

# Los Rios

COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT

strategic plan 2006

*working together for the future*

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## INTRODUCTION

## INTRODUCTION

The 2006 Strategic Plan presents the goals and strategic directions the District will pursue to respond to the changing educational needs of the Greater Sacramento region. Developed during the 2005-2006 academic year, the plan reflects the input of constituencies based at the Colleges and educational centers of the District, and incorporates the major findings of research on District and regional workforce and demographic trends.

### **Purpose**

The Plan expands the District's commitment to strategic planning by stimulating new thinking to help the District respond to the needs of the Los Rios service area while addressing economic, demographic, and community trends. By reflecting on past accomplishments, reviewing challenges and opportunities, and relating current issues to research findings and trends, the plan provides a starting point for problem solving and strategy development at multiple levels. The District's commitment to strategic planning ensures that District policies and processes respond to the internal and external factors influencing education in the Greater Sacramento region.

### **Approach**

The 2006 Strategic Plan is built upon the framework established by the District's 1997 Strategic Plan, which was updated in 2002. Both the 2002 and 2006 planning processes tested the 1997 framework to ensure that the established goals continued to provide a viable planning structure for the District. Using this framework, the District then embarked on an extensive update process. Over the past academic year, the Strategic Planning Coordinating Committee (SPCC) has refined and updated the goals and strategies to reflect current needs and opportunities.



## PLANNING PROCESS

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The Strategic Plan was developed with input from a number of different constituencies throughout the Los Rios community. In addition, key data from a number of different sources informed the plan strategies and future directions.

### **Staff, Faculty and Student Participation in the Plan Update**

Over the past academic year, staff, faculty, and students across the District provided input in a number of ways. In addition, the District interviewed Board of Trustee representatives to include their perspective in the planning process. This input was integral to the development of this plan. Student, faculty, and staff were able to provide feedback through the following activities:

#### *Strategic Planning Coordinating Committee (SPCC)*

The Strategic Planning Coordinating Committee (SPCC) is composed of members of the Chancellor's executive staff, Academic Senate presidents, college presidents, Classified Senate presidents, and student government presidents. The SPCC met regularly during the 2005-2006 academic year to provide input and oversight for the planning process. The SPCC also formed working groups to further develop and refine strategies and future directions.

#### *College Leadership Sessions*

Each college conducted leadership strategic planning discussions with staff, faculty, and students in October and November 2005. Participants discussed the Colleges' accomplishments over the past three to five years and identified important issues and challenges they believed the plan should address.

#### *Student Focus Group*

Student representatives from each of the four colleges participated in a focus group. Twenty students took part in the discussion and completed a written questionnaire. The results of the focus group are available on the plan website, located at <http://www.losriosstrategicplan.org/>.

#### *Planning Charrette*

A daylong planning charrette held in December 2005 engaged more than 160 staff, students, and faculty members from across the District in plenary and small group discussions. The charrette also included a presentation of the results of an environmental scan produced by the Office of Planning and Research that shared critical data and trends in the region.

#### *College Review Sessions*

Faculty, staff, and students were invited to review the draft goals and strategies in the plan during sessions held at each college and at the District that were facilitated by consultant staff. Participants reviewed and discussed the draft plan and provided feedback.

### **Strategic Planning Tools & Resources**

The updated strategic plan integrates current data from a number of sources, including a comprehensive environmental scan, an interactive project website, and surveys of District employees and students.

#### *Environmental Scan*

The environmental scan of the Los Rios service area offered critical information about demographic trends, social and economic directions, and educational patterns in the region. Prepared by the District's Office of Planning and Research, the scan provided important data and trends analysis to inform the District's decision making.

### *Website*

The website for the Los Rios Strategic Plan Update (located at <http://www.losriosstrategicplan.org/>) provided participants and the general public with information about the planning process and products. Plan drafts were also posted on the site. The site included a calendar of key dates for district-wide meetings, Strategic Planning Coordinating Committee meetings, and other events related to the plan update.

### *Surveys*

The Strategic Plan was also informed by data from the Noel-Levitz survey, a student satisfaction questionnaire conducted at colleges and universities throughout the United States. The employee satisfaction survey conducted by the District in April 2006 provided additional information.

# District-wide Strategic Planning Process 2006





## CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES

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The Strategic Plan responds to the trends, challenges, and opportunities identified through the environmental scan conducted by the District's Office of Planning and Research. The scan highlighted the following external and internal factors that will influence the District and the Colleges in the next three to five years. A wide range of factors will shape the District's growth and the community's needs in the coming years: population growth, ethnic and racial diversity, academic preparedness of graduating high school students, and workforce needs. As California economies shift and new needs arise, the District and Colleges must be positioned to respond to these changes and prepare students for new opportunities. In addition, the plan must consider needed changes and growth in the physical environments at each of the Colleges and education centers.

### **Demographic Changes**

The District is experiencing rapid population growth and is projected to grow by 13.6 percent to 1.97 million people by 2010 and to 2.2 million people by 2015, a 27.3 percent increase. The number of high school graduates in the region is projected to increase by 17.2 percent by 2012 from its 2004 level of 16,728.

In addition, the population of the region—and of the Colleges—will continue to diversify. Currently, nearly 40 percent of the population in the Sacramento region is nonwhite. By 2020, 61 percent of the population is projected to be nonwhite. The diversity among the school-age and high school graduate populations is even more pronounced: over half of all K-12 students in the region are nonwhite, and 45.5 percent of 2004 high school graduates are students of color.

Census 2000 data also indicate that a quarter of Sacramento County residents and a third of Yolo County residents speak a language other than English at home, with Spanish as the primary alternate language spoken. Given the number of English language learners in the lower elementary grades, Los Rios Colleges may see growing numbers of students speaking Spanish, Hmong, Russian, Vietnamese, Ukrainian, and Cantonese over the next several years.

The 2005 environmental scan also indicated that, for the first time in many years, poverty levels in the Greater Sacramento region are beginning to drop. However, nearly one fifth of children in the Los Rios service area continue to live in poverty.

