support distance education. The college noted that planning is underway to address these needs. (III.C.2)

The district manages the enterprise system, allocates resources to maintain technology infrastructure, and develops policies and guidelines to set standards for how technology is used and maintained at the district and college levels. The College Academic Computing Services

works collaboratively with District Information Services to ensure that all equipment, programs, and services used by students, faculty, and staff are reliable, safe, and secure. The college has a Disaster Recovery and Business Continuity Plan in place to ensure reliability and redundancy. A 5-Year Cyber Security Plan was also approved in 2022 and was being implemented, which has resulted in the district and college being downgraded from high risk to low risk by the CCCC. Technology decisions are approved through a clearly defined governance structure. (III.C.3)

The college and district offer quality training for faculty, staff, and students in technology use. Technology training and support is provided for instructional programs, student services, and operations. Technology training enables students to have the ability to access a wide variety of resources for learning, as well as to interact with faculty and other students. Topics for training are identified through a defined governance structure and program review. Cypress College continues to support the innovation of online teaching through increasing staff, professional development, and online teaching topics covered during Flex Day programs. (III.C.4)

The district and college use board policies and administrative procedures to articulate technology standards for employees and students including BP/AP 3750, BP 3740, AP 4105, AP 3721, and AP 3722. The District Technology Committee develops procedures, policies and standards for the district and colleges. This committee also advises and promotes the use of technology to enhance student learning, teaching, and district operations. The college's Distance Education Plan provides guidelines for accessibility, copyright, student authentication, and fraud prevention. (III.C.5)

Conclusion:

The college meets the standard.

III.D. Financial Resources

General Observations:

Cypress College's and NOCCCD's financial resources are effectively planned and allocated to support its mission, sustain student learning programs and services, and improve institutional effectiveness. The college and district exercise integrity and prudence over its financial resources to ensure compliance with applicable statutes and policies and long-term fiscal stability. The district allocates resources for payment of liabilities and future obligations and effectively manages risk. Financial information is communicated widely and timely and all constituent groups participate in the resource allocation process.

Findings and Evidence:

Financial resources are sufficient to support and sustain student learning programs and services and improve institutional effectiveness as indicated by the annual audited financial statements and budget reports. The district has effective policies and procedures to promote fiscal prudence, establishing budget development criteria, and requirements for annual financial audits by independent auditors and minimum reserves, which were recently increased from a minimum of 5% to two months of general operating expenses (16.7%). Despite a projected

structural deficit based on conservative revenue estimates, the college and district are in a strong financial position as indicated by the District's Cash Balance, Net Position, and history of balanced budgets. The combination of healthy reserves and growth in enrollment will provide the college and district time to adjust expenses if structural deficits materialize as shown in the six-year projection scenarios in the 2023-24 Adopted Budget. (III.D.1)

The mission and goals are the foundation for financial planning. Resource allocations are integrated with institutional planning as demonstrated in the annual budget and resource allocation processes, and Planning and Budget Committee and President's Advisory Committee minutes. Resource requests are tied to the mission and linked to program reviews. (III.D.2)

The college and district budget and resource allocation processes are clearly defined, and all constituents have the chance to participate in the resource request and prioritization processes through participatory governance committees as demonstrated in the board policies and administrative procedures and the handbook for the budget development processes. Requests for College resources are reviewed and recommended to the president by the Planning and Budget Committee and President's Advisory Cabinet. Requests for district one-time resources are reviewed by the Council on Budget and Facilities and the District Consultation Council, which makes final budget recommendations to the Chancellor. (III.D.3)

The college and district make realistic estimates for financial resources when establishing its budget as demonstrated by the historical budget to actuals comparisons and annual district budget. The district prepares multiple scenarios of six-year budget forecasts with different assumptions for revenue – using conservative estimates – and expenses to provide options to assure long-term fiscal stability. (III.D.4)

The annual Independent Auditor's report indicates that the college and district have effective internal controls and that financial documents are highly credible and accurate. Financial information is disseminated widely and timely through the annual budget and audit reports, which are reviewed by committees and presented and approved by the board. External audit findings are infrequent and, when they occur, are communicated appropriately in committees and board meetings and corrected promptly. (III.D.5, III.D.6, III.D.7)

Financial and internal control systems are regularly assessed for effectiveness by both internal external auditors as demonstrated by the external audit report and internal audit webpage and annual audit plan. The district has a fraud hotline to anonymously report suspected fraud. (III.D.8)

