

# **EXTERNAL EVALUATION REPORT**

Skyline College  
3300 College Drive  
San Bruno, CA 94066

A Confidential Report Prepared for the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior  
Colleges

This report represents the findings of the External Evaluation Team that visited Skyline College  
On October 21–October 24, 2013

Dr. Melinda Nish, External Evaluation Team Chair

## **Skyline College Accreditation Team Roster, October 21–24, 2013**

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## **SUMMARY OF THE EVALUATION REPORT**

**INSTITUTION:** Skyline College

**DATE OF VISIT:** October 21, 2013 through October 24, 2013

**TEAM CHAIR:** Melinda Nish, Ph.D. Superintendent/President Southwestern College

### **SUMMARY**

A team of twelve professional educators visited Skyline College from October 21 through October 24, 2013, for the purpose of reaffirmation of accreditation through evaluation of the College's performance relative to the Accreditation Standards and its compliance with Eligibility Requirements and Commission Policies. The team was also responsible to make recommendations for quality assurance, increasing institutional effectiveness, and to submit a recommendation to the Accrediting Commission regarding the College's accredited status. The team members prepared for the visit in advance by reviewing the Self Evaluation Report of Educational Quality and Institutional Effectiveness and preparing a draft report of their conclusions regarding the College's response to the recommendations from the previous review. The team's draft included initial impressions of the Standards, Eligibility Requirements, policies and an overall opinion of the Self Evaluation Report. Prior to the visit, the College also provided the team with an updated document summarizing changes that had occurred since the Self Evaluation Report had been published.

Skyline College is one of three colleges in the San Mateo District; therefore, a District accrediting team composed of a separate chair and assistant plus two members from each of the visiting teams to the three colleges was formed. The District team focused on evaluating the performance of the Board of Trustees and the District Office relative to the appropriate Standards and to each of the three colleges in the district. The chair of the District team maintained contact with the three college team chairs prior to and throughout the visit to share findings, observations, and recommendations.

The Skyline College External Evaluation Team found the College to be well-prepared for the visit, with a good general knowledge and understanding of the accreditation process evident throughout the College community. The accommodations provided to the team worked well with an equipped conference room at the hotel and a spacious team meeting room at the College. The College provided prompt and efficient IT support for secure internet and printing access. Documentation was provided primarily in electronic form with additional hard copies available in the team meeting room on the campus.

The team began its work on Sunday, October 20, with an evening meeting held in the hotel conference room. This early meeting facilitated the two team members also assigned to the District team to begin their District work the next day, Monday. The team continued to meet Monday morning. Monday afternoon, all team members (except those assigned to the District) were provided with a tour of the Skyline College campus which ended with a brief reception in the art gallery. The team members were able to interact with administrators, faculty and classified staff members, as well as students. The tour and reception provided the visiting team members a positive introduction to the creative and supportive culture of the College. The team members greatly appreciated the warm and genuine welcome they received while working on the

campus. Prior to the visit and during the visit, College staff – in particular the Accreditation Liaison Officer and administrative assistant to the college president– responded to requests made by team members via the team chair to provide documentation, arrange interviews, and otherwise accommodate the team.

The team conducted work on the campus from the morning of Tuesday, October 22 through noon on Thursday, October 24. During this time, team members conducted over 50 interviews with more than 100 participants including administrators, faculty and classified staff members, and students. Team members visited over 50 classes with approximately three-fourths of those being online courses. Additionally, two well-attended open forums were held with over 50 participants. Team members attended the Student Services Leadership Team and College Governance Council meetings. As per the directive of the District Chancellor, requests of the visiting teams to meet with specific individuals were to include another accompanying person. Therefore, nearly all requested interviews conducted at Skyline College were not private, one-on-one meetings, with the notable exception of the meetings requested by the team chair to meet with the Accreditation Liaison Officer and the college president. In most cases, the addition of an accompanying person did not impede the interview process, but in several instances the inclusion of an accompanying person, particularly note takers, did hamper the information gathering process.

Frequent team meetings were held throughout the visit. The team chair met with the District team chair and assistant and the two chairs from the other colleges in the district on Wednesday to review findings as well as to focus on potential commendations and recommendations. The team met early on Thursday morning in the dedicated hotel conference room to finalize drafts, incorporating any new information from Wednesday, as well as to prepare the summary to be shared with the college community. The team returned to the College team room at noon on Thursday for a final meeting. The Exit Report occurred at 2:00 pm, Thursday, October 24, 2013 and was very well attended, including the attendance of the District Chancellor.

The Self Evaluation Report of Educational Quality and Institutional Effectiveness for Skyline College was a well-written and comprehensive two-volume document totaling 536 pages. It addressed the Eligibility Requirements, the Commission Policies, Recommendations of the Most Recent Educational Quality and Institutional Effectiveness Review, Accreditation Themes, and the Commission Standards. The electronic version of the report included hyperlinks to evidence which was problematic in function with not all links working, regardless of platform. However, the web version of the Report, accessed from the Skyline College website contained properly functioning hyperlinks. Electronic access to evidence facilitated the work of the team.

A characteristic of the Self Evaluation Report was the near absence of any actionable improvement plans. The College staff explained during the pre-visit conducted by the team chair and assistant in September that the philosophy adopted was if evidence supported that the Standard had been met, there was no need for an actionable improvement plan, and furthermore, the College had an integrated planning process. The team investigated this response and arrived at a similar conclusion. However, future reports would be improved by the inclusion of an alignment of College plans as they relate to and support the Accreditation Standards. Not

providing this type of alignment or crosswalk resulted in the team doing significant research to assure that indeed College plans support and sustain the Standards.

Overall, the team found the Self Evaluation Report to be a fair and accurate depiction of the College and its performance with regards to educational quality and institutional effectiveness.

During the visit, the team members consistently commented on the creative and supportive environment of the College. Interactions with faculty, staff, administrators and students all confirmed that Skyline College is a unique environment that “dreams out loud” and then actively works together to realize those dreams. There was a positive and energetic tone and what team members described as a palpable sense of the Skyline culture. Innovation is encouraged at the College, and team members repeatedly heard that administrators work to say “yes.” Team members found many innovative practices to be worthy of commendation.

The team found Skyline College to be in compliance with all Eligibility Requirements and with the six Commission Policies addressed in the Self Evaluation Report – *Distance Education and Correspondence Education, Institutional Compliance with Title IV, Institutional Advertising, Student Recruitment, and Representation of Accredited Status, Institutional Degrees and Credits, Institutional Integrity and Ethics, and Contractual Relationships with Non-Regionally Accredited Organizations*. Through review of the Self Evaluation, the 2009 Follow-up Report, the College’s 2010 Midterm Report, annual reports from 2009—2013, Substantive Change Reports from 2008 and 2013, and financial reports and audits, the team found that the College had responded satisfactorily to the Recommendations from Most Recent Educational Quality and Institutional Effectiveness Review. The District Team found that the District had responded satisfactorily to the previous recommendations.

Relative to the Standards, the team found that Skyline College has done much good work in the important areas of learning outcomes assessment, program review, and institutional planning. Some of this work is recent and ongoing. The College has been working on its integrated planning process and its participatory governance structure, but the actual planning cycle process does not appear to have been systematically assessed. This may be in part due to the evolving and fluid nature of processes that is characteristic of Skyline College. The team appreciated the uniqueness of the College and its culture and concluded with College Recommendation 1 that the College should conduct a systematic assessment of the planning cycle itself.

Another example of the theme that improvement work needs to be ongoing is in the area of Distance Education. Skyline College has done commendable work with its substantive change applications. The team found in sampling a large number of online courses that it was difficult to document that all courses had continuous, regular, and substantive faculty interaction with students which is the basis for the College Recommendation 2.

Yet another example of this theme of ongoing work is in reference to Standard III.A.1.c, where the College and the District have made significant progress towards incorporating learning outcome effectiveness into faculty members’ evaluations. The most recent work in this area is still in the implementation phase which is why both the College and District teams developed District Recommendation 3.

The team found that relations between the College and the District worked well with a variety of centralized services and some decentralized. For example, all adjunct faculty evaluations are conducted and records maintained at the College level. However, this practice has not produced in all cases a systematic and regularly scheduled process of performance evaluations for all adjunct faculty members. This is the only evidence of a deficiency in meeting the standards and relates to College Recommendation 3.

The District Team found that the previous recommendations relating to District operations had been met but determined that the District should develop a regular cycle for the evaluation of its services and provide documentation regarding the outcomes of the evaluations (District Recommendation 1). Additionally, the District Team recommended that the Board of Trustees could work to improve effectiveness by developing goals for increasing its professional development and orientation of new Trustees (District Recommendation 2).

Finally, the College team was impressed overall with the “student first” culture and attitude at Skyline College. The team found many, many commendable examples of student services and programs that exemplify the Skyline Mission, Vision, and Values.

## **INTRODUCTION**

In 1969, Skyline College was founded to become the third member of the San Mateo County Community College District (SMCCCD), joining College of San Mateo and Cañada College. Skyline College is located on the San Francisco Peninsula in San Bruno. Skyline College does not have any off campus sites. The College primarily serves northern San Mateo County and southern San Francisco. The campus consists of 111 acres and is bounded by residential areas and the Golden Gate National Recreation Area. Skyline College serves the communities of Brisbane, Colma, Daly City, Millbrae, Pacifica, and South San Francisco. This service area is a particularly diverse population. The student body at the College reflects this diversity with 23 percent Asian/Pacific Islander, 21 percent White, 18 percent Hispanic, 17 percent Filipino, 12 percent Multi-ethnic, 5 percent other/unreported, and 4 percent African American.

Skyline College enrollment has been growing, and it currently serves the largest percentage of students in the San Mateo County Community College District. By 2011/12, approximately 45 percent of the District’s students were enrolled at Skyline College. Between 2007/08 and 2011/12, the College’s unduplicated headcount increased by 13 percent. Significantly, the College has experienced a 16 percent increase in full-time equivalent students (FTES) and a 160 percent increase in weekly student contact hours (WSCH) over this same five-year period.

Skyline College offers more than 90 associate degree and certificate programs and awarded 5,491 degrees and certificates between 2007/08 and 2011/12. The number of associate degrees awarded as increased in each of these years, totaling to 49 percent in 2011/12. Skyline students transfer to a number of California public four-year universities with San Francisco State University (SFSU) being the top transfer institution. The highest number of transfers to SFSU in the last ten years occurred in 2011 with 322 transferred students.

The International Student and Study Abroad Programs strive to globalize and internationalize the College’s curriculum. The International Student Program works collaboratively with the

campus' Center for International Trade and Development. The Study Abroad Program is a District endeavor and belongs to the Northern California Study Abroad Consortium. The campus values a diversified global student body that enriches the entire student population and surrounding communities.

Team members found the Self Evaluation Report to be visually appealing and well organized. The Report was comprehensive and reasonably complete as well as reasonably well written. The Report contained all required sections, including a brief college history, service area and demographic information, achievement data, overview of the self-evaluation process, compliance with eligibility requirements and policies. Each team member was provided with a flash drive with electronic copies in both Word and PDF format of the Self Evaluation Report and evidence. However, the links to the evidence did not function properly in many instances for all team members which made the use of the drives problematic. The team members used the web version of the Report and evidence links obtained via the Skyline website. This made review of the Report more challenging for some team members as review required internet access.

Descriptive sections of the report are thorough. The self evaluation sections tend to be brief and could have been improved with more thoughtful, reflective analysis. Coupled with the near absence of actionable improvement plans, the team members found the document to be incomplete in areas, despite its length. Ample evidence was provided, but the team found that often the evidence cited was not complete (a web screen shot, for example, rather than a link to a specific document which would provide satisfactory evidence). In several cases, team members were able to research and find better evidence to support claims of meeting Standards than was provided in the Self Evaluation Report.

Prior to the visit, the team members received flash drives with nearly all evidence available online via direct links embedded in the electronic version of the document, both in the narrative as well as at the end of each section of the report. However, the links in most instances did not work, regardless of the computer platform the team member used. Skyline College was not able to correct the problem and all team members were advised to use the Skyline website version of the Self Evaluation Report. The direct links in this version did work, however, rather than opening a new webpage with the evidence, using the link takes the reader from the Self Evaluation document to the evidence site which forces the user to go back to the Self Evaluation. This complicated the work of the team members.

Evidence in the team room on the campus was well-organized, but team members, despite some awkwardness with the web version of the Self Evaluation, preferred to use electronic versions of evidence when possible.

Shortly before the site visit, the College provided the team with an update to the Self Evaluation Report which included changes that had occurred since the publication of the Self Evaluation Report. An important point of clarification was made in this update concerning assessment of course student learning outcomes in that courses that have not been offered or cancelled have not been assessed.

Skyline College was well prepared for the visit and conducted a special open forum on

October 1, 2013 as part of the preparation with College President Stanback-Stroud opening the forum and clearly setting the tone of championing the process of accreditation and work done by the college members. The informal opening reception, the two open forums, and the exit report were very well attended. The exit report was not recorded but it was live streamed to allow staff members unable to leave their places of work to watch. It was reported that over 40 staff members were able to assist in the exit report via the live stream. The visiting team was very warmly received and requests for interviews, additional data, and transportation were graciously and efficiently met. Throughout the visit, team members remarked on the strong sense of pride, mutual support, and student first commitment that was evident. Indeed, several team members used the term “palpable” to describe the sense of being able to actually feel the Skyline spirit.

As a result of the comprehensive accreditation visit in October 2007, the accreditation of Skyline College was reaffirmed with the requirements that the College immediately file a Substantive Change Proposal (for online offerings), submit a progress report (focused on District Recommendations 1, 2, and 3) in October 2009, and file the Midterm Report by October 15, 2010. After reviewing the progress and midterm reports, the Commission took no further action. The College submitted two Substantive Change Proposals since 2007, in 2008 and 2013. The College was commended on the “preparation and submittal of an exemplary proposal” in 2013.

## **COMMENDATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SKYLINE COLLEGE**

### **COMMENDATIONS**

1. The team commends the College for achieving a “student first” environment that clearly reflects a shared vision of social justice, integrity, diversity, and access.
2. The team commends the College administration, faculty, staff, and student leadership for compassionately seeking, fostering, and valuing the diverse life experiences of the individuals within the college community.
3. The team commends the College for its spirit of innovation that supports progressive teaching and learning, student support and community needs as exemplified by many programs such as the SparkPoint program, the Center for Transformative Teaching and Learning, the BootUp Camp for new faculty, and a broad range of learning communities.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **COLLEGE RECOMMENDATIONS TO IMPROVE**

1. In order to improve and increase effectiveness, the team recommends that the College complete a systematic review of its integrated planning and resource allocation cycle in a purposeful and well documented manner to promote transparency and sustainability (Standards I.B, I.B.6, I.B.7).
2. In order to improve and promote quality instruction, the team recommends that the college adhere to its policy ensuring that all Distance Education courses are effectively facilitating



student learning by providing continuous, regular and substantive faculty interaction with students (Standards IIA.1.b, II.A.2, II.A.2.a, II.A.2.e.).

### **COLLEGE RECOMMENDATION TO RESOLVE DEFICIENCY**

3. In order to meet the Standard and ensure quality instruction, the team recommends that the College adhere to its systematic and regularly scheduled process of performance evaluations for all adjunct faculty members (Standard III.A.1.b.).
4. In order to meet the Standard, the team recommends that the College ensure that each employee group, including classified staff and managers, has prepared a distinct Code of Professional Ethics for their respective constituencies, so as to fully be in compliance with the District wide Policy on Ethical Behavior adopted by the Board of Trustees (Standard III.A.1.d).

### **DISTRICT RECOMMENDATIONS TO IMPROVE**

1. In order to increase effectiveness, the District and Colleges should broadly communicate the modification of the evaluation process for faculty and others directly responsible for student progress, which includes student learning outcomes, and ensure that the process is fully implemented (Standard III.A.1.c).
2. In order to improve institutional effectiveness, the Board of Trustees should develop goals for increasing its professional development and orientation of new Trustees (Standard IV.B.1.f.).
3. In order to improve institutional effectiveness, the District should establish a regular cycle for the evaluation of its services and provide documentation regarding the outcomes of the evaluations (Standards IV.B.3.b, IV.B.3.g).

### **EVALUATION OF INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSES TO PREVIOUS RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **DISTRICT RECOMMENDATIONS**

**Recommendation 1: The team recommends that the district develop and implement appropriate policies and procedures that incorporate effectiveness in producing student learning outcomes into the evaluation process of faculty and others directly responsible for student progress toward achieving stated student learning outcomes. (Standard III.A.1.c)**

The College, in conjunction with the entire District, has worked to include student learning outcomes as a component of evaluations. Initial attempts to negotiate a collective bargaining agreement modification to accomplish this were not successful. The College addressed this initial setback by making student learning outcomes a component of the “Dean’s Assessment of Non-Teaching Responsibilities.” Interviews with several deans and with the Vice President of

Instruction confirm that the deans do, in fact, consider the identification and assessment of student learning outcomes when evaluating full-time and part-time faculty (Standard III.A.1.c).

In 2012, the Performance Evaluation Task Force (PETF) was created. This task force was empowered to improve evaluation processes, including the assessment of student learning outcomes. The PETF is a District-wide body consisting of four faculty members, one college president (who is the Skyline President Stanback-Stroud) and the Vice Chancellor for Human Resources. The work of the PETF has been endorsed by the Academic Senate. The PETF has agreed to recommend that evaluation tools explicitly include effectiveness in producing student learning outcomes. This is now in the implementation phase (Standard III.A.1.c).

*The College has addressed the recommendation, resolved the deficiency, and met the Standards.*

**Recommendation 2: In order to fully meet Standards regarding district evaluation procedures, the team recommends that while the district has clearly defined rules and regulations for the hiring and evaluation of the chancellor, that same clarity of process should be extended to evaluating college presidents. Therefore, the district should develop rules and regulations for the evaluation of college presidents. (Standards IV.B.1, B.1.j)**

The College has annually evaluated its president against goals mutually agreed upon by the Board and the President.

The Board of Trustees has an adopted policy for the selection of the Chancellor as well as an adopted policy for the evaluation of the Chancellor. The Board has evaluated the Chancellor on an annual basis and meets with the Chancellor in closed session to discuss the annual evaluations. The Board of Trustees has delegated full responsibility and authority for the Chancellor to implement and administer board policies without board interference and holds the Chancellor accountable for the operation of the college through the annual evaluation process. A similar process for the selection and evaluation of a College President can be found in board policy (IV.B.1.j)

There is also a clearly defined process for selecting and evaluating the College Presidents. The most recent Presidential searches and hires in the District adhered to these processes. (IV.B.1.j)

Board Policy 8.02 delegates administrative authority to the Chancellor to supervise general business procedures to assure proper administration of property and contracts, the budget, audit and accounting of funds, the acquisition of supplies, equipment and property, and the protection of assets and individuals. It appears that the Board abides by this delegation of authority and that they are properly engaged at the policy level. The team concluded that the Board has fully delegated responsibility to the Chancellor for administering and overseeing the operation of the District. Interviews during the Team visit indicated that there is no sense of Board micromanagement of the Chancellor or other administrators that would impede the normal decision-making processes for both the District and the College. (IV.B.1.j)

*The College has addressed the recommendation, resolved the deficiency, and met the Standards.*

**Recommendation 3: In order to fully meet accreditation Standards and improve effectiveness, the team recommends:**

- a) **The board should regularly evaluate its “Rules and Regulations” and revise them as necessary (Standard IV.B.1.e)**
- b) **The district and colleges should collaborate to implement a process to regularly evaluate the delineation of functions and widely communicate those findings in order to enhance the college’s effectiveness and institutional success (Standard IV.B.3.g)**

According to the 2009 Progress report, the Board has established a schedule of review of policies which indicates a run-rate of one policy chapter per fiscal year quarter. This pace will allow for bi-annual review for each policy chapter on an on-going basis.

Board minutes reflect frequent, if not regular review of policies and procedures. (IV.B.1.e) The Board has a program for board development and new member orientation. Board Policy 1.10 calls for new member orientations, study sessions, access to reading materials and support for conference attendance.

The Board has completed a self-evaluation every year emphasizing in open session the importance of welcoming and listening to input from all constituency groups and the public before making decisions, and the importance of being transparent in its decision-making process. (IV.B.1.g)

*The College has addressed the recommendation, resolved the deficiency, and met the Standards.*

#### **CAMPUS RECOMMENDATIONS**

**Recommendation 4: Skyline College has developed and offers a significant program of online courses with 14 associate degree and 17 certificate programs constituting 50 percent or more of the requirements online. As a result of this finding, the team recommends that the college notify the Accrediting Commission and submit a substantive change proposal that will validate the program’s adherence to the accreditation Standards. (Standards II.A.1, II.A.1.b, II.A.2.d, II.B.1, IIB.2, II.B.2.a, II.C.1, II.C.2.c)**

The College prepared and submitted a Distance Education Substantive Change Report followed by an addendum with modifications in 2008 which was accepted by the Commission. The College subsequently submitted a second Distance Education Substantive Change Report in 2013. Upon acceptance of the 2013 report the Commission commended the college on the preparation and submittal of an exemplary proposal.