### **Regional Economic Trends**

The Greater Sacramento region has experienced strong employment growth over the last five years. While some of the region's traditional industries—including farming, natural resources and mining, and manufacturing—have declined in recent years, jobs have grown at a rate of 11.2 percent overall, twice the statewide average rate of 5.3 percent. Locally, growth has occurred in a range of areas, including construction; finance, insurance, and real estate; education and health services; leisure and hospitality services; and retail trade. The business services and trade sectors now comprise half of all regional employment, and the region hosts more than 100 biotech and medical device companies. Over the next three years, the region projects high growth in the fields of nursing, computer support, and health technology, all positions requiring two-year degrees. High growth occupations requiring some level of career and technical training also include administrative assistants, health field aides and assistants, teaching assistants, and carpenters.

### **Educational Challenges**

Over the next several years, new students will need more basic skills remediation, and more students with language barriers may enroll in the District. The changing demographics of the Los Rios service area mean that the educational preparedness of entering students is also changing. In particular, new

immigrants and English language learners may need additional support as they enter the community college system to overcome educational barriers and become successful. While K-12 performance indicators show improvement and education levels for adults ages 25 and older have increased, there are some indicators that identify potential challenges for Los Rios faculty and staff. Results from the California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE) are mixed. Overall, students residing in the counties of the LRCCD service area did as well as or better than their counterparts statewide on the CAHSEE in 2004-2005. However, African American and Latino students fared poorly on both local and statewide levels. And, while comparable percentages of male (65.4 percent) and female (66.3 percent) students passed the mathematics portion of the CAHSEE, far more females (73.6 percent) than males (62.1 percent) passed the English-language arts (ELA) portion of the exam in the LRCCD service area.

## **Physical Environment and Resources**

The Los Rios Colleges and educational centers have grown both physically and programmatically since the 2002 strategic plan update. The addition of Folsom Lake College and new centers in Rancho Cordova, West Sacramento, and Natomas has helped the District keep pace with the growing educational demands of the region. The District has been successful at attracting quality staff and faculty for its growing base of facilities.

Distance education is also evolving to become one of many options faculty and institutional planners can use to reach students, along with outreach centers, alternative scheduling, and community-based education. The District has made a substantial investment in its technology infrastructure, and use of technology is increasing throughout the District's programs and services. The District must maintain this commitment and continue to assess the results of student learning using technology, while ensuring that the technology infrastructure is maintained and kept up-to-date. Faculty, staff, and students will also need ongoing training and support to keep their skills current.

## **Student Success**

Student success is a critical factor for the District, and an important function of the District is to support the Los Rios Colleges and educational centers as they work to increase persistence and course success rates for all students. Over the past five years, persistence rates for students in the Los Rios Colleges have increased gradually, from 58.1 percent in Fall 2000 to 61.2 percent in Fall 2004. As more young students—who tend to persist at higher rates than their older peers—enroll, this trend is likely to continue. However, the overall persistence rate for new high school graduates and other first-time college students has fallen from 80.3 percent in Fall 2000 to 77.2 percent in Fall 2004, a potential concern.

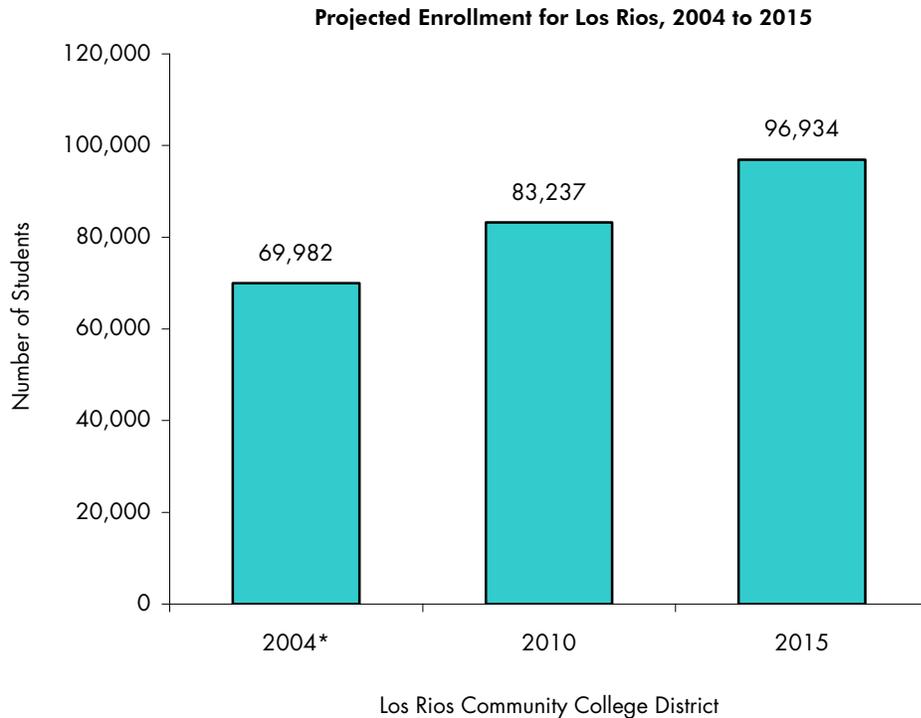
Younger students between the ages of 18 and 20 constitute over a quarter of the District's students. However, the course success rate for these students is among the lowest of all Los Rios cohorts. Through the Education Initiative, the District has committed to providing sustained attention to these students by providing additional support services to help them transition successfully from high school to community college and ultimately to the workforce or to transfer institutions.

Also, with the majority of Los Rios students combining work, education, and family—a pattern that is increasingly common—there is a need to align traditional academic, career, and technical tracks in innovative ways. Many of our students will move between the academic and professional worlds throughout their careers instead of following the more traditional pattern of full-time college attendance.