The annual Independent Auditor's reports show that the district has sufficient cash flow, which is regularly monitored by cash flow projections, reserves, and effective risk management to ensure fiscal stability. The district recently increased its minimum reserve requirement for the Unrestricted General Fund in its board policy from 5% to two months of general operating expenses (16.7%) as recommended by the Government Finance Officers Association and California Community Colleges' Chancellor's Office, which will be fully funded in the 2023-24

fiscal year. The district is a member of a Joint Powers Authority to manage its liability risk and proactively minimizes risks through safety program inspections, and its Injury and Illness Prevention Plan. The Board of Trustees reviews workers' compensation and property and liability coverage annually. (III.D.9)

Segregation of duties between college and district personnel provides effective oversight of finances. The Independent Auditor's Reports indicate few, if any, findings related to internal controls or compliance with federal or state statutes. A concept paper is required to review and approve new grants, and annual audits and performance are performed for all foundations and General Obligation bonds. (III.D.10)

The district and college have fiscally prudent policies and budget practices to ensure sufficient resources for short and long-term financial solvency. Both short and long-term liabilities, including Other Post Employment Benefits are fully funded, subject to fluctuations in OPEB investments, apart from General Obligation bonds, which are repaid by tax assessments, and Net Pension Liability, which is externally determined. The district does not have local debt other than General Obligation Bonds to fund capital projects. The District Council on Budget and Facilities regularly reviews the budget and financial statements for fiscal solvency. (III.D.11, III.D.12, III.D.13)

The college and district use resources with integrity and consistency with the intended purposes as indicated by the conclusions in the annual Independent Auditor's Reports for the District and Foundations, and General Obligation bonds. The district provides effective oversight through segregation of duties to ensure that resources are used appropriately to support student learning and the intent of the State, grantors, and donors. (III.D.14)

Financial aid is monitored to manage loan default rates and ensure compliance with federal Title IV requirements as indicated in the Independent Auditor's Reports on federal compliance and the ACCJC annual financial report. The college uses the Education Credit Management Corporation, a third-party vendor, to assist borrowers with information, workshops, and counseling services to manage the loan default rates. (III.D.15)

Contractual agreements are consistent with the mission, goals, and policies of the institution and include provisions to manage risks and maintain financial stability. Contracts are reviewed and approved by the district. (III.D.16)

Conclusion:

The college meets the standard.

Standard IV

Leadership and Governance

IV.A. Decision-Making Roles and Processes

General Observations:

Cypress College has articulated its shared governance protocols involving various decision-makers for the institution. The college demonstrates that various groups share reports, express their concerns and vote on matters. An evaluation of this activity is also taking place.

Findings and Evidence:

The NOCCCD Decision Making Manual, initially established in 2012 and updated in 2017, delineates the roles of key stakeholders in governance, emphasizing transparency. Cypress College's 2023 Governance and Decision-Making manual elaborates on the college's shared governance model, highlighting the key functions of PAC, PBC, and Academic Senate. Inclusive participation guidelines underscore the institution's commitment to equitable decision-making. The virtual 2021 strategic planning retreat sought stakeholder input, shaping the Equity Framework explored further in the 2022 retreat. Notable contributions from the Black Lives Matter Task Force, the implementation of an AP policy on gender pronoun use, and the Caring Campus Initiative showcase the institution's responsiveness to societal concerns and student well-being. (IV.A.1)

The NOCCCD has established a Board Policy and Administrative Procedures affirming the Board's ultimate responsibility for making decisions that adhere to state and federal regulations, involving the active participation of the Academic Senate, staff, and students. The Accreditation Steering Committee, Guided Pathways Committee, and Instructional Program Review Committee exercise authority in their respective roles and decisions through formal charters. (IV.A.2)

Cypress College has established roles for the PAC, PBC, and outlined the hiring committees for faculty and classified staff in Board Policies. An instructional equipment funding memo serves as an example of the communication processes employed; in this instance, it was distributed to faculty, managers, and staff to assess funding requests for equipment. (IV.A.3)

Cypress College has Board Policy and Administrative Procedures in place for program and curriculum development. The Distance Education Committee also reflects work regarding curriculum development, and significant attention is given to student support services. (IV.A.4)

BP and AP define participation, duties, and roles for Cypress College stakeholders. PBC, PAC, and AS minutes reflect the adoption of the 2023 Governance and Decision-Making Handbook.