*This recommendation has been addressed.*

**Recommendation 5: The team recommends that the College build upon the structure established for the development and review of student learning outcomes and accelerate the full implementation and integration of student learning outcomes into the institution’s instructional and student services programs, and utilize these assessment findings to guide**

**future decision making and institutional improvements. (Standards II.A.1.c, II.A.2.a, II.A.2.b, II.a.2.e, II.A.2.f, II.A.2.i, II.A.6, II.B.4)**

Since the 2008 Accreditation cycle, Skyline College has accelerated full implementation and integration of student learning outcomes into both the instructional and student services programs in an effort to improve institutional effectiveness. The College reports that 100% of all courses, programs, and student learning and support activities have defined student learning outcomes and ongoing assessments as of spring 2013, excluding courses taught for the first time or scheduled to be assessed but cancelled due to low enrollment. The Student Learning Outcomes and Assessment Cycle (SLOAC) Steering Committee continues to involve every department on campus in an ongoing dialogue on outcomes assessment in an effort to initiate potential changes for improvement as needed to better serve students. College decision-making and program improvement is directly informed by Comprehensive Program Review, Annual Program Plans, and the annual Administrative Leadership and Unit Review, all of which require inclusion of student learning outcomes data from course, program, institutional, and administrative levels of assessment.

*This recommendation has been addressed.*

**Recommendation 6: The team recommends that the college develop, approve and publicize a code of professional ethics that applies to all college personnel. (Standard II.A.1.d)**

In 2008, the Board of Trustees adopted Policy 2.21, which was revised in February of 2012. The faculty and Associated Students also adopted codes of ethics.

*The College has addressed the recommendation, resolved the deficiency, and met the Standards.*

**Recommendation 7: The team recommends that the college, in collaboration with district IT services, integrate technology planning with institutional planning, in order to assess and implement the most effective use of technology and to develop a stable, long term plan to meet the ongoing need for renewing and upgrading technology resources in campus computer laboratories and for faculty, staff, and administrative functions. (Standards III.C.1.c, III.c.2)**

Guided by the Education Master Plan and the Strategic Plan, Skyline College's planning structure integrates technology planning through Annual Program Plans, Comprehensive Program Review, Administrative Leadership and Unit Reviews and institutional planning connecting campus technology planning with District technology planning. Planning is used not only to determine needs but also to ensure ongoing support for technology use at the College.

In addition to the annual planning process, the College uses the Technology Advisory Committee (TAC) to support technology planning. This committee made up of faculty, staff, administrators and ITS staff, provides each College with an individual to serve as a Technology Liaison. The Technology Liaison position is responsible for ensuring that the College's administrative and instructional technology infrastructure is maintained to provide peak performance at all times.

The Technology Liaison serves as the technology advocate on behalf of the College administration and faculty and represents College needs to ITS.

*The College has addressed the recommendation, resolved the deficiency, and met the Standards.*

**Recommendation 8: The team recommends that the college develop and implement a policy that specifically evaluates the institution’s governance and decision-making structures on a regular basis to assure their integrity and effectiveness. The results of these reviews should be widely communicated to the college community and used as the basis for continuous improvement. (Standard IV.A.5)**

After first receiving this recommendation in 2007, the college developed a formal tool for evaluating participatory governance. In 2012 a formal evaluation survey of the college’s governance and decision-making structures was developed and administered with 84 participants. The college published the Skyline College Participatory Governance Evaluation (Spring 2012) that documented the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats to the governance process.

*The College has addressed the recommendation, resolved the deficiency, and met the Standards.*

## **ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS**

1. **AUTHORITY** The evaluation team confirmed that Skyline College is properly authorized to operate and award degrees based on its accredited status through the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges and its approval under the regulations for the California State Department of Education and the California Community Colleges.
2. **MISSION** The evaluation team confirmed that Skyline College’s mission-vision-values (MVV) are clearly defined, adopted by the governing board and widely published. The stand-alone mission statement addresses learning at a global level. Combined with the vision and values the total MVV concept developed by the College strengthens their commitment to achieving SLOs.
3. **GOVERNING BOARD** The evaluation team confirmed that Skyline College shares a governing board with the two other institutions that make up the San Mateo County Community College District. The board has six members who oversee the quality, integrity, and financial stability of the college mission, providing sound educational programs. The board is comprised of five members elected by the county at large, one student representative and a board chair who is elected on an annual basis. The term structure is appropriate. The board acts as a policy-making body to support constituent and public interest and adheres to its conflict of interest policy. None of the trustees have employment, family, ownership, or other personal financial interest in the institution.
4. **CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER** The evaluation team confirmed that the CEO was appointed by the board in 2010 accompanied by a prompt notification to the Accrediting

Commission. The president has full authority over all college programs and services as well as administrative and operational matters of the college. The president does not serve on the Board of Trustees.

5. **ADMINISTRATIVE CAPACITY** The evaluation team confirmed that the College has ample resources and employs a sufficient number of administrators to effectively manage the college. New positions are created and filled as needs arise and funding is determined. The college follows statewide minimum qualifications guidelines when selecting employees to positions.
6. **OPERATIONAL STATUS** The evaluation team confirmed that the College has been in continuous operation since 1969. Currently the college serves approximately 18,000 unique students attending 2,359 course section offerings. Degree or certificate seeking students make up 9% of the student body. In recent years, the college has experienced robust growth in students attending online classes.
7. **DEGREES** The evaluation team confirmed that Skyline College offers 49 degree programs and 55 certificate programs. While only 9% of the student body list degree or certificate as their educational goal, 51% of the students list “transfer” as their educational goal.
8. **EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS** The evaluation team confirmed that all programs of study are congruent with the institution’s mission. The programs listed in the catalog are based on recognized higher education fields of study. According to the self-evaluation, the content, length, rigor and Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) are reviewed and approved by the Board of Trustees. Academic program offerings are assessed via SLO evaluation. Multiple programs meet or exceed the two academic year requirement when major specific courses are combined with the general education requirements.
9. **ACADEMIC CREDIT** The evaluation team confirmed that Skyline College has defined its academic credit awarding based on the Carnegie Unit Standard. The Carnegie unit complies with the California Community Colleges Chancellor’s Office requirements for awarding credit under California Code of Regulations and Title 5.
10. **STUDENT LEARNING AND ACHIEVEMENT** The evaluation team confirmed that the College has developed Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) for its instructional programs. SLOs can be found in the College Catalog immediately following the name of each program of study. The College has ongoing and systematic assessment processes allowing the college to evaluate its effectiveness of stated SLOs.
11. **GENERAL EDUCATION** The evaluation team confirmed that the college defines and incorporates a substantial component of general education into all of its degree programs, in order to ensure breadth of knowledge and promote intellectual inquiry. The general education component includes demonstrated competence in writing and quantitative skills, and an introduction to the major areas of knowledge. General education includes comprehensive learning outcomes for students. Degree credits for general education are consistent with the level of quality and rigor appropriate to higher education. The general

education philosophy and a list of general education courses are found in the Catalog and in the General Education Handbook.

12. **ACADEMIC FREEDOM** The evaluation team confirmed the College's commitment to academic freedom. Faculty and students are free to examine and test all knowledge appropriate to their field of study as judged by the academic/educational community. The right to academic freedom is established in SMCCCD Board Policy 6.35, is published in the Catalog, and in the Faculty Handbook.
13. **FACULTY** The evaluation team confirmed that the college employs qualified and experienced full-time and part-time faculty members. In 2011–2012, the college had 104 full-time faculty and about 206 part-time faculty. A clear statement of faculty responsibilities is contained in the faculty contract and a list of full-time faculty and their degrees can be found in the Catalog.
14. **STUDENT SERVICES** The evaluation team confirmed that the college utilizes numerous means of communication to inform students about its student services, which support learning and development appropriate to the college's mission. The Catalog and Student Handbook contain information about student services, including those for special populations. Many services are available online to improve access for all students including those enrolled in distance education courses.
15. **ADMISSIONS** The evaluation team confirmed that the college follows admissions policies that are consistent with its mission as a public community college in California. Clear information about college admissions policies is available in the catalog and in several locations on the college website.
16. **INFORMATION AND LEARNING RESOURCES** The evaluation team confirmed that the college provides students with access to sufficient information and learning resources and services to support its mission and instructional programs. Many materials and services are available online to improve access for all students including those enrolled in distance education courses.
17. **FINANCIAL RESOURCES** The evaluation team confirmed that the College receives its funding through the San Mateo Community College District. The visiting team confirmed that the college has sufficient resources to support student learning programs and services and to ensure ongoing institutional improvement. Financial reserves are more than adequate to ensure fiscal stability.
18. **FINANCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY** The evaluation team confirmed that the San Mateo Community College District and the three colleges that make up the district are audited annually by an external certified public accounting firm. The visiting team confirmed that the audits meet requirements and that no major findings were reported.
19. **INSTITUTIONAL PLANNING AND EVALUATION** The evaluation team confirmed that the college evaluates and provides public notification about how well it is meeting its

goals and the methods employed to do such, including assessment of student learning outcomes. The team found evidence of the college's planning for improvement of institutional structures and processes, student achievement of educational goals, and student learning. Progress was assessed regarding achievement of stated goals. Processes are in place for decisions to be made through an ongoing and systematic cycle of evaluation, integrated planning, resource allocation, implementation, and re-evaluation.

20. **PUBLIC INFORMATION** The evaluation team confirmed that all required information is available to both students and the general public in the catalog and on the college website.
21. **RELATIONS WITH THE ACCREDITING COMMISSION** The evaluation team confirmed that the college provides assurance that it adheres to the eligibility requirements, accreditation Standards, and policies of Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior College. The college communicates any changes in its accredited status and discloses information as required by the Commission.

## **COMMISSION POLICIES COMPLIANCE**

### **Policy on Distance Education and on Correspondence Education**

The San Mateo Community College District creates innovative educational opportunities, responsive support services, and strives for the high success and retention rates of students enrolled in distance education (online and hybrid) course offerings, degrees, and certificates. The District's Administrative Procedure 6.85.1 defines distance education courses, procedures for approval of new and revised courses, and processes for ensuring student authenticity and privacy. Skyline College is responsive to the diverse educational needs of its student population by offering and incorporating a variety of modes of delivery consistent with its mission. To date, the College offers 120 distance education courses and no correspondence education courses. Distance education has been thoroughly defined by the Skyline College Curriculum Committee along with suggestions for what constitutes regular effective instructor contact for online instructors as evidenced by the Skyline College Distance Education Handbook.

All distance education courses and programs must adhere to a Standard approval process involving the Curriculum Committee, Academic Senate, Board of Trustees, and submission to the State Chancellor's Office for final approval. The College clearly defines appropriate student learning outcomes for all courses and programs, regardless of instructional delivery mode. The College also provides appropriate resources and structure for distance education teaching faculty that include the Distance Education Faculty Handbook and WebAccess Handbook.

In addition, the Office of Planning, Research, and Institutional Effectiveness has provided data on success and retention for online classes as well as comparative analysis of student success in an online setting versus face-to-face modality. The retention rate (81 percent) in online courses is comparable to that of the College (84 percent). The success rate is less (57 percent) than the success rate for all classes (69 percent). The retention (72 percent) and success (52 percent) rate for hybrid classes is lower than the College rates.

The San Mateo Community College District offers a variety of processes in their distance education program to ensure that a registered student is the same student who participates in and



completes the program and receives academic credit. Identity verification includes such methods as electronic authentication using an assigned student ID and PIN, student email using a college-provided email account, the creation of randomized test bank questions and timed test delivery, and plagiarism detection software. Proctored exams are also an option for instructors, to be administered either at designated locations on campus or pre-arranged approved locations off-campus. Student privacy is guaranteed using the designated course management system at all times. Any faculty member wishing to utilize another course management system has to assure the Curriculum Committee that s/he can authenticate students who attend and complete their courses as well as preserve their privacy at all times.

To date, the College has submitted two distance education substantive change reports to the Commission, one in 2008 and another in 2013.

The College meets the Policy on Distance Education and on Correspondence Education.

#### **Policy on Institutional Compliance with Title IV**

The team found no evidence of Title IV compliance issues. The Dean of Enrollment Services is responsible for ensuring the institution maintains compliance with Title IV Regulations, State Student Eligibility Requirements, and related policies. The Financial Aid Handbook provides students with financial information while the Financial Aid Policies and Procedures Manual provides direction for college employees; each is updated annually to ensure any new regulatory changes are included.

The College delivers comprehensive information and services to students regarding financial assistance. The institution demonstrates a commitment to student success and completion by offering an array of federal and state student financial aid opportunities, workshops, and one-on-one counseling for economically disadvantaged students.

Enrollment Services conducts training sessions for faculty and staff to ensure they are properly trained and that information regarding any Federal and State financial regulations that could potentially impact their student population is current.

The College meets the Policy on Institutional Compliance with Title IV.

#### **Policy on Institutional Advertising, Student Recruitment, and Representation of Accredited Status**

Skyline College complies with all regulatory and legal practices related to recruitment and admissions. Requirements of this policy are defined in the college catalog, schedule of classes and college website. Although the College uses standard and traditional approaches for advertising, they have recently begun outreach efforts utilizing social media outlets, Facebook and Twitter.

Student Service programs collaborate with internal and external constituents to ensure access, progress, learning, and success. The Enrollment Management Plan (EMP) links many of the enrollment management efforts as well as provides opportunities to develop additional enrollment management activities where identified.

The college advertises and maintains gainful employment information, making it available to the public through the college website.

ACCJC accreditation status is referenced appropriately in the catalog, schedule of classes, and the college website. All accredited programs, licensure requirements, and state certifications are identified and advertised appropriately.

The College meets the Policy on Institutional Advertising, Student Recruitment, and Representation of Accredited Status.

### **Policy on Institutional Degrees and Credits**

The San Mateo Community College District does have a policy on Institutional Degrees and Credits but does not appear to have a procedure outlining specific criteria regarding a formalized credit hour policy. Board Policy No. 6.12 states “course units of credit shall be based on a pre-specified relationship between the number of units and hours, the type of instruction, and performance criteria” and notes that “the District shall assess and designate each of its programs as either a ‘credit hour’ program or a ‘clock hour’ program. The Chancellor will establish procedures which prescribe the definition of ‘credit hour’ consistent with applicable federal regulations.”

While such a definition is not elaborated upon in any established procedure to date, the College’s intended practice regarding credit units are printed in the yearly Skyline College General Catalog, which states that the amount of credit associated with a course is based on the Carnegie Unit Standard, which defines one semester unit of credit equal to three hours per week of work in a semester consisting of at least 16 weeks in duration, resulting in 48 total hours of work (or the equivalent). However, such a definition of a credit hour as comparable in quantity and nature to credits awarded to other courses at the institution, to be established via administrative procedure by the Chancellor, is not found in any formalized District procedures.

While the Self Evaluation Report does state that the appropriate formula for credit hour is part of the regular scheduling practices by the College as found in the CurricUNET management system, assuring a comparable level of student competence and learning for different activities assigned comparable credit (e.g., laboratory work, studio work) is not formally present in District procedures.

The College meets the Policy on Institutional Degrees and Credits as such a policy is formally defined by the District and executed across the curriculum. An accompanying procedure should be developed to support the policy and assure sustainability and uniformity.

### **Policy on Institutional Integrity and Ethics**

#### Upholds and Protects the Integrity of its Practice

Skyline College has goals consistent with its stated purpose in the Mission-Vision-Values statement. The institution sets goals to improve its effectiveness consistent with its stated purposes. The institution articulates its goals and states the objectives derived from them in measurable terms so that the degree to which they are achieved can be determined and widely

discussed. Faculty, staff, and administrators understand college goals and work collaboratively toward their achievement.

#### Responding to Commission Requests

Reports to the Commission have been submitted on time and were complete. In its January 31, 2011 response to the College's Midterm Report, the Commission stated that Skyline College had resolved District recommendations 1, 2, and 3 as well as College recommendations 5, 6, 7, and 8. The letter notes that the College had submitted substantive change proposals in response to recommendation 4. On March 22, 2013, the Commission acted to approve substantive change requests.

#### Institution Reports are Clear and Accurate

The College prepared and submitted a Distance Education Substantive Change Report followed by an addendum with modifications in 2008 which was accepted by the Commission. The College subsequently submitted a second Distance Education Substantive Change Report in 2013. Upon acceptance of the 2013 Report, the Commission commended the college on the preparation and submittal of an exemplary proposal.

#### Institution Policies Ensuring Academic Honesty, Integrity in Hiring and Preventing Conflict of Interest

The Board of Trustees has approved and published a comprehensive statement on academic freedom as well as a statement on professional ethics. The College provides faculty and students with clear expectations concerning the principles of academic integrity and outlines sanctions for violations in many publications.

The College hires qualified personnel pursuant to a well-developed criteria and process, conducts systematic evaluations of its employees, maintains codes of ethics for employees, and maintains written policies and procedures that promote fair and consistent employment practices.

#### Institution Demonstrates Integrity and Honesty in Interactions with Students

Skyline College assures that clear, accurate, and current information about courses, programs, and transfer policies is available to students through the College Catalog, class schedule, the College website, and the College campus.

The College Catalog also describes the purpose, content, course requirements, and expected student learning outcomes for the various degrees and certificates offered, general education requirements, CSU general education/breadth information, IGETC requirements and other transfer policies for four-year universities and colleges, including the CSU and UC minimum admissions requirements. Faculty members publish course syllabi and distribute to students in every section of courses taught.

#### Institution Establishes and Publicizes Policies Regarding Institutional Integrity and How Violations are Resolved

San Mateo County Community College District Policies 7.69, 7.70, and 7.73 address student conduct, disciplinary sanctions, grievance and appeals. The College schedule, catalog, website,

and Student Handbook provide students with information regarding rights and responsibilities and describe how to resolve violations.

#### Institution Cooperates with Commission on Site Visits

The Skyline College External Evaluation Team found the College to be well-prepared for the visit. The College community seemed to possess a good general knowledge and understanding of the accreditation process. Accommodations provided to the team worked well and included an equipped conference room at the hotel and a spacious team meeting room at the College. Meeting requests and documentation were provided in a timely manner.

#### Institution Establishes Process to Receive and Address Complaints about Operations

A College Internal Audit Group (CIAG) acts to ensure that internal controls are maintained. Additionally, CIAG is responsible for overseeing complaints regarding operations and all District processes.

The College meets the Policy on Institutional Integrity and Ethics.

#### **Institution-Set Standards**

The institution has established set standards for course and program completion, retention, student persistence from term to term, degree and certificate completion, and transfer rates while reporting acquired data for each metric as evidenced by the Balanced Scorecard. In addition, State licensing examination pass rates (for Cosmetology, EMT, Respiratory Therapy, and Surgical Technology) and job placement pass rates (for Respiratory Therapy and Surgical Technology) are also highlighted, although institution-set standards are not yet noted in these areas. The College also collects student progression data from pre-collegiate course to collegiate level course and is working to establish an appropriate standard to ensure student success.

The Balanced Scorecard data and the institution-set standards appear to be reasonable and are evaluated each year. The College discusses the outcomes measured by the Scorecard and how well the College is doing in meeting its goals.

The College largely meets this new requirement for establishing institution-set standards for student performance.

#### **Policy on Award of Credit**

The San Mateo Community College District has established both board policies and administrative procedures that support awarding credit to students based on accomplished work of sufficient quality designed to produce student learning outcomes necessary to meet standards of quality in higher education of transfer institutions, employers, as well as program and degree requirements. Board Policy No. 6.11 defines awarding the degrees of Associate in Arts, Associate in Science, and Certificate of Achievement to qualifying students consistent with Title 5 regulations, and Board Policy No. 6.12 provides for measurement of student performance based on identified student learning outcomes, course objectives, type of instruction and performance criteria, and uniform grading standards, resulting in course credit for courses. Administrative procedures 6.11.1 and 6.11.2 address the specific District Colleges and career/technical programs, respectively. In addition, administrative procedure 6.16.1 addresses

remedial coursework conditions governing award of credit for students enrolled in both credit and noncredit courses, comparable to and appropriate for higher education or for pre-collegiate education. The College also accepts Advanced Placement (AP), College Level Examination Program (CLEP), and International Baccalaureate (IB) exam credits from students.

Skyline College meets the Policy on Award of Credit.