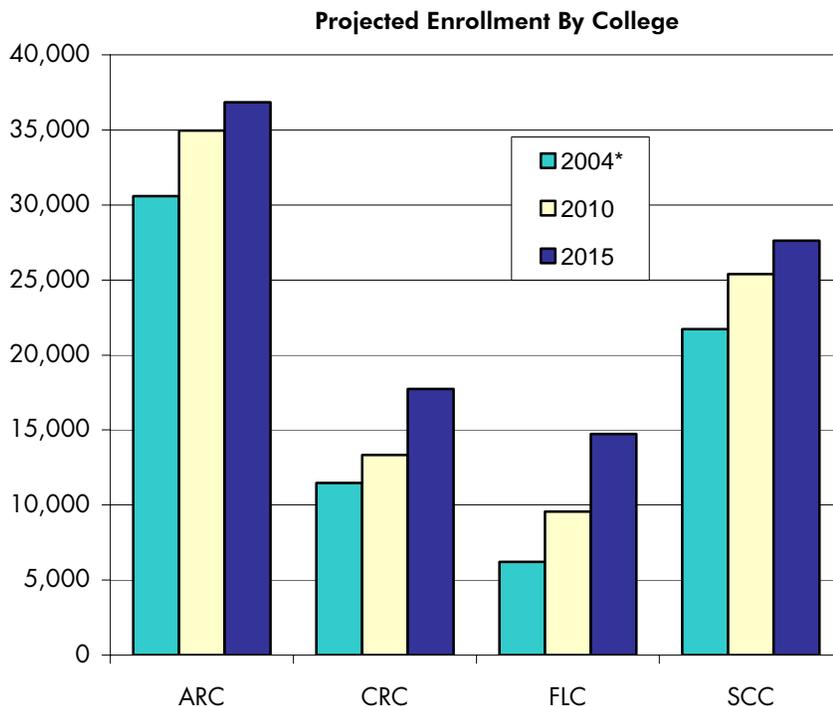
## **Enrollment Growth**

Enrollment at the Los Rios Colleges and education centers is growing rapidly among students ages 18 to 24. Between 2000 and 2004, enrollment for students ages 21 to 24 grew 25 percent, while enrollment for students ages 18 to 20 grew nearly 18 percent. The growth rate for older students has not followed this trend, however. Instead, enrollment fell for students ages 30 and over, and grew only 11 percent for

students ages 25 to 29. As the number of high school graduates in the region increases, however, the number of younger students and new high school graduates in the Los Rios Colleges may also continue to grow.



Enrollment at all four colleges is projected to grow over the next decade, with the student population at Folsom Lake College projected to double by 2015. The student body will also continue to grow more diverse throughout the District.



\* 2004 figures reflect actual data as reported to the MIS of the State Chancellor's Office.

## **Collaboration and Coordination**

There are clear opportunities for coordination and resource sharing across the Colleges that will allow the District to maintain the centrality of the college experience and the autonomy of each school while leveraging common strengths. Each college has unique resources and features because of where it is located and how long it has been established. However, the District can also create additional space for collaboration and coordination across the Colleges to enrich the experiences of faculty, staff, and students.



## PLAN FRAMEWORK

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The Strategic Plan incorporates the District's vision, mission, and values to shape goals and strategies and direct long-term planning for the Los Rios District and Colleges. The Plan includes five elements, as illustrated in the following chart:

- **Vision.** The preferred future for the system.
- **Mission.** The core focus areas of the District.
- **Values.** Qualities and principles that will guide implementation of the plan.
- **Goals.** Directions for change.
- **Strategies.** Specific initiatives that will implement the plan.



The following statements guide all District activities and decision-making processes:

### Vision Statement

We, the Los Rios community colleges, provide outstanding programs and services so that all students meet and exceed their personal, educational, career, and social goals. We meet the social and economic needs of the community.

### Mission Statement

Relying on their professional and organizational excellence, the Los Rios community colleges:

- Provide outstanding undergraduate education, offering programs that lead to certificates, associate degrees, and transfer;
- Provide excellent career and technical educational programs that prepare students for job entry and job advancement through improved skills and knowledge, including the demands of new technologies;

- Provide a comprehensive range of student development programs and services that support student success and enrich student life;
- Provide educational services that address needs in basic skills, English as a second language, and lifelong learning; and
- Promote the social and economic development of the region by educating the workforce and offering responsive programs such as service learning, business partnerships, workforce literacy, training, and economic development centers.

## **Values**

We value: students, community, academic excellence, diversity, relationships, and participatory governance. The District's values provide the guidance and inspiration for implementing and maintaining programs to promote student success.

### *Students As Our Highest Priority*

*Student Access:* We are committed to providing educational opportunity to all who can benefit in the Greater Sacramento region.

*Student Success:* We strive to help our students achieve success in their educations, in their careers, and as contributing members of society.

*Lifelong Learning:* We inspire a spirit of openness and intellectual curiosity as enduring pursuits.

### *Community*

*Serving the Community:* We serve the needs and goals of our communities.

*Social and Economic Development of the Community:* Los Rios supports the social and economic development of our region.

### *Academic Excellence*

*Quality:* We strive for the highest quality in all programs, services, and activities.

*Academic Rigor:* Los Rios' educational standards emphasize critical thinking and high quality educational experiences. Faculty members challenge themselves and their students to prepare for the future by expanding the body of knowledge in an atmosphere of thoughtful, unfettered expression, discussion, testing, and proof of ideas.

*Career and Professional Development:* We encourage and promote the continuous professional development of all administrators, staff, and faculty.

*Academic Integrity:* Los Rios exhibits academic integrity by demonstrating forthright, honest and ethical behavior in all interactions.

### *Diversity*

*Building Community:* We recognize and value the strengths of our diverse backgrounds and perspectives and seek to build a community in which all constituencies are highly qualified.

*Social Justice:* Because diverse perspectives support the District's commitment to equality, equity, and justice, our communities are best served by ensuring that all populations are represented equitably throughout the Los Rios community colleges.

### ***Relationships***

We believe productive working relationships are central to achieving our mission.

*Respect, Civility, Collegiality, and Ethical Integrity:* These hallmarks of a collegial environment enhance our cooperative efforts and shared use of resources for providing education, training, student services, and community service.

*Blame-Free Culture:* Los Rios strives to create a supportive, problem-solving culture, and we recognize the proven usefulness of an interest-based approach (IBA) for achieving cooperation and effective problem solving.

### ***Participatory Governance***

*The Contributions of All Our Members:* All members of the Los Rios community are encouraged to contribute to our organizational success.

*Informed and Decentralized Decision Making:* We value informed decisions made by people close to the issues.

*Democratic Practices:* We observe democratic practices in our internal governance.