Additional evidence of minutes show input on decision-making from these bodies on Institutional Set Standards and the classified prioritization process. (IV.A.5)

Cypress College has utilized both the ACCJC recommendations and the voices of their employees through a campus climate survey to enhance the awareness of issues and efforts in communication of decisions. The college has crafted a decision-making handbook and maintains a Governance website with membership and numerous links to various constituents. Program reviews are also accessible through a webpage, and the IRP committee has access to an archive of files. The PAC and AS are informed of decisions across various committees, as reflected in minutes. (IV.6)

Cypress College provides an annual Committee Self-Evaluation form, and an example of campus climate survey results is provided, extracting responses to address diverse employee concerns and impressions, aiming to identify strengths and areas for improvement. (IV.A.7)

Conclusion:

The college meets the standard.

IV.B. Chief Executive Officer

General Observations:

The team reviewed several examples of the former president of Cypress College who carried out the many of their responsibilities to see the college through the pandemic and accreditation. The president had active participation in meetings and communicated regularly with the communities. In January 2024 a new president assumed the duties of CEO.

Findings and Evidence:

The job description for the Cypress College president includes several duties and desirable characteristics for someone who leads, plans, budgets, selects and develops personnel, and assesses institutional effectiveness. A sample agenda reflects these job duties, and another agenda list shows districtwide communication to the Chancellor's office. (IV.B.1)

The Cypress College Management chart reflects the president's organizational plan. Web page samples depict the several vice presidents and directors. Examples were provided to demonstrate the president appropriately delegates authority to administrators and others consistent with their responsibilities. This includes a sample report that shows how the college responded to return-to-campus conditions post-Covid with specific protocols; another report reflects flexible scheduling, a topic explored in the leadership retreat in Fall 2022. (IV.B.2)

The team reviewed several examples that the college provided demonstrating the president guides the institutional improvement of the teaching and learning environment. Shared governance at Cypress College is outlined in a handbook approved by the PAC in February 2023

that covers guidelines for decision making, governance groups, documentation, communication, evaluation, relationship with Academic Senate, accreditation, and improvement. Minutes of the President's Advisory Cabinet show approvals and votes for various matters. The president shares messages with the institution prior to opening day and is featured in the opening day agenda. (IV.B.3)

The president ensures that regular meetings are scheduled for accreditation and delegation for addressing standards. Timelines for the district were established to meet reporting requirements, and ACCJC reports are made available online. (IV.B.4)

The president assures the implementation of statutes, regulations, and governing board policies and assures that institutional practices are consistent with institutional mission and policies, including effective control of budget and expenditures. The Board meets twice a month; documents are made available to the public. The Chancellor's agenda sample reflects policies being addressed which include Cypress College. Both the HEERF and CARES Act are reflected in Cypress College's response to the pandemic. (IV.B.5)

The team observed the president's state-of-the-college-message that acknowledges and celebrates several individuals and groups that reflect the "journey" motif that Cypress College has adopted. A president's newsletter is widely available and prepared for the district and Board of Trustees. The president attends events for honored citizens, high school superintendents, and principals, and is responsible for engaging with the wider community served by the college. A document about the PAC at Cypress College outlines the responsibilities of the rotating three-year-term members who meet twice a year. (IV.B.6)

Conclusion:

The college meets the standard.

IV.C Governing Board

General Observations:

Cypress College shows that the Board of Trustees and CEO interact regularly and candidly over many issues. Feedback and voices of many constituents are recognized at various meetings. Adherence to policies is fairly emphasized, and members are held accountable. The relationships, challenges, and issues that the Board deals with are made public.