### **Policy on Transfer of Credit**

Both internal and external transfer-of-credit policies are made available to students through the College Catalog, class schedule, and on the College website. District wide internal policies are established through the Enrollment Services Council, Admissions and Records Committee, the District Matriculation Committee, and through the College's Educational Policy Committee. Board Policy No. 6.26 provides for reciprocity of course credit among the District's three colleges. External policies regarding transfer-of-credit mandated by four-year institutions are coordinated by the College's articulation officer as well as the District wide Transcript Evaluation Services staff. Moreover, up-to-date transfer articulation information is accessible through the Transfer Center website and Project ASSIST. The San Mateo Community College District evaluates foreign transcript and credential evaluations using the same published and approved organizations. In addition, the District utilizes DegreeWorks, a web-based tool designed to help students and counselors monitor progress toward degree and certificate completion which examines program requirements at all three District colleges to produce an easy-to-read audit.

Skyline College complies with the Policy on Transfer of Credit.

### **Policy on Contractual Relationships with Non-Regionally Accredited Organizations**

Skyline College belongs to the Peninsula Library system. The Peninsula Library System (PLS), a consortium of 34 public libraries in San Mateo County plus the three college libraries of the District. The System provides the integrated library system (computer system) used by all of the SMCCCD libraries, interlibrary loan delivery services, and access to additional full-text databases. In all instances, these agreements have formal contracts in place which are regularly reviewed to ensure that the College is maximizing the benefits to students

Skyline College complies with the Policy on Contractual Relationships with Non-Regionally Accredited Organizations.

### **Policy on Student and Public Complaints Against Institutions**

Skyline College has not received any student or public complaints in the past six years.

## **EVALUATION BY STANDARD**

### **STANDARD I: MISSION AND INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS**

#### **STANDARD IA: MISSION**

### **General Observations**

Skyline College has Mission, Vision and Values (MVV) statements in place that are intended to reflect its educational purpose, student population, and its commitment to achieving student learning (I.A). The Self Evaluation indicates that the MVV was developed through extensive campus dialogue and a participatory governance process. The District Mission statement is provided via a web link on the same page as Skyline's MVV and College Goals. The Self-Evaluation states that the MVV is reviewed every three years through the participatory governance structure at the College and uses the metrics of the Balanced Scorecard to inform the process (I.A.3).

The College has done significant work in revising its Mission, Vision and Values. The 2012 revision process resulted in significant modifications to the wording of the MVV. By itself, the mission statement is direct, however very broad in scope. When combined with the vision and values, the MVV statements encompass the requirements for Standard I.A.

Additionally, in the Self Evaluation Report, Skyline links its mission statement to the California Community College's Mission statement and the District Mission statement. The Self Evaluation Report states and provides evidence that the MVV was approved on June 6, 2012 by the District Board of Trustees (I.A.2).

The college provides student learning programs and services that are aligned with its MVV (I.A.1). The broad nature of the MVV and the college's statements on campus climate, open access, student success, academic excellence, community connection, participatory governance, and sustainability support the college's efforts to offer the programs and services that ensure students will succeed. The college has in place participatory governance committees in the Institutional Planning Committee (IPC), the Stewardship for Equity, Equal Employment, and Diversity (SEED), Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Committee (SLOAC), Campus Budget Committee, and the College Governance Council that monitor the college's commitment to its MVV (I.A.3).

The Self Evaluation Report for Standard I.A is focused on the connection between the college's MVV and its planning process (I.A.4). The Institutional Planning Committee (IPC) is responsible for reviewing the mission on a three-year cycle. The Self Evaluation Report describes the MVV as the foundation for planning and decision-making. Although the college is able to illustrate the connection between the MVV, planning and decision-making the evidence provided suggest that some of these processes were developed in the last 24 months and are still in the process of completing a full cycle. Representation from all stakeholders is encouraged based on the committee membership structure, surveys and wide-spread participation in program review and assessment.

### **Findings and Evidence**

Evidence of extensive campus participation in the development of the MVV is not clearly presented in the Self Evaluation Report, but through interviews with staff in the PRIE office, Academic Senate Leadership and members of the college IPC, there is evidence that the college did engage in an intensive and broad-range dialogue about the Mission, Vision and Value statements. Campus forums were held and faculty, staff and students were surveyed during the revision process for additional input. The IPC was primarily responsible for leading the process

and the discussion. The Self-Evaluation Report states that the Mission review process is on a three-year cycle, and this was confirmed through interviews with College faculty and staff (I.A.3 and I.A.4). Through public forums held by the accreditation evaluation team, it was evident that college constituents are committed to the “students first” philosophy encompassed in the MVV (I.A.4).

Additionally, District Governing Board minutes from June 2012 report that the Board reviewed and approved the Mission, Vision and Values statement revisions brought forward by Skyline College (I.A.2). The Skyline Mission statement can be found on the college website and is provided on every agenda for committee meetings held by college personnel regardless if it is a departmental staff meeting or a participatory governance committee (I.A.3).

The list of evidence provided is impressive and speaks to the college’s commitment to achieving the MVV and to a culture of evidence-based decision making (I.A.1).

### **Conclusion**

The combination of the Mission, Vision and Value (MVV) statements defines the institution’s broad educational purpose, its intended student population, and its commitment to achieving student learning. Each individual statement within the MVV does not fully describe the college’s broad educational purpose, but the combination of all three statements aligns to their student learning programs and services. The college consistently uses all three statements combined to evaluate ongoing progress and institutional effectiveness. The institutional MVV was defined by the campus community, is an integral part of the college goals, strategic priorities, and SEED visions statements, and is heavily used to guide college planning and program review (I.A.1, I.A.4).

The College has done significant work in revising its Mission statement to formulate the Mission, Vision and Values statements for the college. According to the Self Evaluation Report of Educational Quality and Institutional Effectiveness, the Mission statement and now the MVV are reviewed every three years. By itself, the mission statement is direct, however very broad in scope. It works well with the total MVV concept presented to stakeholders and others and has been approved by the governing board and widely published (I.A.3, I.A.2).

The College meets the Standard.

### **Recommendations**

None

**STANDARD I: MISSION AND INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS**

**STANDARD IB: INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS**

### **General Observations**

The Skyline College office of Planning, Research and Institutional Effectiveness (PRIE) provides a wide range of data to support and facilitate a campus-wide dialogue on student learning and institutional effectiveness (I.B.1). The PRIE staff members are represented in various participatory governance committees and have recently added a Coordinator of

Intuitional Effectiveness who is charged with keeping the college focused on student learning and assessment.

The Skyline Self Evaluation Report makes some sweeping generalities such as “Skyline College has become a leader throughout the state in assessment process development and implementation.” Although there may be some validity to this statement, there is not sufficient direct evidence provided to substantiate this claim.

The college has an established planning process that is led by the Institutional Planning Committee (IPC) (I.B.4). Minutes of the IPC and College Governance Council indicate that a wide variety of topics regarding institutional effectiveness and improvement are discussed. There is substantial evidence that the college is actively engaged in discussions regarding planning and institutional effectiveness. The institution sets goals to improve its effectiveness, consistent with its stated purposes. The institution articulates its goals and states the objectives derived from them in measurable terms so that the degree to which they are achieved can be determined and widely discussed. Faculty, staff, and administrators understand college goals and work collaboratively toward their achievement (I.B.2).

The college has administered two surveys designed to measure institutional effectiveness (I.B.6 and I.B 7). The first is the Employee Voice survey designed to measure campus climate. The second is the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) which measures student engagement inside and outside of the classroom. The college has also prepared a Participatory Governance Evaluation which was completed in a Strengths-Weaknesses-Opportunities-Threats format in a public forum by 14 leadership representatives from all constituents. Also, a survey was distributed to the campus with 84 participants. Additionally, the college has implemented a software system (TracDat) that stores and tracks student assessment data and is used to guide the conversations on student learning outcomes.

Skyline has college goals consistent with its stated purpose in the MVV. The college uses an instrument called “the Balanced Scorecard” to define and measure institutional performance and effectiveness (I.B 3). The Scorecard provides achievement data which is used in collaborative decision making, tracking, and communicating college performance (I.B.4).

The institution, in an on-going and systematic manner, evaluates progress towards its stated goals and makes decisions regarding the improvement based on that evaluation. Evaluation is based on analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data (I.B.3). The Balanced Scorecard, developed in 2005, continues to be an effective and transparent approach to providing key performance metrics to internal and external stakeholders on the College’s institutional effectiveness. The team encourages the College to continually develop new metrics that will further measure their performance.

### **Findings and Evidence**

The college uses a variety of surveys to evaluate different aspects of institutional effectiveness. This includes the CCSSE, Employee Voice Survey, Faculty Surveys, Student Satisfaction surveys in addition to a 6-year comprehensive program review cycle and annual program planning process (I.B.7). Skyline College’s Participatory Governance Evaluation forum and survey were conducted in spring of 2012. Results of these were included in the evidence which



provides documentation of the forum process and results of the college's first formal review of their participatory Governance structure (I.B.4).

The forum focused on the components of governance: Communication, Planning and Budget, Overall Governance, Committee Structure. However, the evidence does not demonstrate that the actual planning cycle itself was assessed as a first level Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats (SWOT) analysis was conducted of the four general areas listed above.

The integrated planning process at Skyline College has been evolving and was difficult to understand from the Self Evaluation Report. Based on multiple interviews during the site visit, the team concluded that the integrated planning cycle of Skyline College is a flexible model that works on a cyclical basis (I.B.4 and I.B.6). SLO assessment and program review activities are concluded during the spring months and planning occurs parallel to the budgeting process, which begins early fall (I.B.5). The Skyline planning process, as described by staff, allows for the insertion of off-cycle items, which are taken under consideration based on urgency. This integrated planning cycle appears to be relatively well received by faculty and staff. The planning process appears to work in an organic manner to suit the needs of the college and its specific culture. Faculty, staff, and administration consider their planning and program review process to be data informed (I.B.5).

Additionally, a review of minutes from IPC and The College Governance Council indicate that a wide spectrum of topics regarding institutional effectiveness and the data regarding progress on institutional goals is discussed (I.B.3 and I.B.5). Aside from the minutes of the IPC meetings, most of the evidence provided regarding assessment and evaluation is relatively recent.

The College's Balanced Scorecard is used to measure the college's progress on institutional performance and effectiveness. The college states in its goals that it intends to be a leader in transferring students, awarding degrees and certificates in the San Francisco Bay area. The college has made a significant attempt to illustrate the alignment among college goals, strategic priorities, and the SEEED equity vision (I.B.2).

Members of the campus community were able to speak to the integrated planning process and confirmed that dialogue regarding program review and planning are extensive and ongoing. Additionally, the evaluation team was able to find evidence to support continual evolution of the integrated planning and resource allocation process but unable to confirm that college constituents are actively engaged in a systematic process to ensure the effectiveness of the integrated planning model in achieving the MVV, goals, strategic priorities, and Equity Vision (I.B.1 and I.B.6).

The college president relies on the Integration Matrix of College Goals, Equity Vision and Strategic Priorities to ensure that resource allocation is aligned with the priorities of the college and the district (I.B.3).

## **Conclusion**

It is evident in the Self-Evaluation Report of Educational Quality and Institutional Effectiveness that the college has invested significant resources into revising systems and processes to ensure

all separate functions of the college are systematically evaluated and that the results of the evaluation are used to improve institutional effectiveness and student learning (I.B.6).

The College has an integrated planning process that appears to be flexible and allows for off cycle planning. The integrated planning process appears to be evolving, as well as the evaluation mechanism for the planning process. A forum style review of the governance process was conducted in March 2102 which addressed integrated planning, although it was not cited as evidence of a systematic review of the integrated planning and resource allocation cycle of the college in the Self Evaluation Report for Standard I.B (I.B.3, I.B.6). The assessment work conducted the PRIE appears to be assessing each individual component of various processes but not the entire cycle itself.

There is evidence that participatory governance committees allow for an on-going dialogue which includes discussion of student learning and institutional process (I.B.1). The College has established goals to improve effectiveness with the Balanced Scorecard being the instrument that performs longitudinal tracking of defined elements of success for the college (I.B.2).

The college is encouraged to continually evaluate the inclusion of metrics published on the Balanced Scorecard (such as graduation rates, transfer rates, federal loan cohort default rates, job placement rates, and graduate earnings) to ensure the College is effectively measuring its stated MVV, goals, priorities and Equity vision (I.B.5).

The College meets the Standard.

### **Recommendations**

College Recommendation 1: In order to improve and increase effectiveness, the team recommends that the College complete a systematic review of its integrated planning and resource allocation cycle in a purposeful and well documented manner to promote transparency and sustainability (I.B, I.B.6, and I.B.7).

## **STANDARD II: STUDENT LEARNING PROGRAMS AND SERVICES**

### **STANDARD IIA: INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMS**

### **General Observations**

Skyline College offers high quality programs in certificate, degree, transfer, career programs, and basic skills options that align with its mission to empower and transform a global community of learners. Faculty members lead the curriculum process through the responsibility of design, review, and oversight of all new and revised courses, including means of delivery and location, new programs, and review of programs and services, to ensure that offerings are consistent with current higher education standards. Distance education offerings undergo additional scrutiny, ensuring the quality, access, and integrity of these courses is equal to onsite courses. Ongoing dialogue and development of college plans and student learning outcomes assessment involve continually evaluating institutional effectiveness through peer review and analyses of instructional methods and modes of instruction to ensure student success. Efforts to support faculty and staff development to promote better pedagogy and improved teaching practices culminate in the College's Center for Transformative Teaching and Learning in conjunction with

maintaining a system of programs and courses that address institutional-level student learning outcomes and benchmarks to support overall institutional integrity.

### **Findings and Evidence**

The College offers 103 associate degrees and certificates based on a defined program of study and student learning outcomes in a wide range of subject areas. Included in part of the degrees offered are six approved associate degrees for transfer that meet the Transfer Model Curriculum agreements, guaranteeing graduates admission to a California State University, with 12 additional degrees pending State approval (II.A).

To ensure the quality and diversity of instructional offerings, the College has established a cycle of sustainable continuous quality improvements through the assessment of student learning outcomes (SLOs) at the course, program, and institutional levels. According to the ACCJC College Status Report on Student Learning Outcomes Implementation, Skyline College has both defined and assessed 100% of its total course, program, institution, and student support activity learning outcomes. Using TracDat, faculty members are able to map course learning outcomes to program and institutional SLOs. The assessment cycle and process is described in the Student Learning Outcomes and Assessment Cycle (SLOAC) Framework. Faculty initiate all course, program, and institutional SLOs and are responsible for the assessment of all outcomes through the annual planning process using multiple measures and inquiry for the purposes of improving student learning and program effectiveness. This evaluation helps identify resources needed including personnel, professional development, facilities, research, and equipment necessary to achieve program outcomes and serves as the basis for each program's six-year Comprehensive Program Review (II.A, II.A.1.a, II.A.1.c).

Skyline College offers basic skills, transfer, and career technical education courses through a variety of delivery methods including online, hybrid, and traditional classroom instruction that support the mission of the College. To ensure alignment with the College's mission, faculty initiate and carry out the responsibility of design, review, and oversight of all new and revised courses and programs, including means of delivery and location, in conjunction with the Curriculum Committee, the local Academic Senate, with support from the Office of Instruction (II.A.1, II.A.1.b).

The College utilizes a Comprehensive Program Review and Annual Program Plan process as a primary way for evaluating programs and courses, both of which are part of the integrated planning that align with the Education Master Plan. Comprehensive Program Review occurs on a six-year cycle with Annual Program Plans taking place yearly between the review cycles. Faculty are central to this process, as they revise and update course outlines, reflect on student learning outcome assessment results, and analyze data provided by the Office of Planning, Research, and Institutional Effectiveness (or PRIE) in order to effectively create a schedule that meets the needs of their students (II.A.1, II.A.2.a, II.A.2.c).

The College's Education Master Plan provides data and direction that informs program and course development in basic skills, collegiate, pre-collegiate, continuing and community education, study abroad, short-term training, international programs, and contract education. Faculty expertise along with assistance from advisory committees is relied upon for general

programs, degrees, and career technical education programs as well as updating all course outlines and SLOs. Advisory committees and labor market research and analyses are used to ensure that programs and short-term trainings offered meet local and regional needs. Advisory committees help develop SLOs for courses and Program SLOs for programs with primary input from faculty. Community Education is a District-run program that offers short-term, not-for-credit, fee-based classes and workshops on a wide range of topics to meet the needs and interests of the community. Study abroad opportunities are occasionally offered for students and faculty. International students matriculate throughout the College and are served by the International Students Program (II.A.2, II.A.2.b).

Multiple planning and research strategies are employed by the College to determine student and community demands when responding to varied educational needs. Coordinated by the Office of PRIE, these strategies include the use of needs assessment surveys, environmental scans, business needs assessment, College student surveys, high school counselor and administrator interviews, and general public surveys. Environmental scans make projections on San Mateo County demographics and changes in the population, top businesses, growing businesses, and high school populations. The Community College Survey of Student Engagement is also administered in order to better assess student learning needs. The Office of PRIE annually provides program data used in the Comprehensive Program Review and Annual Program Plans, including data specific to distance education and course, program, and institutional-level SLOs, in an effort to promote overall student progress and meet their educational needs (II.A.1.a, II.A.2.d, 11.A.2.e).

By offering and incorporating a variety of teaching methodologies and modes of instructional delivery, the College is responsive to the diverse educational needs of its current and future student population. Traditional onsite classes are offered during days, evenings, and weekends with comparable success and retention rates. Online and hybrid courses are also offered, where it was noted that success and retention rates for hybrid classes are lower than both traditional onsite and fully online courses, and inconsistent regular and substantive instructor interaction was observed for several online and hybrid courses. The College faculty, staff, and administration are committed to improving online and hybrid courses by encouraging its teaching faculty to continually provide regular and substantive online interactions in an effort to better achieve stated learning outcomes comparable to face-to-face programs. Instructors are encouraged to participate in the Center for Transformative Teaching and Learning (CTTL), which provides resources and opportunities to strengthen student learning, engagement, support, and success through enhanced integration of pedagogy and technology. Other innovative approaches to teaching and learning include the formation of learning communities or linked classes, which feature comparable retention and success rates compared to the College as a whole, although both retention and success in math and English were significantly higher in learning communities than non-learning communities. The College also features a robust honors program. While Skyline College meets this Standard, instructors teaching distance education courses are encouraged to maintain continuous regular and substantive interactions with their students in order to ensure learning is better facilitated and consistent with traditional delivery modes (II.A.1.b).

Planning at Skyline College builds upon student learning outcomes assessment and analysis as evidenced through Annual Program Plans, Comprehensive Program Reviews, and Administrative Leadership and Unit Reviews, Education Master Plan, Strategic Plan, and the Balanced Scorecard. The College strives to improve outcomes and make results available to both internal and external constituents via Annual Program Plans, Comprehensive Program Reviews, the Balanced Scorecard, General Education Annual Program Plan, Accountability Research for Community Colleges reporting, the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office MIS Data Mart, surveys, and other institutional data as depicted via ongoing campus dialogue, reflection, integrated planning, and re-evaluation. While the College meets the Standard, it should also strive to ensure that student learning outcome results for all courses, certificates, programs, and degrees are easily accessible to appropriate constituencies as per the Standard (II.A.2.f).

Skyline College does not use departmental course or program examinations. Therefore, Standard II.A.2.g does not apply.

Every course at Skyline College has a course outline of record, which contains specific standards for awarding credit based on content, objectives, and student learning outcomes reflecting generally accepted norms or equivalencies in higher education for semester-based institutions. Moreover, degrees and certificates are awarded based on student achievement of a program's stated learning outcomes as well as additional academic standards approved by the Curriculum Committee, Academic Senate, and the District Board of Trustees. SLOs for individual courses link to program and institutional SLOs. Discipline faculty link course SLOs to their respective degrees and certificates. Credit for courses, programs, degrees, and certificates are awarded based on satisfactory completion of established and respective requirements (II.A.2.h, II.A.2.i).

The College requires a component of general education in all degrees, including career and technical degrees. The General Education philosophy was carefully considered by faculty and is clearly stated in the current College Catalog, providing area definitions for accepting courses into the general education program. A candidate for any associate degree must complete 19 units of general education selected from: English Language Communication and Critical Thinking, Scientific Inquiry, Arts and Humanities, Social Sciences, and Lifelong Learning and Self Development. These five areas coincide with the College's institutional SLOs that address Critical Thinking, Citizenship, Information Literacy, Effective Communication, and Lifelong Wellness (II.A.3, II.A.3.a, II.A.3.b, II.A.3.c).