*Financial Stability:* Our continuing success is based on careful management of our resources.



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## GOALS & STRATEGIES

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The 2006 Strategic Plan comprises a series of strategies linked to the District's five primary goal areas: Student Success; Teaching and Learning Effectiveness; Access and Growth; Community, Economic and Workforce Development; and Organizational Effectiveness. Each strategy is designed to further the goal it addresses and to shape the future of the District and the Colleges.

### **District Goals:**

#### **A. *Student Success***

Our primary goal is to promote student success. This success is reflected in students' performance at our colleges as well as in their later achievements in education and the workplace. We also look at the intellectual skills that students develop while at Los Rios, such as critical thinking and the ability and desire to engage in lifelong learning. Student success also measures the education of the whole person for engaging in an increasingly complex and interconnected world.

#### **B. *Teaching & Learning Effectiveness***

We are committed to providing the highest quality instructional programs in transfer, vocational and general education, using the best current and emerging instructional methods and technologies. The District promotes flexible teaching and learning methods to support the success of its diverse student population.

#### **C. *Access & Growth***

As a community-based institution, the District strives to be responsive to the growing communities of the Greater Sacramento region. To meet the challenges of population growth, we pursue new delivery approaches to provide a high level of access to education. We also provide comprehensive support services to assure access by reducing or eliminating significant barriers and by promoting diversity. We are committed to ensuring that students from a wide variety of backgrounds have an equal chance to achieve their educational goals.

#### **D. *Community, Economic & Workforce Development***

We seek to promote the health and economic vitality of the region. As a community resource, the District and its Colleges contribute to community life through partnerships, staff involvement in civic affairs, and programs that are open to the public. The District and Colleges also support economic development through their occupational programs and partnerships with business, labor, and industry.

#### **E. *Organizational Effectiveness***

Our organizational processes play a critical role in student success and overall institutional effectiveness. Los Rios will continually improve its organizational processes in order to enhance its institutional effectiveness and ensure its fiscal accountability and integrity.

## Overview of Goals and Strategies

The following table summarizes the goals and associated strategies.

<i>Goal</i>	<i>Strategies</i>
A. Student Success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A1. Focus on the Entire Student Experience</li> <li>A2. Comprehensive Student Support Services</li> <li>A3. Student Assessment</li> <li>A4. Changing Community Demographics</li> <li>A5. Campus and Community Engagement</li> <li>A6. Student Access to Technology</li> <li>A7. Los Rios Students as Global Citizens</li> </ul>
B. Teaching & Learning Effectiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>B1. Student-Centered Decision Making</li> <li>B2. Meeting the Needs of All Learners</li> <li>B3. Distance Education</li> <li>B4. Coordinated Program Development</li> <li>B5. International Education</li> <li>B6. Assessment of Program and Service Outcomes</li> </ul>
C. Access & Growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>C1. Enrollment Management Plans</li> <li>C2. Outreach to Underserved Populations</li> <li>C3. Facilities and Technology</li> <li>C4. Educational Centers</li> <li>C5. Student-Centered Enrollment Process</li> </ul>
D. Community, Economic & Workforce Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>D1. Community Needs Assessment</li> <li>D2. Responsive Economic Development and Workforce Preparation Programs</li> <li>D3. Community Philanthropy and Resource Development</li> </ul>
E. Organizational Effectiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>E1. Institutional Capacity for Diversity</li> <li>E2. Integration of Technology in Planning and Project Delivery</li> <li>E3. Staffing</li> <li>E4. Business and Human Resource Process Streamlining</li> <li>E5. Participatory Decision Making</li> <li>E6. Budget and Planning Process Integration</li> <li>E7. Joint Purchasing and Shared Resources</li> <li>E8. Promoting Health and Safety</li> <li>E9. Professional Development</li> <li>E10. Marketing the Colleges of Los Rios</li> <li>E11. Grant Seeking and Grant Management Support</li> </ul>

## A : STUDENT SUCCESS

### A1. Focus on the Entire Student Experience

Create opportunities for students to have complete educational experiences that integrate engagement in college community, mentoring, effective support services, and instructional innovation.



The Los Rios student experience encompasses both a strong academic component and the comprehensive personal development of the student as an individual. Both are critical factors in student and program success, and the District must support all elements of the full student experience.

#### *Future Directions:*

- Support the development of engaging student-centered learning environments and opportunities that meet the needs of highly diverse students.
- Implement best practices as identified through the Education Initiative.
- Increase the number of students who participate in supportive learning communities, based on best practices from programs such as MESA and Puente.
- Integrate learning outcomes into the design of student learning experiences.
- Provide students with the support necessary to be successful in order to increase persistence and retention rates.
- Anticipate the varying levels of academic preparedness of incoming students.

### A2. Comprehensive Student Support Services

Provide all students with access to high quality, comprehensive student services appropriate to the needs of each student.

Student support services are essential for students to be successful in higher education. It is critical that students are able to access the services wherever they are—on or off campus. There must also be coordination and continuity across the Colleges so that the advice and procedures in place at one college achieve the same results at another.

#### *Future Directions:*

- Coordinate student service solutions across the Colleges to provide continuity and address common academic support needs.
- Conduct an inventory of existing student services, locations, and delivery modes.
- Explore options for providing student support services via distance education technologies for those who are unable or unwilling to come to a college campus.
- Ensure that faculty and staff are knowledgeable about available student services so they can direct students appropriately.

- Provide access to student services for distance or online learning students as well as students who attend educational centers.
- Assess student services programs on a regular basis and use assessment results to make needed improvements.

### **A3. Student Assessment**

Enhance student needs assessment for individual educational planning and for institutional planning.

Individual assessments provide students with guidance and counseling to accurately assess their skills and identify which courses and instructional modes will best support learning. Collectively, this assessment data can inform the District of changing student needs and provide the Colleges with a better understanding of student success factors.

#### *Future Directions:*

- Provide counseling and guidance to support students in the identification and selection of appropriate course levels and instructional modalities.
- Help students develop an accurate assessment of their needs, basic skills, learning styles, and proficiency with technology.
- Provide regular and ongoing independent objective assessments of changing student needs and communicate these needs to District and College leadership.
- Strengthen the ability of individual colleges to conduct research leading to a better understanding of student success factors.