Findings and Evidence:

Member profiles are published and visible, and Board Policy 2200 details duties and responsibilities of board members. Regular meetings are scheduled, and a list of the board and administrative policies is provided to demonstrate their authority over and responsibility for policies to assure the academic quality and financial stability of the institution. (IV.C.1)

The college provided evidence to demonstrate that the governing board acts as a collective entity. Voting and quorum specifications exist as well as code of ethics and standards of practice. (IV.C.2)

Board and administrative policies are in place for CEO selection and evaluation. The job posting clarifies many criteria for the position. Finalist forums were posted on YouTube and feedback solicited. The Board minutes are kept reflecting attendance, business, motions, accreditation, management, and votes. (IV.C.3)

The board and administrative policies address conflict of interest, and Board Policy 2200 details duties and responsibilities. Trustee areas are designated on Board Policy 2100 for election and the relevant process to demonstrate that the governing board is an independent, policy-making body that reflects the public interest in the institution's educational quality. (IV.C.4)

The team reviewed minutes that showed presentations apprising the Board of matters regarding faculty, programs, student success, campus culture, instruction, curriculum, legal services, personnel, and finances. Board Policy 2510 outlines collaborative (e.g. Academic Senate, staff, and students) and ultimate decision-making policies indicating that the governing board has ultimate responsibility for educational quality, legal matters, and financial integrity and stability. (IV.C.5)

Published policies reflect information on membership of the Board—eligibility, officer functions, committees, and required/regular and emergency meetings. (IV.C.6)

Board Policy 2410 clarifies awareness of laws and how any changes to AP are to be communicated by the CEO. Regular reviews of BP and AP are scheduled and connected to accreditation. Funding for resources and operations is also reviewed as are hiring procedures. A sample of several revisions in 2023 to Board Policy and Administrative Procedures is made available as a summary list. (IV.C. 7)

Cypress College has an internal process to be consistent with the districtwide strategic plan. The institutional effectiveness report is published online. Minutes reflect presentations to the Board about student success, degrees, programs, equity gaps, stipends, duties, instructional hours, services, professional development, position changes, vaccinations, adjunct issues, and discipline (closed session). Agenda samples show issues regarding fieldtrips, contracts, grants, architecture concerns, surplus, and personnel. The Board is made aware of developments involving, for example, Dual Enrollment, campus events, health, technology, diversity, trends in degrees/ certificates/ non-credit/transfer, and parking. (IV.C.8)

Policies are in place for membership, election, professional development, and travel specifics for Board members. A special effort was made to address the pandemic challenges to institutional effectiveness and several improvement areas were noted to work on. (IV.C.9)

Policies are in place for self-evaluation, and minutes show that the Board addresses difficult issues such as costs of construction delays, resignations, vaccination stances, fraudulent financial aid distribution concerns, security, aging network infrastructure, CEO review, dismissals, funding sources, insurance, contract extensions, bids, revisions, readoptions, salary negotiations, issues of good faith, ethics investigation concerns, timelines for project completions, Supplemental Early Retirement Plan, trustee diversity training, public apology, maintenance, anti-racism, and staff/faculty shifts. (IV.C.10)

Board and Administrative policies are in place and the board upholds a code of ethics and adheres to conflict of interests. Disclosure of involvements, commitments, use of facilities, insurance, audits, accounting, consulting, compliance, and access are made public. (IV.C.11)

The team reviewed policy samples and evidence that show that the Board delegates responsibilities to the CEO and holds the CEO accountable. (IV.C.12)

Board Policy and Administrative Procedures reflect that the CEO is held responsible for informing the board regarding accreditation. BP and AP confirm the CEO's responsibility for establishing collaborative means for achieving institutional effectiveness. (IV.C.13)

Conclusion:

The college meets the standard.

IV.D Multi-college Districts or Systems

General Observations:

The district has policies in place clearly defining the roles of its chief executives. Authority and oversight to ensure responsibility and accountability are articulated and evaluated. Regular meetings reflect that various reports and data are shared regarding allocations and expenditures. The district conducts climate surveys and appears to be discussing the results and reflecting on responses to the results.

Findings and Evidence:

The NOCCCD Board of Trustees has a Board Policy and Administrative Procedure establishing the role of the Chancellor and the Chancellor's delegation of responsibility to the college presidents. Agendas are listed regarding District council meetings and the Chancellor's staff meetings. Each campus in the district hosts a Chancellor gathering once a semester. The Chancellor attended Cypress College opening day and graduation. Samples of memos from the

Chancellor are provided as well as a joint statement with the district college presidents regarding a stance against racism and violence and the recent SCOTUS ruling on the use of race in admissions. (IV.D.1)

The NOCCCD has a function map that contains delineation of the organizational relationship between the two colleges and the District Office, showing the district's role in supporting the two colleges in all programs and tasks. Roles are delineated for the Chancellor's office personnel, the board, and all college personnel. The district also has an Integrated Planning Manual. This includes several processes and assessments for the organized operation of the district colleges. Administrative review of finance, facilities, information services, and educational services is conducted. Accreditation status reports for Cypress College are made available to the public online. (IV.D.2)