All degrees and certificates include one area of focused study in at least one area of inquiry or interdisciplinary core for each degree. The ability to demonstrate the technical and professional competency required by a licensing or certifying agency is stated in all course outlines as an expected student-learning outcome. Certificates are awarded upon successful evaluation by written tests and practical demonstration of these abilities to prepare students for licensure or certification testing in fields such as Automotive Technology, Central Service Technology, Cosmetology, Emergency Medical Technician, Massage Therapy, Respiratory Therapy, and Surgical Technology (II.A.4, II.A.5).

Skyline College assures that clear, accurate, and current information about courses, programs, and transfer policies is available to students through the College Catalog, class schedule, the College website, and the College campus. Policies are established based on Title 5, Matriculation Guidelines, Board Policies and Procedures, CSU and UC transfer policies, as well as the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office. The College provides for reciprocity of course credit among the District's three colleges for the purposes of meeting graduation requirements. The College Catalog also describes the purpose, content, course requirements, and expected student learning outcomes for the various degrees and certificates offered, general education requirements, CSU general education/breadth information, IGETC requirements and other transfer policies for four-year universities and colleges, including the CSU and UC minimum admissions requirements. Faculty members publish course syllabi and distribute to students in every section of courses taught. The Office of Marketing, Communication, and Public Relations oversees College publications, including the website, and provides resources to College staff, faculty, and students for publications, publicity, and promotional materials. The Office of PRIE provides information related to student transfer, graduation, retention, and success rates. Overall, materials are easily accessible, accurate, and up-to-date (II.A.6, II.A.6.a, II.A.6.c).

There is no evidence of program elimination or alternative completion processes because the College has not eliminated a program in over 15 years. The District has a clearly defined policy addressing programs which may require improvement or discontinuance. Skyline College adheres to Board Policy 6.15, which details Curriculum Development, Program Review, and Program Viability when considering the viability of a given program. This policy affirms the Board's collegial consultation with the Academic Senate and primary reliance on the expertise of faculty in making academic recommendations should the need arise (II.A.6.b).

The Board of Trustees has approved and published a comprehensive statement on academic freedom as well as a statement on professional ethics. Moreover, the College provides faculty and students with clear expectations concerning the principles of academic integrity and sanctions for violations in many publications such as the College Catalog, Student Handbook, and Faculty Handbook. Faculty members are also guided by the Academic Senate-approved Code of Professional Ethics. The College recognizes faculty members' right to express their informed opinions in the context of professional competence, open inquiry, and rigorous attention to the pursuit of truth in order to provide students with a variety of ideas, to encourage them to engage in critical thinking, and to help them understand conflicting opinions. Students are also held to standards regarding academic honesty and consequences for dishonesty, published in the Student Handbook, College website, and College Catalog, as part of Student Records, Responsibilities, and Rights (II.A.7, II.A.7.a, II.A.7.b).

Skyline College does not seek to instill specific beliefs or worldviews. Therefore, Standard II.A.7.c does not apply.

Skyline College does not offer curricula in foreign locations. Therefore, Standard II.A.8 does not apply.

## **Conclusion**

Skyline College uses well-established, faculty-led procedures for the development, assessment, and reporting of student learning outcomes, in conjunction with their Comprehensive Program Review and Annual Program Planning processes, as a means to systematically evaluate courses, programs, and improve institutional effectiveness consistent with its Mission-Vision-Values (II.A.1.a, II.A.2.a).

By effectively analyzing data and assessing general observations, the College systematically identifies gaps in curriculum, equipment, staffing, resources, and other needs that are reported and addressed through integrated planning (II.A.2.e).

The College has made noteworthy strides to define and assess 100% of its total course, program, institution, and appropriate learning support outcomes. (II.A.1.c, II.A.2.b, II.A.2.f).

Various delivery systems and modes of instruction continue to align with the mission of the college, support curricular goals, and achieve stated learning outcomes to serve the diverse student population. (II.A.1.b, II.A.2.d).

All facets of the participatory governance infrastructure of the College appear to engage in ongoing dialogue in support of student achievement and learning and contribute to the observed sustainable continuous quality improvement of the campus to foster institutional effectiveness in planning.

The College meets the Standard.

### **Recommendations**

College Recommendation 2: In order to improve and promote quality instruction, the team recommends that the college adhere to its policy ensuring that all Distance Education courses are effectively facilitating student learning by providing continuous, regular and substantive faculty interaction with students (Standards IIA.1.b, II.A.2, II.A.2.a, II.A.2.e.).

## **STANDARD II: STUDENT LEARNING PROGRAMS AND SERVICES**

### **STANDARD IIB: STUDENT SUPPORT AND SERVICES**

#### **General Observations**

To complement the institution's mission, vision, and values statement, student service areas have also developed mission, vision and goals. In addition, there are clear and codified policies, procedures, and governance practices that assure access to all services in a variety of modalities to all students. Public information, achievement criteria, service area outcomes, and governing policies and procedures are routinely documented in monthly reports and regularly published online for student service areas.

Skyline College has demonstrated that it is committed to achieving its core mission, maintain its values, and be responsive to the needs and requests of the diverse student population and its external partnering community. There is evidence that the college works to maintain pathways to success by ensuring access, progress, and learning opportunities. Student Service programs are regularly reviewed. The college community is engaged in broad based discussions regarding

assessment of outcomes and program improvement. The student services learning programs are also regularly reviewed ensuring that they meet the mission of the institution and uphold its integrity whether the courses are delivered online, hybrid, or in the traditional face-to-face format. Students have access to a student information system, portal, WebSmart, which provides secure online support. The college requires all students to use a district issued email account; however, students may opt out. Students at Skyline may take advantage of online support services that include counseling and advisement, financial aid, registration, and many other services.

The Student Services operation is robust and demonstrates its commitment to providing services to students by offering a broad range of high quality support services that enhance student learning and achievement. Student support services include counseling and advisement, assessment, health, wellness and safety, financial aid, tutoring and learning support, center for student life activities, and other ancillary services. In addition to the traditional services, the college has dedicated sufficient resources to provide noteworthy services that include programs that provide specialized services in response to the needs of veterans, international students, economically disadvantaged and underrepresented students. Exemplary programs such as *SparkPoint at Skyline College* where the college partners with community agencies in response to the economic needs of students helping them navigate and obtain public benefits beyond those available on campus, enhance a supportive learning environment.

Through this Self-Evaluation process the College identifies no areas in Standard IIB where actionable improvement plans are needed. However, through its review processes, stated outcomes and request for resources there is evidence that there is room for institutional improvements as well as greater institutional efficiency.

### **Findings and Evidence**

Supported by its open access policy, Skyline College is committed to making quality educational programs and services available to every member of its internal and external community. The College actively recruits and supports students from a variety of backgrounds, ages, abilities, and life experiences. The college offers comprehensive services to all student segment groups both on-line and in person responding to the Mission-Vision-Values (MVV) that pertains to student success and retention. The college has an open-access policy, which is a value clearly mirrored in its Mission Vision and Values statement. Through its ongoing concurrent enrollment program high school students begin their college education while still attending high school. Student Service programs collaborate with internal and external constituents to ensure access, progress, learning, and achievement/success (II.B, II.B.1).

In 2007–2008 Skyline developed an Enrollment Management Plan (EMP) as a recommendation from the college’s 2006 Education Master Plan in response to its enrollment planning strategies. The EMP the Enrollment Management Plan provided a way to link or coordinate many of the enrollment management efforts as well as provide opportunities to develop additional enrollment management activities where needed. The EMP listed Marketing and Growth, Outreach and Recruitment, Research and Application, and Retention and Success as its goals. There is evidence that the Institutional Effectiveness Committee has engaged in dialogue about updating the Enrollment Management Plan however there is no evidence that the EMP has been updated



or its strategies implemented. The 2008–2013 San Mateo Community College District Strategic Plan under *Areas of Strategic Focus* lists that it will “develop and implement an enrollment management plan at each College to address the need for systematic outreach and retention strategies.” Neither the college nor the district has achieved that objective (II.B).

The college offers a diverse array of programs/services such as CalWORKS, Counseling, Disability Resource Center, Public Safety, Transfer Center, Financial Aid, Veterans Services and Center for Student Life, and Admissions and Records all linking and or leveraging resources to create activities and provide extended services that emphasize access, outreach, retention, persistence and success. The college also provides special support for various student segment groups through programs such as, the African-American Success through Excellence and Persistence (ASTEP), First Year Experience-Latinos Excelling in Academic Program (FYE-LEAP), Hermanos/Hermanas Program, Puente, and the Scholar Athlete Program. Many student services interface with instructional programs creating a comprehensive array of integrated services such as the Differential Learning Skills program, the Learning Center and MESA program. The college also provides services in crisis intervention and substance abuse assessment through the Psychological Services both online and face-to-face (II.B, II.B.1).

An exemplary support service program is SparkPoint at Skyline College, a partnership between the college and United Way of Bay Area provide services for impacted middle- and low-income residents of San Mateo. Students and non-students receive, financial coaching, free income tax preparation, they benefit from the food pantry, and have access to banking services. There is a student-focused effort to provide comprehensive support services to students in a wrap-around fashion to foster student success. Skyline’s concept of a one-stop shop for comprehensive student support services extends beyond the physical locations of offices. It is a concept that is embodied by broad-based dialog and open communication (II.B, II.B.1).

The college assures quality of all programs regardless of the location or method of delivery. Included in the methodologies for review ensuring quality are: Annual Plans, Comprehensive Program Review, the Balanced Scorecard, the Administrative Leadership and Unit Review and various forms of outcomes assessment (II.B, II.B.1).

The college catalog is published annually and is available in print and in electronic file format. The catalog contains all of the required student and consumer information including those policies that affect students such as Academic regulations and dishonesty, discrimination, sexual harassment, and grievance and complaint policies. Hard copies of the catalog are sold in the bookstore; however, new students attending the in-person New Student Orientation receive a copy at no charge. The catalog is also posted on the college’s website. The college is engaged in dialogue and widespread participation regarding preparation and publication of the catalog. The annual updating of the catalog ensures that reliable and accurate information pertaining to degrees, course descriptions, certificates, and special program and support services are available to students (II.B.2.a, II.B.2.b, II.B.5.c, II.B.2.d).

The Office of Program Review and Institutional Effectiveness (PRIE) provides support to the student services divisions in order to identify the learning support needs of students at Skyline. Skyline also utilizes data from an external source of research, The Qualitative study of Two-to-

Four-Year Transfer Practices in California Community Colleges has helped in identifying student learning-support needs and how to address them (II.B.3).

Data is gathered through surveys, the balanced scorecard, comprehensive program reviews, student climate surveys, and employee surveys. This data is reviewed, and there are broad based, campus wide discussions regarding the service area improvements identified to meet the need of students. The college reports widely that it utilizes the methodology of planning, review, implement improvements, and review; however, the documentation of this process could be improved (II.B.3).

During interviews, staff and administrators reported identified needs that arose which fell outside of the review process and absent of quantifiable data from the PRIE. Because of the nature of some needs, the college, through innovative problem solving, demonstrates its ability to find workable solutions. Historically, it is known that the Disabled Students Program identified the need for consolidating its services, which had been dispersed throughout the campus. Program staff reports that there were some discussions about relocating from swing space, which was not on the ground floor, but there were no identified resources allocated for the relocation. When the college hired an employee who needed accommodations, a location, which met the parameters of the accommodations and better-served students, was identified in the 2009 program review process. Two years later, 2011, the college implemented the move and opened the Disability Resource Center that is located on the first floor of the building. This improvement provided greater access to students with disabilities and addressed other student needs. Although this action greatly improved service to students with disabilities, it seems to be the way the college allocates resources in certain situations. Even though part of the relocation was forced by a need for accommodations. the college was able to address the concern. The innovation used to problem solve creates a potential concern about adhering to the planning, outcomes assessment and resource allocation processes. The team concluded that the College justified this as an exception (II.B.3, II.B.3.a).

PRIE provides enrollment data on success rates, and student persistence from one semester to the next to leaders of the College Success Initiative and student support services division in order to foster greater student success. Stewardship for Equity, Equal Employment, and Diversity (SEEED) Committee also gathers and analyzes data to evaluate how effective the College is aligning its student learning programs and services with its purposes, character, and student population, annual plans and learning outcomes (II.B.3).

The Counseling Department offers one hybrid course and in the student services area there are no correspondence education courses. All distance education courses and programs must adhere to a standard approval process involving the Curriculum Committee, Academic Senate, Board of Trustees, and submission to the State Chancellor's Office for final approval. The online support services are reviewed regularly through the college's review processes, outcomes assessed according the Student Learning Outcomes Framework, and improvements are identified and implemented (II.B.3).

To ensure equitable access to services the college's outreach efforts are a collaboration of all departments regardless of location or delivery mode. With its multi-dimensional and

technology- supported processes, students are able to access many support and learning services on demand. Web resources and services include orientation, assessment, e-counseling, and online tutoring. The college prepares students for the online experience by offering the Student Preparedness Assessment (SPA). Students may obtain and or access information through email, the Internet, WebSMART, WebAccess and by telephone (II.B.3.a).

Personal and civic responsibility and personal development are encouraged at Skyline through active student clubs that contribute to campus life. The Center for Student Life and Leadership Development and other organizations sponsor activities to meet the needs of students. In addition to classes and curriculum specifically designed to promote personal life, the college offers a Community Service and Leadership Practicum for students, a student newspaper, robust men's and women's athletic programs, the Democracy Commitment Initiative (Dare to Dream and Step Up), and a Leadership Academy. The college has ongoing activities such as lecture series, various art exhibitions, music concerts, and other annual events such as, Latino Heritage Month, Cinco De Mayo, Asian Heritage Month, Earth Day, Relay for Life, Disability Awareness Month, and many others (II.B.3.b).

In collaboration with the PRIE, the Center for Student Life and Leadership undergoes a comprehensive program review to assess its effectiveness at encouraging personal and civic responsibility and personal development for students (II.B.3.b).

The Skyline College Counseling Work Plan, 2009/10 year-end report serves as evidence that the counseling division is actively engaged in planning to design programs and services to meet the needs of students in ways that align with college goals and strategies. Ongoing annual planning, a comprehensive program review every six years, inclusion program information in the division's ALUR, outcome development and assessment shape and form program development and or service improvements provided by counseling staff. In a comprehensive program review completed in 2010 the department identified itself as "*Practitioners*," engaging in widespread dialogue when it came to implementing and assessing plans, refining SLOs, reviewing and discussing outcome data, and implementation of improvements (II.B.3.c).

Skyline's counseling faculty and staff provides service that supports student development, learning, and success. Counselors participate in professional development, division meetings, and other training in order to provide high quality comprehensive services to meet the needs of the rapidly changing student populations which include Veterans, dislocated workers, transfer students, and students with special needs. The Student Success Act requirements and current program planning has led to many adjustments in service delivery including, group counseling, follow-up, course offerings, and the use of specialized software for improved online services (II.B.3.c).

The SEED Committee is instrumental to the college's commitment to celebrate intellectual, educational, and social benefits of diversity. The President's Innovation Fund, SparkPoint at Skyline College, and other clubs and organizations are a few ways that the College demonstrates its sensitivity to diversity. Diversity at Skyline is documented and articulated by faculty, staff and students in college policies and practices. Students articulate how much they appreciate Skyline's supportive environment that allows them to participate in committees such as academic

senate, curriculum and college council. The level of student engagement in and knowledge of college governance, policies, and practices is evidence of Skyline's culture and climate that fosters diversity and appreciation of diverse activities (II.B.3.d).

The Assessment Center administers admissions placement tests in three areas: math, English, and ESOL. For math, the assessment instrument is Compass by ACT. For English, the assessment instrument is Accuplacer by College Board. For ESOL, the assessment instrument is also Compass by ACT, which includes three subtests of reading, grammar, and listening. Computerized placement tests can be scheduled online via WebSMART or offered/accessed on a drop-in basis. The Director of the Assessment Center regularly confers with the California Community College Chancellor's Office to ensure that Skyline is in compliance with the standards of having an approved assessment instrument (II.B.3.e).

The PRIE Office, Assessment Center and matriculation coordinators conduct instrument validation studies on a six-year cycle by surveying students and instructors. In addition, the Assessment center conducts an end-of-the-term survey of faculty and students asking whether the faculty felt the student was placed appropriately and asking the student if he/she has been placed properly. Though the data is a simple compilation, the general response was that both instructors and students felt that the student had been placed appropriately (II.B.3.e).

Skyline College maintains student records permanently, securely, and confidentially. The College has files that are securely backed-up as required by regulation. The Admissions and Records office has the responsibility to coordinate the requests for and review of student records as defined in the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Student discipline and grievance records are maintained in the Office of the Vice President of Student Services. The Colleges in the San Mateo Community College District have access to The Advocate, a software program that allows them to communicate across the district regarding discipline and other safety issues. Access to the program is limited to Public Safety personnel, the Vice President of Student Services and the Assistant to the Vice President. The Health Center maintains student health records in accordance with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) and FERPA (II.B.3.f).

Forms requesting the release of student information require the student's signature or in the case of electronic requests student authentication is required. Policies pertaining to the release of student records are published on forms, in the catalog, and on the college's website (II.B.3.f).

Skyline College reports a systematic and regular review process for all student support services through Comprehensive Program Review and Annual Program Plan processes that includes assessment, analysis, and plans for improvement and reflection (II.B.4).

The College uses TracDat as the repository where evidence of and the status of learning outcome and assessment data are stored. In the October 2012 College Status Report on Student Learning Outcomes, the college reported that 100% of student service area outcomes have ongoing assessments (II.B.4).

The college has also updated its Integrated Planning and Participatory Governance for Student Success Handbook in December of 2012. In the document, the college articulates and describes the integrated processes used for planning, resource allocation, and outcomes assessment. All student service areas have completed the Annual Plan (AP) and Administrative Leadership and Unit Review (ALUR) that connect service area outcomes, institutional outcomes, College goals and strategic priorities, and resource allocation (such as facilities, human resources, fiscal, and professional development). Built into the college's review process is the annual assessment of student service area outcomes. These cycles of outcomes assessment document the integration and implementation of service area outcomes into institutional outcomes and analysis of the findings guide and or influence decision-making and institutional improvements. Information and data collected from the annual plans and administrative leadership and unit reviews may also be used for program improvement and resource allocation (II.B.4).

In review of Financial Aid and Admissions & Records services and in development of learning/service-outcomes, staff and administrators recognized areas of concern in the business processes used to conduct transactions. Since these processes were district processes, the concern was discussed at a standing administrator/staff district-wide, meeting. After district-wide discussion, the District Office led a three-day Business Process Analysis project further examining the financial aid, scholarship, and admissions processes and identifying areas where improvements were needed. This initiative resulted in district processes that greatly improved services to students. The Offices of Financial Aid and Admissions and Records from Skyline participated in a district-wide effort to process map services to students and to achieve service area outcomes. After the exercises of process mapping business services, the District also published *Business Process Analysis: Enrollment Process—From Application to Bill Payment* and *Business Process Analysis: Financial Award and Scholarship Processes*. Skyline has implemented the new business processes (II.B.4).

### **Conclusion**

Skyline's Self Evaluation Reports and evidence supports that practices and activities in student services meet Standard II.B.

The College provides comprehensive services to students in all areas. Students benefit from the instruction, and services support student success and create opportunities for students to achieve their educational goals (II.B.3.a, II.B.3.d).

The student support services division has demonstrated its ongoing attention to student needs, engaged in broad based dialogue, and upheld the college's mission, vision, and values statement to foster the "student-first" commitment (II.B, II.B.1, II.B.3.b, II.B.3.d).

The college has also demonstrated its passionate commitment to achieve and sustain continuous institutional improvement. In regards to student support services the college has made significant progress and is meeting Standard II.B.4.

The College meets the Standard.

### **Recommendations**

None

**STANDARD II: STUDENT LEARNING PROGRAMS AND SERVICES**

**STANDARD IIC: LIBRARY AND LEARNING SUPPORT SERVICES**

**General Observations**

Skyline College provides students and faculty with a broad range of library and learning support services. In the Self Evaluation Report, the College identified learning support services as the Learning Center (housing the Writing and Reading Lab, The ESOL Lab, the Language Lab, the Math and Science Lab, the TRiO program, extensive tutoring operations, and a 60 computer lab), the MESA Center, and several discipline specific labs including the Center for Alternative Technology (CALT) lab, and the Computer Applications for Business (CAB) labs are briefly included in this standard section of the Report. The Library and the Learning Center are both housed on separate floors of Building 5, so on-site students have easy access to a variety of services and resources in a single convenient location.