### **A4. Changing Community Demographics**

Implement a range of strategies to ensure that the Colleges adapt to the changing needs of our communities.

Currently, our student population ranges from high school youth to mid-career adults to seniors. Twenty percent of our students are Asian, 16 percent are Latino, 12 percent are African American, and 1.5 percent are Native American. Almost 60 percent of our students are female. These demographics will change as the region grows dramatically over the next 15 years. To serve our students well, we must recognize who they are and anticipate and support what they will need.

#### *Future Directions:*

- Hire faculty and staff that reflect the changing demographics of the Los Rios service area.
- Cultivate a climate of inclusion and encourage opportunities for participation in campus activities.
- Support the Colleges' provision of intervention and support services for low-performing students and continue to enhance student support programs.
- Support the Colleges' review and development of curricula that use the strength of our diversity to reach a broader audience.
- Provide training and support for faculty and staff to work successfully in a multicultural environment.

## **A5. Campus and Community Engagement**

Provide a variety of engagement opportunities on campus, online, and in the community.

Students engaged in campus activities are better informed and more likely to use services that contribute to their success. A vibrant campus life encourages participation and provides opportunities for students to apply the critical thinking skills developed in the classroom to real world discussions with their peers, staff, faculty, and community members.

### *Future Directions:*

- Promote a sense of connectivity to the Colleges through innovative programs, activities, events, and student involvement opportunities, including opportunities for evening and weekend students.
- Strengthen and increase opportunities for students to engage in activities based in the community including internships, hands-on-learning experiences, and service activities.

## **A6. Student Access to Technology**

Increase student access to educational tools and technology.

To remain competitive in the current job market and keep up with education trends, students must have regular access to technology to complete their coursework. As online tools are used increasingly, both in distance and traditional classes, students who are without computers, primarily for economic reasons, will continue to be at an increasing disadvantage.

### *Future Directions:*

- Increase access to college-owned computers and other technology that students will use in learning.
- Explore cost-effective opportunities for students to acquire educational technology.
- Partner with other institutions (e.g., education, business, industry, labor) to increase access to educational technology.

## **A7. Los Rios Students as Global Citizens**

Support efforts to prepare students to succeed in a global society.

Los Rios students must be prepared to live, work, and interact in a world that is increasingly connected and interdependent. Being globally competent is a marketable skill that crosscuts all areas of education, communications, language, and business. Encouraging Los Rios students to interact with students from other countries and to study abroad can help deepen students' understanding and awareness of our connection to a larger, global society.

### *Future Direction:*

- Support efforts across the Colleges to develop a common focus, priority, and understanding of our students' role in an increasingly global society.



## B : TEACHING AND LEARNING EFFECTIVENESS

### B1. Student-Centered Decision Making

Ensure that student needs and learning outcomes take precedence in all planning and decision-making processes.

Student needs must be at the heart of all decision making in the District and the Colleges. By using student learning outcomes and success data as the basis for planning, the District and Colleges can ensure that efforts to support students' academic goals, connections to transfer institutions, and employment opportunities are succeeding.

#### *Future Directions:*

- Consider student needs at the outset and at key milestones of educational and planning processes.
- Conduct regular assessments of student needs and success measures and convey results to College and District leaders.

### B2. Meeting the Needs of All Learners

Encourage use of effective educational practices for all learners.

Faculty rely on a diversity of teaching styles and educational strategies to keep pace with a changing student body and to support student learning in an environment with limited resources, rapidly changing workforce needs, and varying levels of student preparedness. The District should encourage faculty to continue to explore innovative teaching practices to ensure that the learning needs of all students are met.

#### *Future Directions:*

- Encourage faculty to use innovative instruction practices.
- Conduct classroom-based research, assess best practices, and disseminate results.
- Encourage faculty to increase opportunities for student-faculty interaction.
- Encourage faculty to incorporate multiple methods of student participation in classes.

### B3. Distance Education

Support high-quality distance education as an option for increasing access and promoting student success.

As the use of distance education has increased over the past five years, so has the need to support the development of distance education and to leverage innovations and best practices across the Colleges. Distance education opportunities must continue to share the same high standards as traditional courses and students need to be supported so they can develop the skills to keep pace with changing technology. Staff and faculty must also receive support to ensure their competency in the use of these technologies.

#### *Future Directions:*

- Integrate distance modes into college educational planning processes.

- Support the Colleges' development of budgeting tools for distance education classes, training, and support.
- Conduct a district-wide inventory of best practices for faculty support services, student academic and technical support services, Blackboard infrastructure support, and training.
- Explore options for coordinating program and course offerings in distance education to maximize student choice and access.
- Conduct ongoing assessments of student success for distance education students using accepted student achievement standards.
- Promote professional development to support high-quality distance education.
- Support the Colleges' development of standards for program implementation and evaluation.

#### **B4. Coordinated Program Development**

Support the Colleges in their efforts to determine appropriate locations and strategies for program delivery.

With rapidly changing needs and high infrastructure costs, it is not possible or necessary for each college to offer the same programs. The District should facilitate discussions that support collaborative decision making about resource allocation and program placement across the Colleges.

##### *Future Directions:*

- Facilitate discussion among the Colleges regarding the placement of programs across the District, especially those with high infrastructure costs.
- Work closely with transfer institutions to develop programs that support career and academic advancement and ease transfer to receiving institutions.
- Coordinate with labor, business, and industry partners to develop programs that support workforce development needs.

#### **B5. International Education**

Develop a comprehensive and integrated vision for international education within the District.

Since 2001, the enrollment of international students at Los Rios has dropped from almost 1,000 to 450 students across the Colleges. At the same time, efforts to encourage Los Rios students to study abroad have become the responsibility of the individual colleges. The District needs to develop a vision and strategies to provide an appropriate level of support for these activities at the Colleges.

##### *Future Directions:*

- Determine the priority and level of resources that will be directed toward addressing the needs of international students studying at the Los Rios Colleges.
- Determine the priority and level of resources that will be directed toward supporting and encouraging Los Rios students to study abroad.

#### **B6. Assessment of Program and Service Outcomes**

Conduct regular assessments of programs and services.