Since the last accreditation visit, NOCCD has revamped its resources allocation model, which led to the elaboration of the Resource Allocation Model. NOCCCD has a Council on Budget and Facilities comprised of various individuals who receive information and input from the board and the governor's office and reflect on the district strategic plan while adhering to the budget allocation model in place for its four budget centers. The district also has a budget allocation RAM (Resource Allocation Model). The Budget Council meets regularly throughout the year. Budget reports are prepared for the Board, and the Board approves the budget and expenditures according to law. The budget allocation model is shared with attendees at a virtual forum with detailed representation of expenditures and a section specifically about Cypress College. Quarterly and annual financial reports are archived. (IV.D.3)

The NOCCCD Chancellor delegates responsibility and authority to the college president to operate the board policies. Administrative Procedures delineates the CEO delegation responsibilities to the college resident. Evaluations of the CEO and all executive officers are outlined in an Administrative Procedure. This process occurs every three fiscal years. (IV.D.4)

Evidence of minutes shows the college engaging in discussions related to integrating planning. The district has a Plan, but there is no integrated planning manual. The college has a master plan from 2020 that documents many areas addressed in the district concerns for meeting students' needs. Minutes also show a move toward forming design teams. The District Council and Institutional Effectiveness Coordinating Council make available their decisions related to the input received from the district's four entities and report on student learning and achievement (IV.D.5)

Communication between the district and the college is shown on the lists of Board of Trustees' and committee groups' agendas. The district's governance groups provide updates to their constituencies. Furthermore, the Board of Trustees has a website to feature updates. Councils, workgroups, and committees also publish their agendas/minutes and meet regularly. The district includes governance and decision-making within the campus climate survey (IV.D.6)

The NOCCCD and Cypress College regularly seek input from their community about decision-making processes aiming at effectiveness. Some of the surveys are outsourced. There is a body (Institutional Effectiveness Coordinating Council) that oversees these processes. Examples include the 2019 survey conducted among 610 employees and 4791 students and the 2021 survey regarding the Education Engagement Index. Presentations from various committees are scheduled throughout the district. The District Consultation Council and Institutional Effectiveness Coordinating Council met to discuss survey results in 2023 (DCC) and 2022 (IECC) (IV.D.7)

Conclusion:

The college meets the standard.

Quality Focus Essay

Cypress embarked on a unique approach to the Quality Focus Essay by expanding on *Buen Cypress! We Take This Journey Together* initiative to further student connection and understanding of institutional resources.

The Quality Focus Essay was born from discussion stemming from a 2022 all-campus retreat. Discussion at the retreat illustrated the broad student resources available but lack of student awareness of these resources. The institution anticipates developing both interactive walks and 3-D tours to expand student awareness and connect students to resources to further their success. The initiative's success will be measured through student service usage data, student persistence, and campus climate surveys detailing campus connectivity.

The project will consist of five phases over four years: 1) Research and Discovery; 2) Development; 3) Proof of Concept; 4) Implementation; 5) Evaluation and Next Steps

The team finds that Cypress College's goal of increasing student awareness of services and connection to the campus culture is both worthwhile and timely, and the process of interactive walks and virtual connection is both unique and innovative. Furthermore, the team finds that Cypress College identifies measurable outcomes and diverse data collection to quantify progress. The *Buen Cypress! We Take This Journey Together* initiative, if well-executed, will pay strong dividends to student success and belonging.

Appendix A: Core Inquiries



ACCREDITING COMMISSION FOR
COMMUNITY AND JUNIOR COLLEGES
WESTERN ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

CORE INQUIRIES

Cypress College
9200 Valley View Street
Cypress, CA 90630

The Core Inquiries are based upon the findings of the peer review team that conducted Team ISER Review on March 18, 2024.

Dr. Jennifer Taylor-Mendoza
Team Chair

Summary of Team ISER Review

INSTITUTION: Cypress College

DATE OF TEAM ISER REVIEW: March 18, 2024

TEAM CHAIR: Dr. Jennifer Taylor-Mendoza

A nine-member accreditation peer review team conducted Team ISER Review of Cypress College on March 18, 2024. The Team ISER Review is a one-day, off-site analysis of an institution's self-evaluation report and supporting evidence. The peer review team received the college's institutional self-evaluation report (ISER) and related evidence several weeks prior to the Team ISER Review. Team members found the report to be a comprehensive document detailing the college's alignment to the 2014 Accreditation Standards, Eligibility Requirements, and Commission policies. Cypress College provided a thoughtful report, reflecting on the institution's transformational processes, equitable student outcomes, and planning for continuing institutional improvement.