The library and learning support service areas all maintain extensive websites, and distance education students have access to a wide array of library materials, instruction, and learning support services. Through the partnership with Peninsula Library system, students have access to an expanded collection of online materials; students can also request delivery of print materials from any Peninsula system library to either Skyline College Library or to a convenient San Mateo public library branch. A number of learning support programs and services are available to distance education students, including an option for online tutoring sessions. The College has identified information literacy as one of the institutional student learning outcomes and has an information literacy graduation requirement in place. In addition, most of the programs and services have program student learning outcomes or service area outcomes identified.

**Findings and Evidence**

The Library's collection consists of over 50,000 print books and access currently to more than 100,000 e-books. In addition, students can use print periodicals (approximately 100 current subscriptions) and over 40 databases that provide access to full-text of journals, magazines and newspapers. The Library houses almost 1,000 media items and subscribes to two streaming video collections. The selection of materials for ongoing Library collection development relies on appropriate expertise from faculty librarians and is also guided by input from a variety of other sources. Classroom faculty input is sought in several different ways, and librarians use course level SLOs and course assignments to help guide selection. In addition, a librarian serves on Curriculum Committee, so information about needed materials to support new and revised courses and programs is readily available (II.C, II.C.1.a).

The Learning Center provides an array of services to support student learning. College wide tutoring services are available in a number of subject areas, with individualized tutoring delivered by peer and grad tutors on a drop-in basis. Online tutoring is also available, both to provide additional service hours and to support the needs of distance education students. All students enroll in a Learning Skills course to take advantage of tutoring services. The Learning Center also offers numerous workshops on a variety of topics that support student success, including test-taking strategies, homework skills, etc. The Learning Center advertises services on

its website, staff members make visits to classrooms, and faculty are encouraged to bring entire classes for a visit to the Center. All of these activities are designed to broaden student awareness of available learning support services. The Center is staffed by a combination of discipline faculty and learning support staff to optimize services that are provided (II.C.1, II.C.1.a, II.C.1.b).

Other learning support service areas identified in the Self Evaluation Report are TRiO and the MESA Center. Both programs provide additional support for educationally disadvantaged students, with a particular focus on math and science students at the MESA Center. TRiO is housed within the Learning Center, and provides several computer labs areas with for student use along with a variety of tutoring services. Among the learning support services that the MESA Center provides are workshops, peer support, and tutoring in math and science courses. In addition, the Center houses computers, software, and textbooks that have been selected by discipline faculty (II.C.1).

Discipline labs described in the Self Evaluation Report include the Computer Applications for Business (CAB) Labs and the Center for Advanced Learning and Technology (CALT). The CAB Labs primarily provide academic support for students taking Business courses. The computer labs run a number of software packages chosen by Business faculty to support their courses. Tutoring services are also provided to students. CALT is a complex of drop-in labs and computer classrooms that provide computer assisted instruction to support a variety of courses. Hardware and software are chosen by discipline faculty to support their courses (II.C.1.a).

In the library, the primary vehicle for teaching the information competency is through the 'infused' workshops that are provided in every section of ENGL 100 taught at the College. Library faculty teach two active learning workshops to all students in this course, and students are required to complete two assignments which ensure that they master the needed skills. Distance education students enrolled in online sections of ENGL 100 complete an online tutorial which covers the same material as the two workshops, and complete the same assignments. The successful completion of the ENGL 100 course with its information literacy component is one way in which students can satisfy the information literacy graduation requirement. The Library also offers on-site information literacy workshops for classes besides ENGL 100. Numerous sessions are taught each semester for individual courses at faculty's request which provide instruction tailored for particular subjects and course assignments. Librarians also teach information competency skills on a one-to-one basis to students as part of ongoing reference services, both in person for on-site students and via email and chat reference sessions for distance education students. Finally, library faculty have created a number of instructional materials that teach information competency skills, such as how to use various search tools, how to critically evaluate information sources, and how to cite sources appropriately. These materials are all available on the library website to support both on-site and distance education students (II.C.1.b).

The Library is open 62 hours per week, and the Learning Center is open 52 hours per week. Although students have not specifically been asked if the hours of operation are sufficient, the 2010 Student Campus Climate survey posed the general question "Library resources and services are adequate", to which students responded very favorably. For distance education students,

there are more than twice as many e-books available online as there are print books on campus, a vast array of full-text materials available from databases, and an article delivery service. Help from a librarian is available to distance education students both via chat and email. Instructional materials such as in-depth topical guides are all available online, as are a large number of instructional handouts teaching how to critically evaluate and properly cite information sources. The Learning Center offers tutoring online for distance education students. In addition, instructional materials ranging from grammar and writing guides to a handout on how to forward SMCCCD student email are all available online, along with links to a number of high quality online websites that offer free access to study guides, test preparation and other useful resources. The Learning Center workshops are currently only available on campus (II.C.1.c).

The College maintains adequate security for the Library and learning support service areas, materials, and equipment. Maintenance and security for these programs are provided following processes and procedures utilized throughout the campus. For example, physical security is provided by personnel from the Public Safety Department augmented by the selective use of security cameras. Computer maintenance and security is provided by technology staff and utilizes a variety of software techniques to help safeguard equipment (II.C.1.d).

Although the College provides all library and learning support services directly to its own students, there are a number of formal agreements with outside organizations which are used to enhance and support these programs and services. For example, printing services provided to students are managed by a third party, and databases are purchased through an outside consortium to gain better purchasing power. In addition, the College belongs to the Peninsula Library system. The System provides the integrated library system (computer system) used by all of the SMCCCD libraries, interlibrary loan delivery services, and access to additional full-text databases. In all instances, these agreements have formal contracts in place which are regularly reviewed to ensure that the College is maximizing the benefits to students (II.C.1.e).

The Library and the Learning Center completed the College's comprehensive program review process in spring 2012, and participated in the College's ongoing planning process (annual program plans were most recently submitted in spring 2013). In addition, the Library, the Learning Center, and TRiO all completed Administrative Leadership and Unit Reviews (ALURs) in fall 2013. MESA has not been part of any of the College program review or planning processes until now, but team interviews confirmed that MESA would begin participating in these processes in the near future (II.C.2).

All of the library and learning support services gather data on student usage of materials and services. Both MESA and TRiO have separate data gathering and tracking requirements that are mandated by the respective funding agencies. Most of these programs and service areas also conduct user surveys although the thoroughness of the surveys and the regularity of data collection varies among the areas. While many focus their survey efforts on students utilizing materials and services, some also survey faculty in order to determine their opinions on sufficiency of resources and the impact of provided services for student success. For some programs, more in-depth surveys and/or a broader range of assessment activities would provide more complete data that could be used to analyze the effectiveness of the resources and services



being provided by program. While the Self Evaluation Report did not provide much evidence for data being used to drive changes and improvements in the resources and services being offered, the team found that staff in the program areas could often offer examples to demonstrate how program improvements were planned and implemented as a result data gathered from student feedback (II.C.2).

Both the Library and Learning Center have identified student-learning outcomes for direct instruction being offered in their areas. For example, the Library has identified SLOs for the instructional sessions taught by librarians that are embedded in English 100. These information literacy SLOs are assessed regularly, the assessment results have been discussed, and appropriate changes to the sessions are being implemented. The SLOs assessment results have clearly demonstrated the role of the library in supporting student learning. The Learning Center has identified SLOs for the Learning Skills courses in which students enroll to take advantage of Center services. There are ongoing assessments for these courses, and the assessment results support the importance of the Learning Center services in supporting student learning (II.C.2).

In addition, most of these program areas also have identified either service area outcomes or program learning outcomes. The Library has program learning outcomes (which mirror the information literacy institutional outcome) posted on its website. The Library has also identified service area outcomes in its most recent ALUR; assessment of one service area outcome is already underway for the current academic year. The Learning Center did not identify service area outcomes in its most recent ALUR. However, the Learning Center does have program learning outcomes posted on its website. TRiO has service area outcomes identified in its most recent ALUR, with a number of assessment results included in that document. In addition, TRiO has project student learning outcomes (which are identical to their service area outcomes) posted on its website, with the assessment results also available on the website. The MESA Center does not have student learning outcomes on the program's website, and in team interviews, staff acknowledged the lack of currently identified SLOs for this program. The team would encourage all library and learning support programs/services to identify appropriate outcomes, to regularly assess these outcomes, to make the assessment results broadly available, and to use the assessment results to plan improvements (II.C.2).

### **Conclusion**

Skyline College provides students with high-quality library and learning support resources and services. The College provides an unusually extensive range of materials and resources to support distance education students; on-site students benefit from the accessibility of resources at any time and in any place (II.C.1, II.C.1.a, II.C.1.c).

Faculty and staff in all of these program areas demonstrate an exceptional commitment to both providing support for student learning and to equipping students with the skills they need to become life-long independent learners. The College's adoption of information literacy as a graduation requirement is also noteworthy (II.C.1.b).

The Library and Learning Center have identified and are assessing student learning and service outcomes (II.C.2.).

The College meets the Standard.

## **Recommendations**

None

### **STANDARD III: RESOURCES**

#### **STANDARD IIIA: HUMAN RESOURCES**

##### **General Observations**

The college hires qualified personnel pursuant to a well-developed criteria and process, and conducts systematic and fair evaluations of its employees. The College adheres to District Human Resources Department procedures and develops job descriptions that not only reflect duties, responsibilities, and authority, but also support the College's Mission, Vision and Values.

The college employs sufficient numbers of full-time faculty, and has adequate staff and administrative support for the college's mission and purposes. In conjunction with the District office, it maintains codes of ethics for employees, and maintains written policies and procedures that promote fair and consistent employment practices.

Staffing decisions are vetted by the College Budget Committee pursuant to the allocations provided by the District.

The College offers a variety of opportunities for professional development. Notably, the Center for Transformative Teaching and Learning (CTTL) was created which encourages and supports effective pedagogical development. The College also provides a variety of funding options for professional development activities which include the President's Innovation Fund. Also of note, is the Boot Up orientation for new faculty members which offers a semester-long program to orient and support these new College employees.

The District bargains collectively with three employee organizations: San Mateo Community College Federation of Teachers (AFT Local 1493), California School Employees Association Chapter 33 (CSEA Chapter 33), and American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees Local 829, Council 57 (AFSCME Local 829). The District has recently concluded negotiations with all three bargaining units.

During the period since the previous accreditation review, the District, the three Colleges, and the AFT have endeavored to address Standard III.A.1.c, which specifies that "Faculty and others directly responsible for student progress toward achieving stated student learning outcomes have, as a component of their evaluation, effectiveness in producing those learning outcomes." In order to make progress, and by the mutual agreement of the parties, a District Performance Evaluation Task Force was established that was empowered to resolve this issue, along with other evaluation matters.

##### **Findings and Evidence**

The College employs qualified personnel, and follows District policies and procedures which promote equal access and employment opportunity, staff development, fair compensation and accountability (III.A, III.A.1).

These policies and procedures are available electronically. Additionally, the District Participatory Governance Committee assures inclusive review and development of policies and procedures, as well as serving as a forum for reviewing the application of these (III.A.3).

At the first meeting of each screening committee, an orientation is conducted by Human Resources staff with the College President also participating. Of note, the College President discusses the MVV, the importance of the screening committee, and information regarding staffing needs and diversity for the College.

The College has been able to maintain adequate levels of staffing despite recent budgetary reductions due to the passage of a parcel tax in 2010. Overall, there has been an 11 percent increase in College staffing in the past five years (III.A.2).

Personnel records are maintained at District Offices with satisfactory provisions for security and confidentiality (III.A.3.b). A notable exception is evaluations of adjunct faculty. Whereas adjunct evaluations appear to be carefully tracked at the division level by the division dean, there is evidence that not all adjunct faculty members have been evaluated regularly as per collective bargaining contractual requirements (III.A.1.b).

The College, in conjunction with the entire District, has worked to include student learning outcomes as a component of evaluations. Initial attempts to negotiate a collective bargaining agreement modification to accomplish this were not successful. The College addressed this initial failure by making student learning outcomes a component of the “Dean’s Assessment of Non-Teaching Responsibilities.” Interviews with several deans and with the Vice President of Instruction confirm that the deans do, in fact, consider the identification and assessment of student learning outcomes when evaluating full-time and adjunct faculty (III.A.1.c).

In 2012, the Performance Evaluation Task Force (PETF) was created. This task force was empowered to improve evaluation processes, including the assessment of student learning outcomes. The PETF is a District-wide body consisting of four faculty members, one college president (who is the Skyline President Stanback-Stroud) and the Vice Chancellor for Human Resources. The work of the PETF has been endorsed by the Academic Senate. The PETF has agreed to recommend that evaluation tools explicitly include effectiveness in producing student learning outcomes. This is now in the implementation phase (III.A.1.c).

In 2008, the Board of Trustees adopted Policy 2.21, which was revised in February of 2012. The policy reads, in pertinent part: “Each employee group has prepared a distinct Code of Professional Ethics for their respective constituencies, which, as a whole, comprise the District wide Policy on Ethical Behavior adopted by the Board.” Although specific codes of ethics were, in fact, adopted by the Academic Senate and by the Associated Students, the team was unable to find any specific code of ethics for the classified staff or for the college managers. The college has addressed the previous recommendation by adopting a uniform code of ethics through the above board policy, but the absence of a specific code of ethics for managers and classified employees should be resolved so as to fully support the policy (III.A.1.d).

Whereas the College does assess itself in terms of employment equity and diversity, the college's employee profile does not reflect the diversity of its student body. While this is a challenge experienced by many other community colleges, it raises questions about the effectiveness of the college's recruitment efforts, given that the college is located in one of the most ethnically diverse regions of the nation. However, based upon interviews with the Vice Chancellor of Human Resources, the Director of Human Resources, and the Vice President of Instruction, it appears that the college is making progress on this matter, as reflected by the diverse composition of the fourteen new faculty members it recently hired. Among the social media tools being used to expand the college's recruitment efforts are Twitter and Facebook (III.A.4.a, III.A.4.b).

### **Conclusion**

During the evaluation visit, the team confirmed that adjunct performance evaluations are not consistently being conducted at stated intervals. Whereas there is a plan to achieve this, there were several significant issues with lapses of many years between adjunct faculty evaluations. The Vice President of Instruction is assisting division deans in the tracking of this process. (III.A.1.b)

The District and the Colleges have made an effective and concerted effort, with the assistance of the Collective Bargaining Agent, to resolve a difficult matter of long standing, which has resolved a conflict between the Standards of Accreditation on the one hand and legal issues associated with collective bargaining on the other. The determination of the Chancellor to resolve this dilemma was matched by the cooperation of the institutional and union participants (III.A.1.c).

During the evaluation visit, the District Team verified that agreement had been reached by the PETF to include student learning outcomes as a required component of a faculty member's self-evaluation, which is part of the overall, official faculty evaluation. Although yet to be ratified as part of the Collective Bargaining Agreement, this practice is already in force, based upon the task force's agreement and the Chancellor's approval. Evaluations of classified staff members who are directly responsible for student learning often include goals that involve improvement of student learning, and documentation of progress on those goals (III.A.1.c).

The team finds that the College meets the Standards of ensuring that qualified personnel are hired to support student learning programs. The College should continue to evaluate its outreach strategies against the diversity of its employee population (III.A.4).

The team encountered a very positive climate that appears to embrace a "students first" philosophy, and reflects a highly innovative culture, where employees are encouraged to "dream out loud." Some of the particularly noteworthy innovations are the staff development Center for Transformative Teaching and Learning and the President's Innovation Fund. Additionally, the college's semester-long orientation for new full-time faculty is a commendable model of professional development.

Commitment to professional development was evident throughout our exploration of Skyline College, who provides numerous opportunities for improvement to enhance support for student learning and success, teaching and learning excellence, and fostering professional growth for

staff and administrators. These opportunities provide the framework for innovation and professional growth that foster Skyline College's vision of inspiring a global and diverse community of learners to achieve intellectual, cultural, social, economic and personal fulfillment (II.A.5.a III.A.5.b).

The College does not meet all components of the Standard.

### **Recommendations**

#### College Recommendation 3:

In order to meet the Standard and ensure quality instruction, the team recommends that the College adhere to its systematic and regularly scheduled process of performance evaluations for all adjunct faculty members (III.A.1.b).

#### College Recommendation 4:

In order to meet the Standard, the team recommends that the College ensure that each employee group, including classified staff and managers, has prepared a distinct Code of Professional Ethics for their respective constituencies, so as to fully be in compliance with the District wide Policy on Ethical Behavior adopted by the Board of Trustees. (Standard III.A.1.d).

#### District Recommendation 1:

In order to increase effectiveness, the District and Colleges should broadly communicate the modification of the evaluation process for faculty and others directly responsible for student progress, which includes student learning outcomes, and ensure that the process is fully implemented (III.A.1.c).

### **STANDARD III: RESOURCES**

#### **STANDARD IIIB: PHYSICAL RESOURCES**

#### **General Observations**

Skyline College primarily serves northern San Mateo County residents and residents drawn from the southern portion of San Francisco City and County. Skyline College supports student learning programs and services and provides a high-quality learning environment. Campus infrastructure include 19 buildings on the main campus, plus four facilities maintenance buildings, upgraded athletic facilities, new cosmetology and automotive transmission instructional facilities, and sufficient parking lots for students and staff.

The college uses primarily its Facilities Master Plan to guide building expansion and renovation. The Facilities Master Plan is, by design, grounded in the Education Master Plan. Since the last accreditation visit in 2007, upgrades and replacement of facilities have been quite significant due to the passage of two bond measures (measure C in 2001 and measure A in 2005). An up-to-date building list, bond construction projects, costs and estimated cost at completion can be found at the District website. The District and College Facilities Plans are updated every five years with the most recent update taking place in 2011.

The college is committed to sustainability and minimizing adverse impact on the environment. Energy efficiency is a high priority in all new designs to reduce operational costs in order to

enhance the ability of the college to achieve its mission. Indeed the college has built within one of the buildings a laboratory space for the new Solar and Building Science Center that includes a residential home where students can learn to conduct energy assessments in a realistic environment.

Capital improvements are designed to address safety and security issues, to improve accessibility and to include the best technologies available to support student learning. Skyline College is focused in creating an effective learning environment for all students. Access is a priority for the College and for the District in all new construction and renovations.

The San Mateo County Community College District provides sufficient physical resources that support and assure the safety, integrity and quality of its programs and services, regardless of location or means of delivery. Planning for major projects is guided by the SMCCCD 2011 Facilities Master Plan, and is aligned with recommendations articulated in the campus master plans (III.B.1).

The District has been engaged in a comprehensive Capital Improvement Program (CIP) since 2001. The development of the SMCCCD Facilities Master Plan, along with campus Facilities Master Plans for each of the three Colleges, has provided the District with the framework for its two, successful capital bond measures, passed by the voters in the amount of \$675 million, and has served as the basis for a possible, future bond measure. Maintenance of existing facilities is assured through the Facilities Management program review, assessments, and operational processes (III.B.1.a).

The District ensures the safety of its physical resources through its District's Facilities and Public Safety staff, District Safety Committee and the Facilities Safety Task Force. The District, along with the campuses, has conducted multiple facilities and safety-related assessments and has implemented changes when needed in response. Emergency preparedness and other safety-related training and drills are also conducted regularly. Campus climate data indicates employees and students are satisfied with the College's facilities (III.B.1.b).

In 2003, the District engaged a consultant to conduct a physical survey of the campuses. The data was entered into the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office Facilities Database, allowing facilities planners at the District to create reports on facilities condition indices, to plan projects, to maintain a space inventory, and to track funding of approved projects. This database is regularly updated as conditions change (III.B.2).

Long-range capital plans are guided by the Facilities Master Plan, and are updated as funding becomes available. When developing long-range capital improvement plans, the District considers all components of the overall cost such as architectural design, construction, equipment costs, and total cost of ownership (III.B.2.a).

Facilities planning for major capital projects is guided by the SMCCCD Facilities Master Plan. The most recent plan is the 2011 Facilities Master Plan where priorities are aligned with the planning assumptions and recommendations articulated in campus Education Master Plans.

Planning for physical resources, including equipment, is integrated into the institutional planning processes (III.B.2.b).

### **Findings and Evidence**

The College's and District's efforts in physical resources administration demonstrate careful planning, execution and a strong commitment to serving the needs of the students. The College's and District's comprehensive facilities planning activities and processes ensure that its physical resources are planned and constructed to ensure effective utilization. Through the College's integrated planning process, program needs are analyzed, discussed, and identified.

Comprehensive Program Review, Annual Program Plans, and Administrative Leadership and Unit Review processes allow for the identification of equipment and facility needs consistent with the college mission. Facility needs are forwarded to the President's Cabinet where the project is prioritized. Based on cost, priority and/or need, some projects are completed immediately while others, because of the cost or complexity, need to be forwarded to the District to be placed in the long-range capital category (III.B.1.a, III.B.1).