Programs and services must be assessed on a regular basis to ensure that student needs are being met. With expanding career options and changing workforce needs, keeping pace with the development of programs and services is crucial to effectively support the Colleges and communities we serve.

*Future Directions:*

- Establish a regular evaluation process to assess programs and services, and use assessment results to make needed improvements.
- Use the results of the assessment process to inform and adjust student learning outcomes.

## C : ACCESS & GROWTH

### C1. Enrollment Management Plans

Develop enrollment management plans to provide programs and facilities to accommodate the projected growth of the Greater Sacramento region, to manage student enrollment changes, and to ensure accessibility of quality programs that meet the needs of diverse students and communities.



Over the next decade, the Greater Sacramento region is projected to grow by over 27 percent, or nearly 500,000 residents. This translates to a projected increase in enrollment of almost 25,000 students during that same time frame. Enrollment management plans will help the District and Colleges determine how to respond to increasing enrollment while continuing to provide high quality programs and services.

#### *Future Directions:*

- Provide programs and facilities to meet enrollment growth while maintaining flexibility to adapt to the changing needs of students and regional employers.
- Develop campus and center facilities to maximize access to programs and services throughout the region.
- Support coordination between the Colleges, high schools, other higher educational institutions, and employers.
- Create a campus climate that is desirable and attractive to our student population to ensure that they remain connected to and engaged in the whole college experience.
- Enhance outreach, persistence and retention efforts to improve enrollment levels.
- Provide College and center facilities to meet program and enrollment demands.

### C2. Outreach to Underserved Populations

Increase awareness of community college educational opportunities to the changing demographic base of the district service area.

The District must expand efforts to reach underserved communities, especially those whose residents do not traditionally seek higher levels of education and career and technical training. By creating innovative outreach programs, a culture of inclusion and effective strategies to remove barriers to access, the District can attract students who reflect the diversity of the region.

#### *Future Directions:*

- Expand outreach efforts to ensure that all members of the community are aware of community college education opportunities.
- Ensure that District publications and other marketing media include imagery that reflects the diversity of the students and communities we serve.

- Focus recruitment on selected geographical locations and communities that include larger numbers of underrepresented groups.
- Identify and address both real and perceived barriers to enrolling and completing District programs.
- Create a campus environment and programs and services that are welcoming to all students.

### **C3. Facilities and Technology**

Continue to develop facilities and technologies throughout the District that support program development.

The District's efforts to support responsive programs at the Colleges will be successful only if they are accompanied by a commitment to provide the necessary facilities and technology. The District must provide resources for maintenance, upgrades, and new innovations as technology changes.

#### *Future Directions:*

- Review facility and technology needs to ensure that they are keeping pace with program development.
- Develop a plan to maintain the currency and capacity of facilities and technologies in order to support student learning.

### **C4. Educational Centers**

Use educational centers to provide highly accessible learning facilities and localized services and to serve as gateways to the main campuses.

The educational centers are often a student's first introduction to a community college education and can serve as steppingstones to degree or certificate completion at the Colleges or to transfer to a four-year institution. The District should emphasize the role the centers play in providing flexibility to meet changing enrollment demands and to serve the needs of the lifelong learner.

#### *Future Directions:*

- Provide continued support and enhancement of programs, facilities and services at the District's educational centers.
- Locate centers to maximize student access to public transit.

### **C5. Student-Centered Enrollment Process**

Ensure that all students attracted to the Colleges can successfully register for programs and services.

The District's ability to retain students attracted to the Colleges' high-quality programs and services is often limited by difficulties with enrollment, course selection, and financial aid processes. Addressing these barriers can have a positive impact on student enrollment and retention and encourage high-need students to seek career and educational advancement opportunities.

#### *Future Direction:*

- Evaluate and improve the enrollment experience, including registration, assessment, orientation, and placement, to ensure that processes can be easily accessed and used by all students.



## D : COMMUNITY, ECONOMIC & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

### **D1. Community Needs Assessment**

Conduct regular assessments of community educational needs.

Each college must continually assess the changing needs of the community around it. Regular interactions with the community can enable the District and Colleges to be more responsive to community needs and interests, and can provide the public with information about opportunities available at the Colleges.

#### *Future Directions:*

- Use assessment tools that are interactive and invite dialogue with community members about program needs and opportunities.
- Publicize new programs and activities that have been developed in response to business, labor, industry, and community input.

### **D2. Responsive Economic Development and Workforce Preparation Programs**

Continue to develop effective and relevant career and technical programs in collaboration with external partners.

To keep pace with the growing demand for employees with career and technical skills, the District must develop and provide responsive programs that include collaborations with business, labor, and educational partners in the region.

#### *Future Directions:*

- Develop alliances and partnerships with employers and professional organizations to leverage resources and ensure that courses and teaching methods remain relevant and responsive to community needs.
- Include local businesses, labor organizations, high schools, government agencies, and chambers of commerce in the development of an economic and workforce development strategic plan and regular updates.
- Develop strategies to recruit and retain qualified career and technical education faculty to support changing economic- and business-driven educational needs.
- Develop strategies to provide stable funding for career and technical programs that require intensive infrastructure, specialized equipment, and maintenance.
- Support career and technical education faculty and programs with student services that can address barriers to success for those students.
- Develop business and labor partnerships to enhance career pathways for students.
- Increase partnerships with businesses, community organizations, and public agencies to meet community, economic, and workforce needs and serve as a force for positive change.

- Identify potential barriers to alliance and partnership development, and explore solutions.
- Provide support and incentives for faculty and staff to develop partnerships in the community.

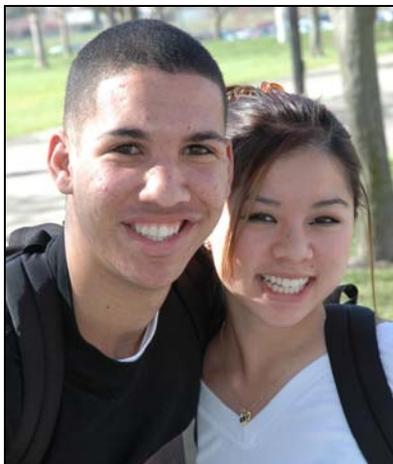
### **D3. Community Philanthropy and Resource Development**

Work closely with the District and college foundations to secure additional funding resources.