In preparation for the Team ISER Review, the team chair attended a team chair workshop on December 5, 2023, and held a pre-review meeting with the college CEO on January 9, 2024. The entire peer review team participated in a team workshop provided by staff from ACCJC on February 1, 2024. Prior to the Team ISER Review, team members completed their assessment of the college's alignment to the Accreditation Standards and policies, identified areas for further clarification, and provided a list of requests for additional evidence to be considered during Team ISER Review.

During the Team ISER Review, team members spent the morning discussing their initial observations and their preliminary review of the written materials and evidence provided by the college for the purpose of determining whether the college meets Accreditation Standards, Eligibility Requirements, and Commission policies. In the afternoon, the team further synthesized their findings to validate the excellent work of the college and developed Core Inquiries to be pursued during the Focused Site Visit, which will occur on September 16, 2024.

Core Inquiries are a means for communicating potential areas of institutional noncompliance, improvement, or exemplary practice that arise during the Team ISER Review. They describe the areas of emphasis for the Focused Site Visit. During the Focused Site Visit, the team will tour the facilities, conduct scheduled meetings and an open forum, gather additional information to further their analysis to determine whether all standards are met, and accordingly finalize their Peer Review Team Report which will identify commendations or recommendations. The college should use the Core Inquiries and time leading up to the focused site visit as an opportunity to gather more evidence, collate information, and to strengthen or develop processes in the continuous improvement cycle. During the Focused Site Visit, the ACCJC staff liaison will review new or emerging issues which might arise out of the discussions on Core Inquiries.

Core Inquiries

Based on the team's analysis during the Team ISER Review, the team identified the following core inquiries that relate to potential areas of clarification, improvement, or commendation.

Core Inquiry 1: The team seeks understanding and follow-up on Administrative Unit (AUO) and Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs).
Standards or Policies: I.B.2
Description: During the ISER production, Cypress College identified an improvement plan related to the assessment of outcomes for Administrative Units (AUO) and Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs). Specifically, the college identified that Administrative Units Outcomes needed to be revisited to ensure applicable measurable outcomes along with the identification of a body to review these processes to provide accountability and continuing improvement.
Topics of discussion during interviews: <ol style="list-style-type: none">What progress has been made on the review of campus services' program reviews for SLO (student learning outcomes) assessments, and accountability and continuous improvement?What is the current process to establish outcomes for Administrative Units?What is the current process to integrate Student Learning Outcomes and its integration with Program review?
Request for Additional Information/Evidence: Examples of program reviews and assessment of student learning outcomes; updated administrative unit outcomes assessment if applicable.
Request for Observations/Interviews: <ol style="list-style-type: none">Student Learning Outcomes CoordinatorAdministrative Units Outcomes coordinator

Core Inquiry 2:

The team would like to follow-up and understand the catalog update process.

Standards or Policies: I.C.2**Description:**

The college identified an improvement plan due to the ISER revealing numerous omissions and errors in the college's catalog that led to a significant change in the catalog and what appears to be some confusion on the entities responsible for updating it.

Since the catalog information needs to be consistently updated promptly to ensure students receive accurate information, the team would like to inquire about this process and potential solutions.

Topics of discussion during interviews:

- a. The process for updating the catalog to ensure it is current, accurate and clear.
- b. Updates or progress on addressing the prior challenges to consistently updating the college catalog.

Request for Additional Information/Evidence:

Provide process and responsible parties for updating the college catalog.

Request for Observations/Interviews:

- a. Vice President of Instruction
- b. Vice Chancellor, Educational Services (DO)
- c. Others involved in updating the catalog

Core Inquiry 3:

The team seeks to better understand the college's process for regularly inspecting and evaluating buildings for safety to minimize the risk to students and employees.

Standards or Policies: III.B.1**Description:**

ISER III.B.1 paragraph 2, p. 153 states that "Buildings are annually inspected for fire safety and elevator safety, and they are further inspected every three years by the college's insurance company, ASCIP." The evidence provided in the additional evidence request indicated that the most recent safety inspection by ASCIP was from 2016.