To ensure safety of its facilities, College personnel have access to an online work order management system, the Facilities Help Center, at the District website. The work order management system also captures and tracks maintenance requests and it stores a database that includes equipment and space inventories for each building and exterior spaces. Each building service system has been inventoried and scheduled for preventive maintenance. Moreover, College facilities are maintained following a preventive maintenance schedule which is tracked using a computerized maintenance management system. This preventive maintenance program ensures that the College facilities are safe and operate as required to support the programs and services of the College (III.B.1.a, III.B.1.b).

Campus Safety is a priority for the campus, and many strategies have been implemented to ensure a safe environment. The District Safety Committee and the College Health and Safety committee collaborate closely and hold regular meetings. Moreover, the College Health and Safety Committee maintains a crime prevention and safety website containing an emergency response guide, evacuation maps, training resources and a variety of safety information. The District Office of Public Safety also maintains its own website with additional information about emergency procedures and crime prevention. There is a reporting process for accidents and injuries; there is also safety training program for workers at risk for industrial accidents; inspections during construction projects are the norm. The District Safety committee and the College Health and Safety committee meet regularly and to collaborate to improve safety in all the College facilities (III.B.1, III.B.1.a, III.B.1.b).

When a new project is started, the project architects, engineers, project managers, and facilities planners meet early with the college user group team. Members of the user group provide input at each stage of the process from the design phase through the final construction documents. This participation of the user groups ensures effective utilization of the facility. It also ensures that instructional spaces will effectively support programs and services housed in the facility. The recently completed Science, Student Community Center Buildings, and Cosmetology buildings are good examples of this process (III.B.1.a).

In March of 2011, the District contracted an external consultant, Managers Partner Incorporated, to do a careful and thorough review of all maintenance operations. In addition to this external review, comprehensive program reviews of maintenance operations have been used to evaluate the effectiveness of facilities in supporting programs and services. These reviews have provided very valuable information to identify minimum staffing levels to ensure that the District Facilities department has enough staff to continue providing high quality support to the programs and services of Skyline College (III.B.1.a).

The college has made a commitment to increase accessibility to the campus, to support services and to all areas of instruction. ADA deficiencies have been identified, and a new Disability Resource Center has been created to provide information to the college community how to better support all students, staff, and visitors. As part of the capital projects construction program, existing facilities that are renovated are made ADA compliant (III.B.1.b).

Emergency response and preparedness are also a high priority at Skyline College and the District. The Vice President of Student Services provides campus leadership for College emergency preparedness. Emergency evacuation drills, lockdown drills, and emergency preparedness training are provided at the College regularly. The College Health and Safety Committee meets monthly to plan disaster preparedness activities, to review recent accident and injury incidents, to review safety inspections, and to promote campus safety. To evaluate the success of the drills, debriefings and discussion within members of the Health and Safety committee take place immediately after the drills. All constituencies are part of the Health and Safety College Committee and the District Safety Committee (III.B.1.b).

Skyline College and district have installed cameras in buildings and throughout the campus to help safeguard students and staff. The 2012 employee survey shows that a large majority of the respondents feel safe on campus. Additionally, electronic access controls and other monitoring systems are being implemented as part of the Capital Construction Program (III.B.1.b).

All facilities and equipment decisions are driven by needs identified at the program or service area level to support college goals. A process exists for evaluating and addressing existing facilities and equipment. As stated, facility needs are forwarded to the President's Cabinet where the project is prioritized. Long-term needs are eventually incorporated in the Facilities Master Plan. Equipment requests are forwarded by the deans to the appropriate vice president for prioritizing and funding (III.B.2, III.B.2.b).

The District and Skyline College use data from the FUSION report and guidelines from the State Chancellor's Office Facilities Planning unit to identify and evaluate current and future facility needs. This information helps the District and College determine if adequate space is available to support current and projected enrollment. Room capacity and student demand data is used to determine College needs for lecture classrooms, laboratories, offices, library and other support spaces. Furthermore, the District's Facilities Planning department, in consultation with college leaders, updates annually the five-year capital construction plan and submits it to the chancellor's office. The five-year construction plans contain comprehensive information on cost, scope and the schedule of each project (III.B.1.a, III.B.2.a).



The district identifies the components for total cost of ownership when making decisions concerning facilities. The District has created inventories for each facility and has identified all resources needed to support existing and new buildings. Moreover, the District has also created strict facilities design standards that allow for predictable costs and ease in maintenance of the facilities. The college indicates that the district has plans in place to support the increased staffing, maintenance, and operations costs of new and remodeled construction, and that money has been set aside from each of the last several district budgets for that purpose (III.B.2.a).

The Facilities Master Plan is a college document and identifies the guiding principles for future construction and upgrades. The development of the last update to the Facilities Master Plan occurred in 2011. The process to update the Master plan involved many individuals from all constituents groups. The update began with a detailed review of the College's Education Master Plan to make sure that the College institutional goals were the foundation for all physical resource planning. This first step was followed by discussions to identify major projects goals and alternative options. Drafts of the document were then reviewed by the College and the District before final approval by the board of trustees. The District and Skyline College's facilities master planning cycles have taken place in 1997, 2001, 2006 and 2011. The last annual update of the five-year construction plan was prepared and submitted to the State Chancellor's Office in November of 2012 (III.B.2.a, III.B.2.b).

During the visit, both the District Team and the College team were able to review planning documents and evidence. Interviews with staff validated that the processes of facilities planning were as stated in the Self Evaluation and benefited from these integrated planning processes and documents.

### **Conclusion**

The San Mateo County Community College District has provided facilities and facilities support to its three College campuses that would be a source of pride for any community college district. The master planning process in place at the District is a collaborative process integrating campus planning for the delivery of educational programs, for providing an environment conducive for student learning, and addressing safety and code requirements. The San Mateo County Community College District and its three Colleges should be commended for their efforts in building campus facilities to meet their respective educational missions.

Skyline College provides safe and sufficient physical resources that support and assure the quality of its program and services. Physical resource planning is integrated with institutional planning and is ongoing (III.B.1).

College and District plan, build, maintain and replace (or upgrade) its physical resources to ensure effective utilization and continuing quality necessary to support its program and services (III.B.1.a).

Skyline College and the District have robust processes to guarantee that physical resources are constructed and maintained to assure access, safety, security, and a healthful environment for all staff and students (III.B.1.b).

Skyline College plans and evaluates its facilities and equipment on a continuous basis, taking utilization into account (III.B.2).

Long-range capital plans support institutional improvement goals; institutional design standards facilitate the physical resources maintenance and provide solid projections of the total cost of ownership of new facilities and equipment (III.B.2.a).

Skyline College provides numerous opportunities for discussion and input into physical resource planning. The college assesses the effective use of physical resources and uses the results of the evaluation for improvement. Physical resource planning is integrated with institutional planning and is ongoing (III.B.2.b).

### **Recommendations**

None

### **STANDARD III: RESOURCES**

#### **STANDARD IIIC: TECHNOLOGY RESOURCES**

#### **General Observations**

The College Technology Plan, recently updated in 2012, offers a clear vision of technology as an Integral part of the College's teaching and learning environment. As a result of long-term facilities planning Skyline College has seen a substantial increase in support and deployment of technologies that enhance teaching and learning and facilitate the delivery of student and administrative services. There has also been significant progress in network and communication infrastructure. Faculty and staff have access to updated equipment and software tools that help them to fulfill more effectively their roles at the institution. The number of Smart classrooms, learning laboratories and support has significantly increased.

The District Instructional Technology Services (ITS) and Educational Services and Planning Office participate on the college's Technology Advisory Committee (TAC) and collaborate in the development of Skyline College technology planning including the most recent update of the College Technology Plan (2012). The District Strategic Plan for Information Technology 2012-2016 provides a clear overview of the role of the District as well as the goals for improving instruction, enhancing student learning and for improving technology infrastructure as the colleges grow in both numbers of students and diversity. The ITS Information Technology Strategic Plan reflects the role of the District in supporting the Colleges.

ITS supports a wide range of tools and applications that are used by the Colleges and the District Office to support their needs. Many of the core services are provided through Banner, the Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system. Teaching and learning is supported through smart classrooms with wired and wireless network connectivity; through learning centers with a range of technology to support student success; through WebAccess, a course management system for faculty (a Moodle implementation). There is also a web-based system (WebSMART) that provides a variety of online service options for students, faculty and staff. Research is supported by reporting and analytics software including Argos and Hyperion, SPSS, and ArcGIS. Student services use: SARS software and DegreeWorks. The College also uses CurricUNET for

curriculum processes and Tracdat for tracking student learning outcomes assessment. An electronic transcript interchange that allows students to obtain transcripts among District colleges has also been implemented.

In addition, ITS provides a broad array of services. It supports administrative systems, network infrastructure, Web services, computer and media support. ITS is also responsible for securing College data and for providing backup and recovery for all administrative systems. ITS completed a revision of the district strategic plan for information technology in April 2013.

### **Findings and Evidence**

There is evidence to support the statement that the San Mateo County Community College District (SMCCCD) uses technology effectively to support student learning programs and services (III.C.1). Instructional and student support technology is centralized at the District-level with a close, customer-service working relationship with the Colleges to address campus needs. The District offers a variety of technology services, professional support, facilities, hardware, and software to enhance the effectiveness of college operations (III. C.1.a). This includes desktop and media support, personnel/student data support, network/phone/server support, and web services.

Guided by the Education Master Plan and the Strategic Plan, Skyline College's planning structure integrates technology planning through Annual Program Plans, Comprehensive Program Review, Administrative Leadership and Unit Reviews. Planning is used not only to determine needs but also to ensure ongoing support for technology at the College. In addition to the annual planning process, the College uses the Technology Advisory Committee (TAC) to support technology planning. This committee is composed of faculty, staff, administrators and, most importantly, ITS staff. Moreover, ITS staff also participates in various District and College committees to ensure close communication between the College and the District in matters of technology (III.C.1, III.C.1.a).

The College TAC serves as a forum through which faculty, staff and administrators discuss, plan, investigate, and implement ideas and strategies that will best utilize advances in technology to enhance instruction, student support services, and administrative services. The College TAC provides technology leadership at the College level and is also responsible for the development of the Skyline College Technology Plan. The plan includes detailed prioritized replacement schedules for administrative and instructional technology, smart classrooms, and general campus technology. In addition, the plan provides technology goals aligned to the College vision and to the District Information Technology plan (III.C.1.a).

To ensure that faculty, students, and staff have access to high-performance and reliable network services such as Internet, voice and email resources, ITS has implemented a redundant network infrastructure across the District. ITS provides staff the opportunity to work directly with the District's Construction Planning and Development consultants and contractors to insure compliance with ITS stated guidelines. ITS desktop support provides technical support for the installation of new computers, network equipment, and instructional technology. ITS support group technicians maintain, deliver, and set up faculty requested instructional equipment, install or replace Cell phone repeaters and monitors. Technological staff support is provided through a

centralized dispatch and online HelpCenter work order system and telephone help desk. The requests are then routed to the appropriate technical staff who responds to the requests. The customer satisfaction survey results show a high level of satisfaction with these services (III.C.1.a).

The college and ITS offer a variety of desktop software and online pedagogical training through regular faculty and staff professional development activities; ITS offers specific software and hardware training for affected employee groups when new technologies are introduced (Degree Works, student email, Banner functionality updates), and a wide range of computer training through course offerings in the Business, Science, Math and Technology division for students. The library also offers some support in the open computer labs. In the area of distance education, the District, through its distance education committee, has implemented a training program for all instructors who are interested in teaching online. The program prepares faculty to use online resources and to teach online classes. A large number of Skyline instructors have participated in this training. Customer satisfaction surveys are used to evaluate the effectiveness of the training and the results are used to make improvements (III.C.1.b).

ITS is responsible for securing College data and also provides backup for all administrative data stored on its servers on a daily basis. The Data Center is located at the District Office. A recovery strategy is in place with a failover site at Cañada College (III.C.1.c).

To enhance training opportunities at the institution, the college recently opened The Center for Transformative Teaching and Learning (CTTL) with the important mission of supporting professional development for faculty and staff. Among the many services provided by the CTTL a regular series of technology training programs and workshops designed for faculty and staff are offered. The college has recently added an instructional technologist to the staff of the center to expand its services since, as it was stated during the campus tour, “faculty training in the use of Instructional Technology should not only include the ‘how to’ but equally important, the ‘why to use’ technology to achieve better learning outcomes.” The center has also implemented an orientation program for new faculty.

The workshops at the center are scheduled throughout the day to maximize participation. The CTTL assess technology training needs through meetings with divisions and employee groups and formally through an online survey. The survey completed fall 2012 indicated an interest in basic WebAccess (Moodle implementation) training (III.C.1.b).

In close collaboration, college and district systematically plan, maintain, and upgrade the technology infrastructure and equipment through integrated planning at the college and the district. Program reviews and annual program plans are used to request specific technology needs at the program level. Annual plans, program reviews and stated goals in the technology plan are discussed jointly during division meetings to help with the assessment and effective deployment and use of resources. Assessments of the student learning outcomes are being used to identify technology needs. The College’s Technology Plan 2012–2015 includes a five-year instructional lab replacement schedule, a four-year replacement schedule for faculty and staff technology, and a four-year update schedule for Smart classrooms and conference rooms. In addition, the plan includes an annual recommended budget for technology.

Decisions regarding technology issues from a district-wide perspective are made collaboratively by the member colleges, ITS, and the Educational Services and Planning Office at the district. Examples of district-wide decisions include adoption of Moodle for online course management system; email access for students, faculty and staff (III.C.1.c, III.C.1.d).

Technology planning is guided by the District Strategic Information Technology plan, the Skyline technology plan and by the collaboration between the College TAC and the District ITS. The vision and goals of the Skyline technology plan are aligned to the mission of the college and play an essential role in guiding technology planning. Linkages between technology planning and institutional planning are strong. Program review allows each program and administrative unit to state technology needs that reflect student needs based on learning outcomes assessments. The Instructional Leadership Team and Student Services Student Committee prioritize these needs before submitting for approval to the president's cabinet. The process to evaluate technology decisions to see how well the technology needs were met and the subsequent path for improvement needs to be communicated more broadly to all College stakeholders (III.C.2).

Technology planning is an ongoing and consistent thread at SMCCCD (III.C.1.c). District Information Technology Services takes a consultative approach to future technology planning, which is integrated with institutional strategic planning. The Education Master Plan, Technology Plan, and the District Strategic Plan for Information Technology provide evidence of this planning effort (III.C.2). The evidence and on-site interviews support the finding that the District provides quality training in the application of its information technology to students and personnel (III.C.1.b). The Colleges assess the need for information technology training through surveys and workshops. Finally, workshops, online tutorials, and Structured Training for Online Teaching (STOT) are developed and offered in response to needs identified in these surveys.

The District Information Technology Services Department is responsible for the Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system. SMCCCD has been employing the Banner software system for over a decade (III.C.2). The District is experienced with this cross-functional, integrated application and has effectively employed the human resources, financial, and student modules of the system. Technology resource infrastructures and software are in place for the effective delivery of distance education (III.C.1.d). The District has established consistent and standardized aspects of instructional technology for instructional personnel at all three Colleges.

### **Conclusion**

The San Mateo Community College District and Colleges meet Standard III C. The District uses a variety of technological resources throughout the breadth of its programs, services, and administration. Policies and procedures ensure that its technology inventory, maintenance, replacement, and upgrading are effectively addressed. Technological resources are also systematically evaluated. The evidence validates that there are a number of plans for this purpose such as the District Facilities Master plan, Education Master Plan, Sustainability Plan, Custodial Program Review, Grounds Program Review, Technology Plan, and the District Strategic Plan for Information Technology. Physical resources planning and technology planning are integrated with institutional planning. A number of measures are identified to

assess the effective employment of technology and to use the information for continuous improvement.

Technology resources are distributed throughout the college to serve the development, maintenance, and enhancement of its programs and services. Bond funds have helped to build a fairly rich array of technical support for academic programs and college operations (III.C.1, III.C.1.a).

The District and the college provide training in the effective use of its information technology to students and staff (III.C.1.b).

The District systematically plans, acquires, maintains and upgrades technology infrastructure and equipment to meet institutional needs (III.C.1.c).

The distribution and utilization of the technology resources support and enhance the services and programs offered by the college (III.C.1.d).

Technology resource planning has clear planning processes and is tied to college planning processes as well. There is evidence of clear goals, TAC works well in setting priorities and establishing policy related to technology at the college. The Technology plan has played an essential role in guiding planning. The college participates actively in District wide planning (III.C.2).

### **Recommendations**

None

## **STANDARD III: RESOURCES**

### **STANDARD IIID: FINANCIAL RESOURCES**

#### **General Observations**

The quality and scope of information provided by Skyline College for this Standard was substantial. Each of the Financial Resource Sections were well summarized and functionally descriptive in responding to the Standard and the self-evaluation responses provided by the college referenced evidence(s) in meeting the Standards as required by the ACCJC. Although strained by state budget cuts, Skyline College has maintained financial resources sufficient to support student learning programs and services.

Skyline College has a history of financial stability and manages a balanced budget that provides for a reserve that exceeds the 5% benchmark. The current reserve is 17.1% which is commendable given the economic conditions faced by the college. Integrated Planning established by the Balanced Scorecard strategic management system has allowed the college to provide sustainable, continuous quality improvement in assessing and improving institutional effectiveness through program review. Skyline College's financial practices are exemplary given the economic climate during the past few years. The college has also identified grant-seeking as a revenue enhancement strategy and expanded partnerships that extend the capacity of the college and enhance institutional effectiveness.

As the result of reducing its expenditure budget during California's severe fiscal crisis, pursuing revenue enhancement measures, and carrying out careful planning, the San Mateo County Community College District is in a strong and healthy financial position. The District holds reserves in excess of the reserve level required by the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office and general accounting practices. The District's 2012-2013 beginning balance was \$19,601,580, which includes a contingency reserve of \$5,884,069. The passage of a parcel tax measure, Measure G, provides additional resources for District and College initiatives, including greater student success support through the addition of class sections and counselors. The District manages and plans for its long-term liabilities as well as its short-term liabilities. The District employs a Resource Allocation Model that serves as the expenditure plan. This model is integrated with District and College planning processes that are grounded in the participatory governance process under the leadership of the College President.

### **Findings and Evidence**

The college's mission and goals are the foundation for financial planning. The SMCCCD Board goal to "maintain fiscal stability..." has been prioritized in their MVV Statement to "establish and maintain fiscal stability and alignment of programs and services". Financial planning is integrated with and supports all institutional planning. The Strategic planning and budget allocation process are integrated into the Skyline College planning process. Institutional planning reflects assessment of financial resources availability, development of financial resources, partnerships and expenditures requirements (III.D, III.D.1.a).

Financial obligations are included in the audited financial statements and funds are reserved for meeting those needs. This is evidenced by the Board Policies and Procedures, College Budget Committee Minutes, Skyline Capital Improvement Projects, Actuarial Study of Retiree Health Liability and Long-Range Funding for Equipment (III.D.1.b).

To assure the financial integrity of the college and responsible use of its resources, the internal control structure has appropriate control mechanisms and widely disseminated dependable and timely information for sound financial decision-making. In addition to annual external audits, a College Internal Audit Group was formed to ensure that internal controls are maintained on all District fiscal processes. Financial documents, including the budget and independent audit, have a high degree of credibility and accuracy, and reflect appropriate allocation and use of financial resources to support student learning programs and services (III.D.2).

The college has policies and procedures to ensure sound financial practices, financial stability, sufficient cash flow and reserves to maintain stability, strategies for appropriate risk management, and contingency plans to meet financial emergencies and unforeseen occurrences. The college practices effective oversight of finances, including management of financial aid, grants, externally funded programs, contractual relationships, auxiliary organizations or foundations, and institutional investments and assets. The college plans for and allocates appropriate resources for the payment of liabilities and future obligations, including Other Post-Employment Benefits (OPEB), compensated absences, and other employee obligations (III.D.3.a).

Contractual agreements with external entities are consistent with the mission and goals of the college, governed by institutional policies, and contain appropriate provisions to maintain the integrity of the institution. The college regularly evaluates its financial management processes, and the results of the evaluation are used to improve internal control structures. Financial resource planning is integrated with institutional planning. The college systematically assesses the effective use of financial resources and uses the results of the evaluation as the basis for improvement (III.D.3.b).

An annual assessment of probable financial resources begins at the District level. The District Committee on Budget and Finance includes representatives from all three Colleges in the District. The committee is responsible for making recommendations and evaluating resource allocation policies and budget processes. The committee considers budget assumptions; reviews revenue sources; prepares budget scenarios for short- and long-term planning, and integrates the District strategic plan into the budget (III.D. 1.a, III.D.1.b, III.D.1.c, III.D.1.d).