The District and college foundations play a critical role in securing additional funds and resources. District efforts to regularly communicate priorities and results can increase the foundations' effectiveness at maintaining and growing positive relationships with current and potential donors.

#### *Future Directions:*

- Stimulate private giving to support individual student and faculty needs that current funding sources are unable to cover.
- Reach the goals of the capital and endowment campaign.
- Explore options for ongoing revenue streams to enhance District resources.
- Build and strengthen the annual fund.
- Maintain fiduciary accountability to donors.
- Build and maintain positive relationships with donors.
- Continue to strengthen membership of District and college foundation boards.
- Identify strategic opportunities for alumni to support District and College efforts.



## E : ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

### **E1. Institutional Capacity for Diversity**

Strengthen and expand the ability of all employees to work and communicate effectively with people of diverse backgrounds and life situations.

As diversity among students, faculty, and staff increases, Los Rios employees must demonstrate cultural sensitivity to all groups. The District can support the successful development of this skill by providing training that addresses intercultural interaction and understanding.

#### *Future Direction:*

- Provide training and professional development opportunities to all employees to increase their abilities to interact effectively with all students and with one another.

### **E2. Integration of Technology in Planning and Project Delivery**

Ensure that educational and business technology needs are identified and addressed in all programs and projects.

In order to effectively support the changing technology needs of students, staff, and faculty, the District must integrate the needs of technology in educational and business programs and projects.

#### *Future Directions:*

- Provide technology support for educational, business and administrative needs across the Colleges; encourage dialogue between district information technology staff and the Colleges.
- Review best practices and incorporate user needs and feedback in IT projects.
- Review district-wide committee structure to support effective technology planning.

### **E3. Staffing**

Attract, recruit, and retain the most qualified employees and assure that staffing levels keep pace with new facilities and the growing number of students being served.

As a large number of employees begin to retire and the District and Colleges continue to grow, Los Rios will face increasing competition from all sectors to attract and retain diverse, high quality employees. It is important that employment processes are efficient and effective and that the hiring process itself is not a barrier to attracting valuable employees.

#### *Future Directions:*

- Examine staffing levels to ensure they are keeping pace with growth in the District and Colleges.
- Review and improve hiring processes to ensure that they are timely, deliberative, and inclusive.
- Review the District's recruiting process to ensure it is strategic and responsive to attracting employees that reflect the region's demographics.

- Review new employee orientation at the Colleges and District to improve and enhance the process and ensure that all employees receive orientation training.
- Regularly review compensation, benefits, incentives, and professional development opportunities to ensure the District is competitive and can attract and retain high quality employees.
- Use technology to streamline the application process, reduce time delays for emergency hires, and increase applicant pools.

#### **E4. Business and Human Resource Process Streamlining**

Use technology and other methods to streamline processes and increase efficiency.

Process improvements can redirect resources from administrative activities to core educational needs. Technology-based systems can allow for streamlined data collection and information sharing across the Colleges. These systems and other methods will be most effective if the District emphasizes a user-based approach to defining streamlining needs and methods.

##### *Future Directions:*

- Continue to emphasize customer service as a core principle in working with employees.
- Increase the use of existing technologies and other methods to streamline business and human resource processes; incorporate users into the development of these processes.

#### **E5. Participatory Decision Making**

Provide opportunities for constituent groups to participate in College and District decision-making processes.

Participatory decision making is a core value of the District and Colleges. The District has supported this effort to enhance participatory decision-making capacity by providing training and support for the Interest-Based Approach (IBA) to problem solving. The District and Colleges should continue this commitment and explore additional methods and best practices to enhance their participatory decision-making processes.

##### *Future Directions:*

- Expand District capacity for participatory decision making.
- Strengthen and clarify communication processes and encourage open dialogue across all constituencies.
- Promote greater consistency and effectiveness in the use of institutional research.
- Maximize use of and access to existing data and information sets.
- Promote and encourage increased participation by all constituencies in decision making.
- Explore opportunities for increased student participation in decision making.

#### **E6. Budget and Planning Process Integration**

Ensure continued integration of the District's strategic planning process with its budget development process.

The District and Colleges have made substantial progress in aligning their budgets with the goals of the strategic plan and in allocating resources in a manner that provides the greatest benefit to students and the community. The District's success is based in part on the careful management of resources and the recognition that there is continued room for improvement.

*Future Direction:*

- Assess the effectiveness of the current process for linking budgets to planning processes and identify potential improvements.

## **E7. Joint Purchasing and Shared Resources**

Partner with other public agencies to pursue opportunities for joint purchasing and shared resources where feasible.

With almost 7,000 employees and more than 70,000 students, Los Rios is a large organization with the ability to obtain lower prices on supplies and services. The District is well positioned to collaborate with other public agencies to negotiate price reductions and arrange the shared use of facilities and services.

*Future Directions:*

- Identify opportunities for joint purchasing and other cost saving measures in such areas as health care, insurance, utilities, etc.
- Explore opportunities for joint use of facilities and shared programming with other public and private entities.

## **E8. Promoting Health and Safety**

Promote the health and safety of all students, faculty, staff, and community members at all Los Rios locations and facilities.

The District is committed to the ongoing safety of its students, employees, and visitors. By regularly reviewing workplace and campus safety policies and procedures and making needed improvements, the District supports a high level of safety and security. The District also conducts emergency preparedness and recovery planning to minimize damage and disruptions during potential disasters and emergency situations.

*Future Directions:*

- Enhance policies and activities that promote workplace health and safety for all employees, students, and visitors.
- Review and implement security and safety measures at all campus locations to enhance safety.
- Review and implement disaster planning and emergency preparedness activities.

## **E9. Professional Development**

Provide professional development opportunities designed to support student success in and out of the classroom.

To fully support student success at the Colleges and educational centers, the District must offer a range of professional development options to faculty and staff to ensure that every employee is adequately prepared to teach and support Los Rios students.

*Future Directions:*

- Provide professional development and ongoing feedback to support the use of educational practices that are effective for all learners.
- Provide support to ensure competency in the use of classroom technology.
- Promote innovative professional development projects.
- Conduct regular assessments to identify professional development needs for all employees and implement programs based on results.
- Provide ongoing professional development and training to promote and support career advancement.