Topics of discussion during interviews:

- a. In lieu of completing regular safety inspections by the insurance provider, what additional procedures has the college employed to assure facilities are safe?

Request for Additional Information/Evidence:

Other reports or documentation pertaining to review of safety of buildings if available.

Request for Observations/Interviews:

- a. Safety Committee
- b. Director of Facilities, Maintenance, and Operations
- c. Vice President of Administrative Services

Core Inquiry 4:

The team requests an update on the progress and adequacy of resources to support the IT Resource Optimization Project/NOCCD IT Digital Transformation Effort. The district/college provided planning documents and identified specific actions to address exposure areas. The team would like to know more about recent progress related to the implementation of the plans.

Standards or Policies: III.C.3**Description:**

All evidence in the ISER for Standard III.C. was reviewed. Additionally, the NOCCD IT Resource Optimization Plan and update documents were reviewed. The team would like an update on the progress of the IT re-organization. Specifically, the team is interested in learning more about the following:

- Implementation status on the new data and security procedures, adequacy of staffing to support institutional IT priorities.
- How the new IT reorganization plan meets college IT needs.
- Update on implementation of five-year Cyber Security Plan actions.

Topics of discussion during interviews:

- a. Progress on the IT reorganization.
- b. Steps taken by the institution to address the data breach.
- c. Adequacy of resources to ensure planning priorities are implemented.
- d. Coordination of District and College IT efforts to address identified challenges.

Request for Additional Information/Evidence:

Evidence to support progress on the above items.

Request for Observations/Interviews:

- a. Vice Chancellor of Educational Services and Technology (District)
- b. Executive Director of Information Technology and Services (District)
- c. Chief Information Security Officer (District)
- d. Vice President of Administrative Services (College)
- e. Director of Academic Computing (College)
- f. Other appropriate college and District employees

Core Inquiry 5:

The team would like to better understand how the college is using the guidelines from the 2023 Shared Governance Handbook for decision-making, and how it shares information with constituents—faculty, staff, students, the board, and administrators.

Standards or Policies: IV.A.3, IV.A.4, IV.A.5, IV.A.7

Description:

The team observes that a new handbook has been established in 2023, a response to concerns raised in various minutes from 2021. The team would like to learn more about how the institution implements its shared governance and decision-making policies to address needs.

Topics of discussion during interviews:

- a. How is the college implementing the updated guidelines?
- b. How are decisions communicated to all constituent groups, college, and districtwide?
- c. How are decisions documented to reflect diverse perspectives and input of various constituents?
- d. How is the college evaluating its system of shared governance given the new guidelines?
- e. How does the college ensure constituents are educated about/oriented to the guidelines so that they can effectively participate in shared governance?

Request for Additional Information/Evidence:

The team would like to see possible evidence in minutes, committee agendas, workshops and professional development regarding shared governance, evaluation reports, archived reports, communication online/electronic, etc.

Request for Observations/Interviews:

- a. Interviews with participants such as: faculty leadership, administrators, staff leadership, committee leadership, and student representatives.

Core Inquiry 6:

The team was impressed by the college's quality focus essay, disaggregated data framework to highlight both equity disparities and career education outcomes leading to high-wage jobs, and the intentional equity mission statement that operationalizes the college's core values.

Standards or Policies: I.A.2; I.B.4, I.B.6, and II.A.14, II.A.16

Description:

The college has developed an integrated, robust comprehensive model of continuous improvement to ensure conversations stay focused on improved outcomes for students. This operationalized equity framework allows for data metrics to be clear and measurable.

The college has reflected on the student journey as they navigate the campus to optimize various student support resources. The quality focus essay centers on improving wayfinding abilities to improve access, retention, and completion.

Topics of discussion during interviews:

- a. How has strategic planning impacted student success?
- b. What data sets have helped the college increase student success?
- c. What challenges and successes has the college experienced in its equity work?
- d. Role of participatory governance groups?
- e. Please describe the college's process to focus on the QFE wayfinding project

Request for Additional Information/Evidence:

Data or outcomes if available that demonstrate the impact of the college's equity framework.

Request for Observations/Interviews:

- a. Academic Senate
- b. Classified Senate
- c. Institutional Participatory Governance Committees
- d. Research and Planning Groups