The District's resource allocation model was developed by the District Committee on Budget and Finance approximately six years ago. It was vetted by District and College representatives prior to being formally approved by the District Participatory Governance Committee. The Resource Allocation Model serves as the vehicle for allocating resources for ongoing expenditures such as personnel and benefits, and addresses long-term liabilities, including post-retirement medical benefits, and allocates funding for District priorities identified in the District Strategic Plan. The Resource Allocation Model is an FTES-based model. The model is reviewed by the District Committee on Budget and Finance annually and changes are made as needed (III.D.1.d).

The District Executive Vice Chancellor is currently working with the District Committee on Budget and Finance to create a new Resource Allocation Model which will incorporate San Mateo County Community College District's new Basic Aid status, address Redevelopment Agency revenue, and the sunset of Measure G, the parcel tax. The assessed value of property in the San Mateo Community College District increased 6% in 2013–2014, which will provide the District with more property tax revenue in which to operate the District. Further increases are projected for the future (III.D.1.d, III.D.3, III.D.3.h).

Services offered to the Colleges of the San Mateo County Community College District by the District include facilities maintenance and operations, information technology support, public safety, purchasing, payroll, accounting, banking, insurance, and human resources. By centralizing these operations, greater resource efficiencies are achieved for the District and the Colleges that it serves.

The most recent example of this took place in 2009 when public safety was centralized. One Director oversees all of the college public safety operations and assigns staff based on student population. Twenty-four-hour coverage is possible with this new centralization without additional staff. Similarly, with facilities operations, centralization has proven to be more efficient and coordinated. The three Colleges collectively reduced their budgets by \$2 million, thereby enabling the augmentation of the District facilities and operations budget for on-going preventive maintenance at the Colleges (III.D.1.b, III.D.1.d).



The District Chancellor along with the District Executive Vice Chancellor communicates budget information throughout the District. Through the District Committee on Budget and Finance to the College Budget and Planning Committee, budget and resource allocation data and information are communicated. Presentations are made on a monthly basis through the participatory governance committees regarding budget updates. A new Resource Allocation Model is being explored in order to address the changes to the District's funding sources. Budget information is available on the District's website and also communicated at each public Board Meeting by the Chancellor and the Executive Vice Chancellor. At the beginning of each academic year, the Chancellor addresses the District and College staffs and provides updates on the status of the budget (III.D.1.d, III.D.2, III.D.2.a).

The District budgets and plans for payment of long-term debt, short-term debt, and future liabilities. The District established both a revocable and an irrevocable trust fund for post-retirement benefits to cover the cost of medical insurance costs for retirees. The District has set aside \$43 million toward its \$125 million retiree liability. Setting aside these funds towards the District's long-term liability has helped the District in many ways, including a strong credit rating. In fact, the San Mateo County Community College District holds the highest bond credit for Community Colleges in the State, largely due to its strong financial and management practices. The District uses the California Community Colleges Sound Fiscal Management Self-Assessment check list as a barometer for the fiscal health of the institution and as a guide to maintain long- and short-term fiscal stability. The Board of Trustees has developed 37 District policies that outline sound financial practices to be followed by the District and colleges. These policies are reviewed and revised as necessary on a regular basis (II.D.1.c, III.D.3.c, III.D.3.d, III.D.3.e).

The District has also pursued entrepreneurial projects of a fiscal benefit nature. The SMCCCD constructed faculty and student housing on two of its College campuses: "College Vista" and "Cañada Vista." The District issued Certificates of Participation for the construction for these two projects and later defused that debt with proceeds from General Obligation bonds. The income from the housing units is an on-going source of funds and is deposited to the District Capital Outlay fund for future capital outlay projects (III.D.1.b, III.D.3.g).

The District prepares three-year financial projections and works with the Colleges on their allocations. The District uses its reserves to avoid large expenditure reductions in any one year.

The District has sufficient funds to meet its needs and for emergencies. The District's ending balance has ranged from 14% to 18% over the last four years. Parcel tax revenue and redevelopment tax revenue in addition to the revenue derived from its recent Basic Aid status have greatly enhanced the financial strength and stability of the District (III.D).

District Long Range Instructional and Institutional Equipment Planning Teams was formed in 2011 to assess the condition of existing equipment and technology at the three campuses. The District allocates \$400,000 to each college for a five-year period to enable the Colleges to purchase and replace classroom equipment. The District Information Technology unit finances the upgrades and changes to the College's instructional labs. The District Information

Technology staff works with the college staff to determine what instructional labs need upgrading and the most appropriate technology to upgrade (III.D.1.c, III.D.3.c, III.D.3.e).

The District uses the Banner financial accounting system to record financial transactions. Inherent in the system are approval controls. Various reports and queries can be run on the Banner system. The District has an internal audit committee that reviews and audits procedures such as cash handling, use of purchasing cards, conference and travel, and asset tracking. An independent CPA firm conducts an annual audit on all of the District's financial records. The annual audits are presented to the Board of Trustees. The audits have resulted in no financial findings in the last six years. There have, however, been a few compliance findings on programs, with follow-up conducted by District and College staff (III.D.2.a, III.D.2.b, III.D.2.c, III.D.3.h).

The District Executive Vice Chancellor makes budget reports to the Colleges and answers questions regarding budget allocations to the Colleges (III.D.1.b).

The District prepares tentative, final, and mid-year financial reports on the budget. The budget is distributed to the Colleges and posted on the District website. The budget reports are presented to the Board of Trustees and published online (III.D.1.b).

The voters of San Mateo County passed a parcel tax in 2009 which annually provides over \$7 million in additional funding for the three Colleges in the San Mateo County Community College District. The District's primary use of the parcel tax revenue is to provide funding for student services and to offer additional class sections. The District also passed two general obligation bonds for construction and facilities upgrades at all three colleges, totaling \$675 million. A bond measure Citizens' Oversight Committee is in place to review the activities of the general obligation bond projects (III.D.1.b).

Risk management is a function of the District. The District procures insurance for property, casualty, employee liability to protect College and District assets from losses. The District has established a reserve for worker's compensation claims that are incurred but not reported and has an actuarial study made every two years to substantiate reserves and set rates. The District oversees public safety at all three Colleges. The District offers on-going training programs for faculty, staff, and students to increase awareness of risk and to protect the safety of staff and students. The District collaborates with the San Mateo County Sheriff's Department, Woodside Fire Department, and Redwood City Police (III.D.3.a).

Skyline College Financial Aid Office worked with two other college's in the District to create the San Mateo County Community College District Default Prevention and Management Plan for Federal Direct Loans. This is included in the Financial Aid Policies and Procedures Manual (III.D.3.f).

Contractual agreements are consistent with the mission and goals of the Colleges of the SMCCCD. Contracts are reviewed by both the College Business Office and the District. Contracts are left for services consistent with the contracting college mission and goals. Policies and procedures regarding contracts are developed and implemented in compliance with the

California Education Code, Public Contracts Code, and Civil Code. Only the Chancellor and the Executive-Vice Chancellor and their designees are authorized to sign contracts for the District (III.D.3.g).

### **Conclusion**

Skyline College and the SMCCCD meets Standard III. D. The District holds high reserves as does the College. The District resource allocation model allocates resources for ongoing expenses and addresses long- and short-term liabilities. Resource allocation is tied to the District Strategic Plan. The District provides services in the way of facilities operations, information technology, purchasing, payroll, accounting, banking, insurance, risk management and human resources. External Audit reports have not addressed any financial or internal control findings for the last three years. The District is not responsible for any long-term debt payments from the General Fund.

A review of the Federal and State Awards Auditors' Results for the last three years did reveal a number of findings that should be addressed by instituting internal controls and procedures to ensure the noted deficiencies are rectified. Also, those findings noted as significant deficiencies or items noted on prior reports should have the highest priority for resolution.

Skyline College has done commendable work in maintaining a fiscally responsible institution. The District and college are commended for seeking new funding sources to support educational improvements and Skyline College's efforts in attracting significant Grant Funding through the SparkPoint partnerships program.

### **Recommendations**

None

## **STANDARD IV: LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE**

### **STANDARD IV: DECISION-MAKING ROLES AND PROCESSES**

#### **General Observations: COLLEGE**

Skyline College is a high quality educational institution with a history of collegiality and participatory governance that has served the college well. The College has leadership and governance structures and processes that support continuous improvement of the College. The cultures of the District and the College encourage and support widespread engagement in governance and leadership.

Skyline College has a committee structure designed to provide an opportunity for faculty, students, administrators, and staff to participate in institutional governance appropriate to their area of expertise. The College is committed to participatory governance as indicated by a recent evaluation of governance revealing that 79 percent agree that they are provided with adequate opportunities to participate on important College Councils and committees.

The San Mateo County Community College District (SMCCCD) Board Policy on Professional Ethics (BP 2.21) provides the foundation for ethical and effective leadership throughout the District and the College. The Academic Senate Statement on Ethics and the District Student Council Statement of Student Ethics further demonstrate the commitment of the College and the

District to ethical and effective leadership. The District Board of Trustees demonstrates its commitment to ethical and effective leadership throughout the organization in its Reaffirmation of Core Values and Principles dated June 2012. Included in these values are student-centered mission, support for innovation, employment philosophy, participatory governance, and the Board's final decision-making authority (IV.A).

The SMCCCD Function Map indicates that Skyline College has primary responsibility (leadership and oversight of a given function which may include design, development, implementation and successful integration) for all functions addressed in Standard IV.A., while the District has secondary responsibility (support of a given function which may include feedback, input and communication to assist with successful integration) in these areas.

### **General Observations: DISTRICT**

The SMCCCD governance roles are designed to facilitate decisions that support student learning programs and services and improve institutional effectiveness while acknowledging the designated leadership responsibilities of the governing board, Chancellor, and College Presidents. The governing board for the District fully supports the Chancellor and provides him the resources to be effective in his position (IV.A.1). Board members also interact with the three College presidents at retreats, Board meetings, and other meetings and solicit their input on important decisions that affect the District and their individual Colleges (IV.A.2).

The Board has in place a policy (2.08) that ensures effective participation by all College constituency groups. Additionally the District, through Policy 2.05, established a District Academic Senate (DAS) with faculty representation from all three Colleges that provides an avenue of communication between the Governing Board and District faculty for recommendations agreed upon by all individual College Academic Senates (IV.A.2). Board policy 2.05 also defines the Boards role on the California participatory governance 10+1 areas of academic and professional matters and relies primarily upon the faculty at the three Colleges for input on those areas with which faculty have primacy.

Furthermore Board Policy 2.08 established the District Participatory Governance Council (DPGC) which "ensures faculty, staff, and students the right to participate effectively in District and College governance and the opportunity to express their opinions at the campus and District levels and to ensure that these opinions are given every reasonable consideration." The council is composed of 20 representatives, including five Faculty, five Administrators, five Classified, and five students from across the three Colleges. Membership on the committee also includes members from each of the respective bargaining groups. The Chancellor is responsible for addressing and forwarding DPGC recommendations to the Board (IV.A.2).

The Board develops goals at an annual retreat that is attended by the Chancellor, District staff, and the individual College Presidents as well as being open to the public. The Chancellor, District staff, and College Presidents are responsible for disseminating the goals developed at the retreat to the individual Colleges.

The Board makes public its agendas and meeting minutes as well as Board Policies and Administrative Procedures on a public website. Additionally, the Board has a regular special

topics agenda item on “Innovations in Teaching, Learning and Support Services,” where individual Colleges can highlight best practices and new programs in presentations to the Board (IV.A.3).

The Board formed the San Mateo County Community College District (SMCCCD) Accreditation Coordinating Council to support the accreditation process district-wide and to keep the governing board apprised of accreditation progress and activities. Regular presentations are made to the Board on accreditation activities (IV.A.4).

The Board is responsible for the annual evaluation of the Chancellor, established by administrative procedure 2.02.2. The College Presidents are also evaluated annually under Board Policy 2.09 and Administrative Procedure 2.09.1 Categories of Employment: Evaluation. Furthermore, District services departments engage in program review to regularly evaluate their integrity and effectiveness (IV.A.5).

### **Findings and Evidence: COLLEGE**

During the evaluation team visit, team members met with over 30 College representatives including faculty, students, staff, administrators, and the College president. From these conversations, team members found numerous examples of college employees and students who, no matter what their official titles, are able to take initiative in improving the practices programs and services of the College. For example, concerned with the cost of their textbook, and the barrier this cost caused students, faculty in the math department developed a textbook that is made available to students for the cost of printing it, a mere \$15.00. Another example is the project to provide Chrome Books on a low-rate rental basis so they can access technology and online resources.

While the links to institutional integrated planning were not clear to team members, it is evident that members of the College are actively engaged in generating ideas and in bringing such ideas into practice. Interviews with students, faculty, staff, and administrators revealed many examples of improvements, projects, and services initiated through formal and informal structures (IV.A.1).

The participatory governance structure and practices assure staff, faculty, administrators and students may initiate improvements in their areas. Formal processes that support this include the Institutional Planning Committee, the College Budget Committee, Comprehensive Program Review, as well as the Administrative Leadership and Unit Review and Annual Program Plans.

The Skyline College Mission, Vision, and Values (MVV) are communicated widely throughout the College and to the college community as is information about institutional performance. The Skyline Shines newsletter, announcements, agendas, and minutes of governance groups are posted. The College website can be navigated easily and information about the College is accessible to interested persons or parties. The Marketing, Communications, and Public Relations Office maintains a Feedback and Suggestion Box on its web site.

The planning model of the Institutional Planning Committee depicts the connections among program review, student learning outcomes assessment and other College functions. This model places student success at the center of the institutional planning process.

The Self Evaluation Report states that while the College has autonomous decision-making processes, ultimately decision-making authority presides with the District. In contrast, the San Mateo County Community College Function Map shows the College has primary responsibility for matters addressed in Standard IV.A.1.

The Skyline College Integrated Planning and Participatory Governance for Student Success Handbook and the Compendium of Committees are offered as evidence of an environment of empowerment, innovation and institutional excellence, and these documents support this claim.

The College Governance Council is the primary body that fosters participation by staff, faculty, administrators, and students in planning, evaluation and improvement processes. This body's decision-making is conducted by polling for consensus. When consensus is not achieved, a vote is called for. The president or other primary decision maker can reject a recommendation. In such case, the president or other primary decision-maker must provide a written explanation to Council members and to other groups to which the decision would be forwarded (IV.A.1).

To encourage innovation and improvements to student learning and success, constituent groups have two excellent ways to fund their ideas—the Program Improvement and President's Innovation Fund. All ideas funded through either must support the College's mission, vision, values statements and goals of the institution (IV.A.1).

Skyline College has a long-standing structure and practice of faculty, staff, administrator and student participation in decision-making processes. The College Governance Council philosophy of participatory governance articulates the substantive and clearly defined role faculty, staff, administrators, and students have in institutional governance (IV.A.2.a).

The college's commitment to inclusion, participatory governance and broad based membership is clearly illustrated in Skyline's Integrated Planning and Participatory Governance for Student Success Handbook which identifies the roles and responsibilities of participatory governance committees and constituent roles in the participatory process. Skyline also has a long-standing decision-making structure in place that is supported by the District's policy on faculty (Board Policy 2.05) and student participation (Board Policy 2.18). The organization relies on faculty, its academic senate, the curriculum committee, and academic administrators for recommendations about student learning programs and services (IV.A.2.a).

The team found that the college has a number of documents that describe the official responsibilities and authority of the faculty and academic administrators in curricular and educational matters. The Academic Senate Bylaws and the Constitution describe the responsibilities and authority of the faculty in curricular and other educational matters; San Mateo Community College District Board Policy 2.06 assigns the responsibility of advising the Board on academic and professional matters; and the self-evaluation report addresses the role of

academic administrators primarily as they participate within the structures and committees of the academic senate.

The Institutional Planning Committee and the College Budget Committee as well as District Participatory Governance Process (Board Policy 2.08), articulate that the district relies on the academic senate and the curriculum committee for recommendations about student learning programs and services (IV.A.2.b).

The Compendium of Committees (Fall 2013) indicates membership and participation from a wide range of participants from throughout the College. The College cites evidence from the Employee Voice Survey 2012 to support the claim that the environment at Skyline College is collegial and promotes collaboration. A review of the evidence from the survey generally supports this claim, but it is noted that “agree” responses on questions related to participation in areas of evaluation, planning, and improvement range from 50–70 percent.

The team found that the Board of Trustees, chancellor, administrators, faculty, staff, and students share a high degree of concern for the good of the institution as reflected in the Balanced Scorecard. The Scorecard answers the question of how well the college responds to the needs of its students, the community, business, industry, government, accrediting agencies, the college’s leadership, etc. Additionally, the Planning, Research and Institutional Effectiveness (PRIE) Office has an easily accessible website that posts current research for the campus as well as the community (IV.A.3).

Roles of staff and students are specified in written policies and governance procedures. Communication throughout the college is clear, widely available and current. Skyline Shines, the president’s weekly online newsletter reports on college activities, accomplishments, budget, services, and committee activities. The Skyline View Student News Website provides current information about the College and allows open access comments through its presence on twitter. The PRIE office posts current research results on its web page (IV.A.3).

The team found that Skyline complies with all of the Accrediting Commission’s Standards, policies, guidelines, and requirements for public disclosure. Skyline has responded to previous evaluation team recommendations and provided ample information for the visiting team. Skyline College’s accreditation history demonstrates integrity in its relationship with the Commission. The team noted that the College has submitted substantive change proposals in response to the previous team’s recommendation. Reports to the Commission have been submitted on time and were complete. In its January 31, 2011 response to the College’s Midterm Report, the Commission stated that Skyline College had resolved District recommendations 1, 2, and 3 as well as College recommendations 5, 6, 7, and 8. The letter notes that the College had submitted substantive change proposals in response to recommendation 4. On March 22, 2013, the Commission acted to approve substantive change requests (IV.A.4).

The College maintains relationships with eight external accrediting bodies in addition to ACCJC. These organizations are listed on the College Accreditation web page and in other suitable locations and publications. The College holds external partnerships with Regional Occupational Programs, high schools, and four-year institutions. Also, the College has industry partnerships

with career and technical programs. The College communicates information about its institutional qualities and effectiveness to the public accurately.

Appendix C of the Self Evaluation Report provides evidence that the College complies with the U.S. Department of Education Regulations and Higher Education Opportunities Act of 2008 (IV.A.4).

The Board of Trustees, standing committees, and other governance structures are regularly evaluated to ensure their integrity and effectiveness. Evidence of the decision-making process in participatory governance, budgeting, staffing, technology and facilities usage was supplied to the team (IV.A.5).

The Charter and By-laws of the College Governance Council (CGC) state, “Participatory governance is carefully planned, instituted and evaluated.” The team noted that bylaws of the CGC articulate the communication mechanisms of the group, but do not connect these specifically to the evaluation process.

The Planning and Participatory Governance Manual states, “the bylaws of the College Governance Council were amended to include a plan to undertake a review of the college’s decision-making structures at least once every six years, as part of the accreditation self-study process. The first review has been completed and participatory with the campus, and recommendations have been forward to the appropriate participatory governance bodies.”

In 2008 and 2012, formal evaluations of the college’s governance and decision-making structures took place. In 2012, the college published the Skyline College Participatory Governance Evaluation that documented the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats to the governance process (IV.A.5).

#### **Findings and Evidence: DISTRICT**

The SMCCCD Functional Organization of the District-College Relationship, published October 15, 2013, provides an overview and “map” of the functions, roles, and relationships between the governing board, District Operations, and the individual Colleges (IV.A.3). Interviews with District staff further defined the relationship between the Board, the District, and the individual Colleges. Many services are centralized with the District, such as Human Resources, Information Technology, Safety, and Facilities but maintain a management presence at the individual Colleges as well.

The Board members interviewed affirmed that they conduct an annual self-evaluation that is publicly discussed at an open Board meeting. There does not seem to be a policy in place that outlines this process, but the minutes for February 22, 2012 Board meeting provide documentation that the Board engaged in an open discussion of their self-evaluation. The District Human Resources office provided a copy of the form used by the Board to evaluate the Board’s effectiveness and the form is also used to evaluate the Chancellor (IV.A.5).

Summary reports of surveys conducted District-wide as part of a program review process for Information Technology Services and Accounting, Payroll, Purchasing, Human Resources, and



Facilities were provided in addition to the actual surveys. The summary reports provided responses from the represented service areas on each of the survey questions. Although District staff members were aware of the surveys, it was not clearly apparent in some of the interviews with District staff regarding how they used the survey results to improve practices. The summary reports for the surveys are available on the District website (IV.A.5).

There has been a vacancy on the Governing Board for six months since a member of the board resigned due to ill health. Board members acknowledged that they tried but were unsuccessful in reaching agreement on an individual to appoint to the position even though there were twelve applications. Thus, the vacant seat will be decided by election in November 2013 (IV.A.4).