**E10. Marketing the Colleges of Los Rios**

Market the Los Rios Colleges in a broad manner to inform the community and potential partners about current programs, facilities, and capabilities.

The Colleges have many assets that have not yet been discovered by the community. Increased community awareness of these resources can help build relationships, enrich campus life, assist with student recruitment and retention, and attract support and resources from area businesses. A concerted marketing effort by the District on behalf of the Colleges can help to achieve District goals.

*Future Directions:*

- Increase efforts to promote the programs and services available at the Colleges and centers.
- Target outreach to potential partners and inform them of the Colleges' resources, capabilities, and achievements.

**E11. Grant Seeking and Grant Management Support**

Clarify and coordinate grant seeking and grant management support processes.

Public institutions are increasingly reliant on grant funding. As the District continues to expand its grant seeking, it will be increasingly important to provide support for faculty and staff engaged in the grant process. An effective grant infrastructure can ensure that grant writing, submittal, monitoring, and evaluation processes are effective and that all work elements are anticipated and do not create additional burdens for faculty and staff.

*Future Directions:*

- Support efforts to make grant seeking and grant management processes clear, accessible, and user-friendly and communicate this information across the Colleges.
- Increase the use of partnerships to strengthen collaborative fund seeking efforts and to improve the quality of teaching and learning projects.
- Strengthen organizational understanding of resource development and broaden grant development capacity.
- Provide recognition and encouragement to faculty and staff for grant seeking and grant management activities.

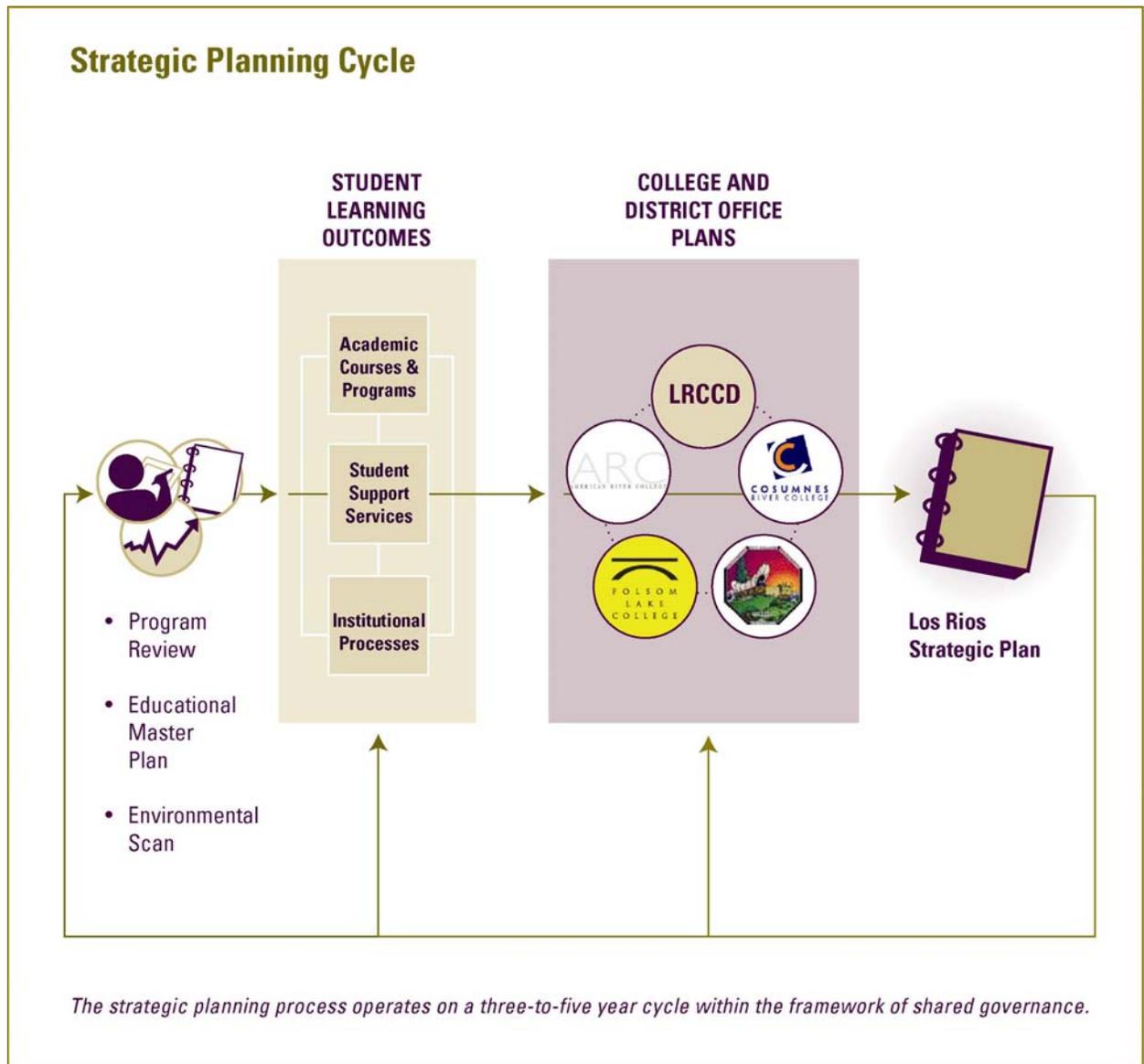


## IMPLEMENTING THE STRATEGIC PLAN

# IMPLEMENTING THE STRATEGIC PLAN

The Strategic Plan will be implemented according to shared governance in a way that respects the autonomy of the Colleges and allows them to respond to the unique student populations they serve. The Plan identifies areas for collaboration and resource sharing, where practical.

The District’s commitment to strategic planning is ongoing: the objectives and lessons of the program review, educational master plan, and environmental scan will continue to be integrated into elements of the strategic plan. Student learning outcomes will also serve as key drivers for strategic decision making for academic courses and programs, student support services, and institutional processes. As the Colleges and the District office complete and implement their business plans, the collective results will also achieve the goals of the District’s 2006 Strategic Plan.





PREPARED BY

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