Interviews conducted with three members of the five-member Governing Board provided evidence that the Board actively engages with the individual Colleges to solicit their input in their decision-making processes. Board members affirmed that they felt they were kept well informed about accreditation activities. They acknowledged reviewing several drafts of each individual College's self-evaluation and receiving the final versions for approval (IV.A.4).

Furthermore, Board members and the Chancellor are actively involved in communicating to the public regarding the educational quality of the programs and services provided and overall institutional effectiveness of the SMCCCD. The public's positive regard for the District is evident by the parcel tax approved by voters within the District service area that provided needed financial resources in a time of declining revenue (IV.A.4).

Finally, after interviewing Board members and the Chancellor, it was evident to the Team that they have a close and mutually-supportive working relationship. This relationship has afforded the District the ability to move forward on several District Strategic priorities (IV.A.1).

### **Conclusion**

Skyline College meets Standard IV.A.

The District meets Standard IV.A.

### **Recommendations**

None

**STANDARD IV: LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE**

**STANDARD IV: BOARD AND ADMINISTRATIVE ORGANIZATION**

### **General Observations: COLLEGE**

A six-member board of trustees governs the San Mateo County Community College District (SMCCCD), which is comprised of three colleges. The voters living in San Mateo County elect SMCCCD board members to a four-year term. A non-voting student trustee is elected by the students to serve a one-year term.

The long-term stability of the Board of Trustees has allowed the college to develop and maintain an effective leadership team. Evidence of discussions with the Board of Trustees, board minutes, and policies describing the duties, responsibilities, selection, and evaluation of the Chancellor and College Presidents were provided to the team (IV.B).

The District Board of Trustees designates responsibilities of the governing board for setting policies and of the Chancellor for the effective operation of the institution. The duties and responsibilities of the Board are articulated in Board Policy 1.01. The Functional Map shows that the District has primary responsibility with the College having secondary responsibility with the exception of Standard IV.B.1.i where the District and the College share the responsibility for the governing board being informed about and involved in the accreditation process (IV.B.1).

**General Observations: DISTRICT**

The College of San Mateo is one of three colleges in the San Mateo County Community College District, and the District is governed by a Board of Trustees consisting of six Trustees, five of whom are elected at large by the citizens of the county, and one of whom is a Student Trustee elected by student representatives of the three Colleges. Currently one of the Trustee seats is vacant following the resignation of one of the publicly elected trustees for health reasons. Most of the Trustees have served on the Board for many years, the most recently elected non-student member having been elected ten years ago. The Chancellor supervises the Presidents of each of the three Colleges and a District Office staff including several Vice Chancellors and other support staff. The Chancellor has served as CEO of the District since 2001, and the President of Skyline College has served as the institutional CEO since January 2011 (IV.B, IV.B.3.e).

Changes to the District's Delineation of Functions Map have been proposed and are under discussion. In addition, collective bargaining agreements have been ratified setting new terms for employee compensation. The District Strategic Plan is currently being updated (IV.B.3.a, IV.B.3.g).

**Findings and Evidence: COLLEGE**

The District Board of Trustees publishes its policies and procedures that specify the board's size, duties, responsibilities, structure, and operating procedures. Policies and procedures are posted on the District web page, are accessed easily and reviewed on a six-year schedule. The procedure for selection of the chief executive is in place, but since the current Chancellor was hired in 2001, there is no recent use of this policy and process (IV.B.1).

The team found that the Board acts as an independent policy-making body, and it reflects the public interest in its activities and decisions (IV.B.1.a). It has clearly defined policies and procedures for educational programs, curriculum development, program review and program viability (IV.B.1.b).

Board Policy 1.10 (2/12), Duties and Responsibilities of the Board, states that the Board has ultimate responsibility for educational quality, legal matters, and financial integrity. Further, minutes of reports and presentations to the Board, yearly retreats, and study sessions reflect an on-going pattern of Board interest in these matters (IV.B.1.a).

The colleges are charged with carrying out curriculum development, program review, and program viability matters as articulated in Administrative Procedure 6.13.1. Board meeting minutes and reports on study sessions provide evidence of on-going Board expectations for quality, integrity and improvement of student learning programs and services. Skyline College's Balanced Scorecard process reflects the College's method for monitoring these areas (IV.B.1.b).

Board minutes reflect frequent and regular reviews of policies and procedures as evidenced by a complete overhaul of the entire set of Board policies that took three years to complete (IV.B.1.c).

The Board of Trustees has adopted policies that clearly specify the Board's size, duties, responsibilities, structure and operating procedures. The team found evidence that the Board of Trustees acts in a manner consistent with its policies and bylaws (IV.B.1.d).

Board minutes reflect frequent, if not regular review of policies and procedures. (IV.B.1.e) The Board has a program for board development and new member orientation. Board Policy 1.10 calls for new member orientations, study sessions, access to reading materials and support for conference attendance. The team reviewed a list of board members' attendance at Community College League of California sessions in recent years, and the District posts minutes from study sessions (IV.B.1.f).

The Board has completed a self-evaluation every year emphasizing in open session, the importance of welcoming and listening to input from all constituency groups and the public before making decisions, and the importance of being transparent in its decision-making process (IV.B.1.g).

Board Policy 1.35 (Board Member Conduct) complies with the accreditation Standards to have an updated code of ethics. Another Board Policy 2.21 (Professional Ethics) deals with behavior that violates the code of ethics. The District Board has a code of ethics that defines the policy for dealing with behavior that violates its code. BP 1.35, Board Member Conduct, states, "Refusal to adhere to these rules shall constitute misconduct by a Board member and shall be grounds for summary termination by the Board President of the offending Board member's privilege of address." The self-evaluation report states there have been no violations of the code of ethics and thus, there has been no implementation of its provisions (IV.B.1.h).

Minutes of Board meetings and study sessions indicate an active interest in accreditation matters. The Annual Board retreat on February 17, 2013 focused on the Board's role in accreditation and the Board has received "Accreditation and Trustee Roles and Responsibilities," the ACCJC power point, updated in the "Guide to Accreditation for Board Members" (2011-2012).

Participation of the Board is primarily through a reporting relationship, Board meeting reports, study sessions, and the Board retreat. The Board reviews iterations of the self-evaluation report. The Board receives regular reports from the College president on reports due to the Commission, accreditation recommendations, and other matters related to accreditation (IV.B.1.i).

The Board of Trustees has an adopted policy for the selection of the Chancellor as well as an adopted policy for the evaluation of the Chancellor. The Board has evaluated the Chancellor on an annual basis and meets with the Chancellor in closed session to discuss the annual evaluations. The Board of Trustees has delegated full responsibility and authority for the Chancellor to implement and administer board policies without board interference and holds the Chancellor accountable for the operation of the college through the annual evaluation process. A similar process for the selection and evaluation of a College President can be found in board

policy (IV.B.1.j).

The current President has been employed by the college since January 2011 and as outlined in board policy, the team found the President has the responsibility for the quality of the institution by providing effective leadership in all areas of the college including planning, organizing, budgeting, selecting and developing personnel, and assessing institutional effectiveness (IV.B.2.a).

The President has provided leadership in the update and development of the college's mission and vision, strategic planning, review and update of board policies, and institutional development of student learning outcomes and evaluation processes. This leadership provides the overall direction of the college, outlines goals, and links all of the planning processes to its continued growth and development while maintaining the integrity of college processes, institutional practices, and fiscal resources (IVB.2.a, IVB.2.b, IVB.2.c, IVB.2.d).

The President guides institutional improvement of the teaching and learning environment. The College Governance Council is the body through which the President works on all policy decisions. The President uses Skyline Shines, a weekly email address to the college to communicate on matters related to institutional values, goals and direction. Information generated by the PRIE office is communicated regularly with the President, the President's Cabinet, Management Council and other college-wide committees (IV.B.2.b).

In addition to her participation in the aforementioned committees, the President meets individually with the Presidents of the Academic Senate and Associated Students and on an ad hoc basis with representatives of the classified staff union. She also communicates with the College community via opening-day addresses, all-College meetings, and the dissemination of her monthly Board reports, a weekly bulletin and email. A review of several of these communications indicate that she uses these opportunities to highlight happenings and people on campus and to share information and data related to three broad goals she has for the College. Observations of the President's interactions with other college personnel indicate that she is approachable and well respected (IV.B.2.b.4).

The Dean of Planning, Research, and Institutional Effectiveness reports to the College President, indicating a close interest in procedures to evaluate overall institutional planning and implementation efforts (IV.B.2.b.4).

Through regular engagement with College planning and leadership bodies, the president assures the implementation of statutes, and regulations. Also, the President participates on the IPC. The President assures implementation of board policies through participation on the Chancellor's Cabinet and the Chancellor's Council and has effectively controlled the College budget and expenditures (IV.B.2.c).

The direct interaction with community members, encouraging new student success initiatives, and the continuous formation of new partnerships that advance district priorities are all positive examples the team found of the high energy and commitment of the President to the institution and the community. The President is active in a wide range of community organizations and

creates opportunities and structures for community leaders to participate in activities that benefit the college. The President's Council engages leaders from the business, professional and other local organizations in supporting the President's Innovation Fund (IV.B.2.e).

### **Findings and Evidence: DISTRICT**

The SMCCCD Board of Trustees is responsible for governing and setting direction for the entire District, including the assurance of financial stability, responsibility for the quality of programs and services, and for the effectiveness of student learning. The Board is independent, and the individuals and constituencies of the College communities clearly respect the authority of the Board. There is a policy for selecting the chief executive (2.02.1), and a set of policies and procedures that is posted on the District website. One of these, 6.01, is a philosophy and purpose policy that makes reference to the educational mission of the District and establishes a process for regular review of "Core Values and Principles." The 2012 "reaffirmation" of this policy makes reference to the educational/learning purpose of the institution. The Board has set clear, up-to-date, and ambitious goals for itself. The Board also has policies outlining its duties and responsibilities, its philosophy and purpose, mission, values, and principles. The SMCCCD Strategic Plan and Mission combined with the Board's annual goals provide additional guidance regarding the Board's role in assuring program quality, institutional integrity, and the effectiveness of student learning programs and services. Specific policies with regard to Educational Programs and Students Services also inform their efforts to ensure institutional quality (IV.B, IV.B.1, IV.B.1.a, IV.B.1.b).

For the Board's five publicly elected seats, there is policy in accordance with statute regarding the election process and timelines to ensure staggered terms of office. Under the California Voting Rights Act, requiring a determination regarding redistricting, the Board is considering the creation of a geographic-area representation board model in lieu of the current at-large election method, and has determined to resolve this question after the Trustee vacancy is filled by election (IV.B.1.a).

As a publicly elected governing board, the Trustees are representative of the public interest. Moreover, the Board invites public input through its public comment sections on regular meeting agendas. Board members are actively involved in a variety of community organizations as well as serving on this District's Board. In addition to the statements made in the institutional Self-Evaluation, a sampling of recent Board minutes confirms that the Board acts in concert. District Team members attended a meeting of the Board of Trustees and observed their thorough discussion of community opinions needs regarding the three Colleges of the District (IV.B.1.a).

Because the SMCCCD is a public institution, none of the Board members has a financial interest in the institution. The Board has appropriate policies concerning conflict of interest, Board ethics, and related matters. All board members submit conflict of interest statements annually, and there is no evidence of conflicts of interest on the Board, nor any undue influence or pressure. The long tenure of the current Board members, the Board agendas and minutes, and the Board's "Core Principles and Values" document provide evidence that the Board functions as an independent policy-making and final decision-making body. The stability of the Board also would indicate that members serve the public interest and act consistently with the Board policies regarding Board behavior and ethics (IV.B.1.c, IV.B.1.h).

The Board has ultimate responsibility and authority for achievement of the institution's mission. It publishes bylaws and policies on its website, along with contact information so that members of the public may inquire about policies and actions of the Board (IV.B.1.c, IV.B.1.d).

The Board establishes policies consistent with the District's mission. The Board is clearly committed to institutional effectiveness and has policies and processes consistent with this commitment. The Board is informed about specific data regarding student success through documents and reports provided at Board meetings. The Board receives monthly reports from the College Presidents. An on-site review of SMCCCD reports indicates that these reports contain updates on new programs, facilities, activities, as well as accounts of individual student and employee success. The Board reviews financial statements regularly and receives quarterly updates on the financial health of the District and a mid-year budget report. The Self-Evaluation indicates that enrollment reports are presented each semester to the Board and refers to the Board's support of an integrated strategic planning model that incorporates an institutional research component (IV.B.1.b).

The policies that govern the Board's actions are available online. There are specific policies that outline the Board's size, duties, responsibilities, structures, and operating procedures. The Board has established a regular cycle for review of its policies, and periodically updates its policies. Board agendas and minutes indicate that the Board actions are consistent with its policies (IV.B.1.d, IV.B.1.e).

The Board's policy on Trustee roles and responsibilities indicates that Trustees should be knowledgeable of the mission of community colleges, and that they should "engage in ongoing development." It also indicates that they should commit "to a trustee education program that includes new trustee orientation" and to "study sessions ... and other activities that foster trustee education." Numerous study sessions have occurred recently, but the Board does not have a formal, codified program for board development or new member orientation. According to the institutional Self-Evaluation, new Board members are encouraged to attend the CCLC New Trustee Orientation program, and Board members indicated to the Team that they plan to ensure that the new Trustee will be provided a program of orientation. Evidence provided to the Team indicates that Trustees have participated in relevant conferences and feel that they should undertake more of these professional development activities (IV.B.1.f).

The Board's awareness of, and commitment to, the accreditation Standards is reflected in part by the alignment of their Self-Evaluation instrument with the Standards of Accreditation. According to Board policy, each board member completes a self-evaluation form that examines 10 areas of governance. Tabulated results are then shared with the Board and discussed at a public Board meeting. The most recent Board Self-Evaluation was conducted in March 2013. With few exceptions, the Board routinely conducts its Self-Evaluation on an annual basis (IV.B.1.g).

Through study sessions at Board meetings and documents, the Board has become knowledgeable about the Standards of Accreditation and the efforts made by the Colleges to address the Standards and fulfill recommendations. The District has a coordinating council chaired by the Vice Chancellor for Educational Services and Planning, which has ensured there are ample opportunities for the Board to be informed about the College's progress and about the

accreditation process generally. The Board receives regular reports on the College's accreditation-related processes and approves all accreditation-related documents. All Board members received and reviewed a copy of the ACCJC PowerPoint presentation "Accreditation and Trustee Roles and Responsibilities" and the updated *Guide to Accreditation for Board Members* in September of 2012. They also participated in an extensive Trustee Training Session on accreditation in February 2013. Conference attendance has provided other opportunities for Board members to learn about accreditation (IV.B.1.i).

The Board has a policy that establishes the process for selecting the District Chancellor, and another policy that includes a method of evaluation of the Chancellor. The Board also has established a comparable policy for the method of evaluation for each of the College Presidents. The Team verified that these policies have been fully and consistently implemented. The Board also has written procedures for selecting and evaluating the District Chancellor, who is the chief executive officer of the District. Due to the Chancellor's long tenure, there has not been a need to implement the selection process since 2001. The Board has used the evaluation process, with evaluative discussions having occurred as recently as September 2013. The Chancellor is evaluated based on goals mutually agreed upon by the Board of Trustees and the Chancellor, together with an established instrument (IV.B.1.j).

There is also a clearly defined process for selecting and evaluating the College Presidents. The most recent Presidential searches and hires in the District adhered to these processes (IV.B.1.j).

Board Policy 8.02 delegates administrative authority to the Chancellor to supervise general business procedures to assure proper administration of property and contracts, the budget, audit and accounting of funds, the acquisition of supplies, equipment and property, and the protection of assets and individuals. It appears that the Board abides by this delegation of authority and that they are properly engaged at the policy level. The team concluded that the Board has fully delegated responsibility to the Chancellor for administering and overseeing the operation of the District. Interviews during the Team visit indicated that there is no sense of Board micromanagement of the Chancellor or other administrators that would impede the normal decision-making processes for both the District and the College (IV.B.1.j).

Board policy 8.02 authorizes the Chancellor to delegate his powers and duties to authorized personnel. The policy also states that the Presidents of the Colleges are responsible to the Chancellor for the development of all aspects of the educational and student services programs of and for the administration and operations at their Colleges. Board policy 2.0 states that each President, as the College Chief Executive Officer, is responsible for implementation of District policies at the College (IV.B.2).

In 2007, the District Shared Governance Council created the District's first functional mapping document. In 2008, the District convened Delineation of Functions Review Committee (DFRC) to assume responsibility for updating this map as needed. A review of minutes indicates that the 2007 document has been reviewed in 2010 and in 2013. However, it appears that the 2013 document has not yet been officially adopted by the Chancellor's Council, due to concerns about the mapping at one or more of the Colleges (IV.B.3.a).

A review of the District's website and documents indicates that the District provides centralized support for the College in the areas of business services, facilities planning and operations, public safety, human resources and employee relations, educational services and planning, information technology services, auxiliary services, and community and governmental relations. The visiting team reviewed documents indicating that various District functions have evaluated their services, including Facilities Planning and Operations, Facilities Maintenance and Operations, Administrative Services, and Auxiliary Services. There is no documentation, however, describing the review process and timelines for the ongoing review of all District services (IV.B.3.b).

Documents and interviews with District personnel indicate that the District implemented its current Resource Allocation Model in 2006–07. This model has been evaluated and modified based on recommendations made by the District Committee on Budget and Finance (DCBF). Currently approximately 85% of the District's resources are provided to the Colleges and 80% of the District's revenues are allocated based on set formulas. The District budgeting process is responsive to the needs of the Colleges as identified by program review. Now that the District is a Basic Aid district, the DCBF is considering a revision of the Resource Allocation Model that would provide a base-funding component and not only include FTES criteria but also the use of outcomes-based incentives in the distribution (IV.B.3.c).

The College and District expenditure processes and procedures provide adequate financial control mechanisms. The District has established a College Internal Audit Group to review and revise procedures for expenditure processes that do not flow through Banner, and to verify that expenditures are legitimate expenses. District audits have produced no adverse financial findings and the District has a positive ending balance and necessary reserves. Finally, the District has Bond and Measure G Citizens' Oversight Committees to ensure these dollars are spent appropriately (IV.B.3.d).

The Chancellor provides the College Presidents with the full responsibility and authority for all aspects of the educational and student services programs and for the administration and operations at their Colleges. The Chancellor also holds the Presidents accountable for their performance through the annual administrative performance evaluation process. A review of the evaluation instrument shows that this evaluation is based primarily on the degree to which the President has achieved his or her stated goals. The Chancellor's interactions with the College Presidents during meetings and his review of information presented in their monthly Board reports provide additional opportunities for the Chancellor to assess their effectiveness (IV.B.3.e).

Various structures provide opportunities for the District and College to work together. Meeting schedules and minutes indicate that the Presidents meet weekly with the Chancellor via their membership on the Chancellor's Cabinet and Chancellor's Council. Other District committees, including the District Research Council, the Distance Education Advisory Committee, and the District Joint VP Council, provide additional opportunities for the District and College to work together. The visiting team experienced some difficulty in evaluating the effectiveness of some District committees due to the fact that their recent meeting minutes and materials are on SharePoint and only available to committee members (IV.B.3.f).



As noted, the District engages in a regular assessment and modification of its Functional Mapping. In addition, the District departments assessed their services during the past accreditation cycle. Board minutes confirmed that the Board conducts an annual Self-Evaluation to evaluate its effectiveness, regularly reviews the District's Policies, and reviews progress on its goals and objectives each spring. The District Participatory Governance Committee and other governance and administrative groups also provide mechanisms for evaluating the District's procedures, governance, processes, and relevant Board policies (IV.B.3.g).

### **Conclusion**

The College meets the Standard due to responsible stewardship by the District's Board of Trustees, the District Chancellor, and the College President. The Board understands and fulfills its role in establishing policies to assure quality, integrity, and effectiveness of student learning and educational programs and services. The Board acts in accordance with its policies, and delegates authority and responsibility appropriately to the Chancellor, who in turn delegates authority and responsibility to the College President for the operation of the College. Programs, services, and CEOs are evaluated in accordance with the Standard and policy. Financial support is adequate, with appropriate review and participation. Leadership and governance operate effectively within the SMCCCD and the institution.

### **Recommendations**

#### District Recommendation 2

In order to improve institutional effectiveness, the Board of Trustees should develop goals for increasing its professional development and orientation of new Trustees (IV.B.1.f)

#### District Recommendation 3

In order to improve institutional effectiveness, the District should establish a regular cycle for the evaluation of its services and provide documentation regarding the outcomes of the evaluations (IV.B.3.b, IV.B.3.g).