Follow-up Team Report

Porterville College
100 E. College Avenue
Porterville, CA  93257

A Confidential Report Prepared for the Accrediting Commission
for Community and Junior Colleges
This report represents the findings of the evaluation team that visited

Porterville College
on

October 28, 2013

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<tr>
<th>Name of Team Chair</th>
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<td>Mr. Michael Claire</td>
<td>President</td>
<td>College of San Mateo</td>
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<th>Name of Team Member</th>
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<td>Dr. Cheryl Marshall</td>
<td>President</td>
<td>Crafton Hills College</td>
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<td>Dr. Santanu Bandyopadhyay</td>
<td>Executive Vice President</td>
<td>Cypress College</td>
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Name of Team Member | Title | Institution |
DATE: December 16, 2013

TO: Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges

FROM: Michael Claire, Team Chair

SUBJECT: Report of Follow-Up Visit Team to Porterville College, October 28, 2013

Introduction:
An External Evaluation team was conducted to Porterville College in October, 2012. At its meeting of January 9-11, 2013, the Commission acted to require Porterville College to submit a Follow-Up Report followed by a visit. The visiting team, Mr. Michael Claire, Dr. Cheryl Marshall, and Dr. Santanu Bandyopadhyay, conducted a site visit to Porterville College on October 28, 2013. The team also participated in the visit to the Kern Community College District on October 29, 2013.

The purpose of the team visit was to verify that the Follow-Up Report prepared by the college was accurate through examination of evidence, to determine if sustained, continuous, and positive improvements had been made at the institution, and that the institution has addressed the recommendations made by the External Evaluation Team, resolved the deficiencies noted in those recommendations, and meets the Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards, and Commission policies.

In general, the team found that the college had prepared well for the visit by arranging for meetings with the individual and groups agreed upon earlier with the team chair and by assembling appropriate documents in the meeting room used by the team. Over the course of the day, the team met with the following individuals: the college president, the vice president of instruction/accreditation liaison officer, the vice president of student services, the director of business and administrative services, the academic senate president, the district’s campus manger of human resources, the district researcher assigned to Porterville College, and the chair of the distance education committee.
The Follow-Up Report and Visit were expected to document resolution of the following recommendations:

**College Recommendation 3: Include and analyze disaggregated data in program review**

To meet Standards and improve its planning process, the College's program review should include disaggregated indicators of success, using indirect measures such as grades, retention, and persistence along with direct assessment of course level and program level student learning outcomes (Standards II.A.1, II.A.1.a, II.A.2, II.A.2.a, II.A.2.d, II.A.2.e, II.A.2.f, II.A.2.h, II.A.2.i, II.A.6.a, II.A.6.c).

**College Recommendation 5: Conduct research to assure quality in the distance education program**

In order to assure the quality of its distance education program and to meet Standards, the team recommends that the College conduct research and analysis to ensure that courses offered in a distance education mode and related student and learning support services be of comparable quality. (Standards II.A.1, II.A.1.a, II.A.1.b, II.A.2, II.A.2.d., II.A.6, II.B.1, II.C.1)

**College Recommendation 7: Fully integrate human resources planning into the planning process**

In order to meet Standards related to planning for human resources, the team recommends that the College assess its future human resource needs and fully integrate the results of the assessment into its institutional planning process. Furthermore, the team recommends that the College determine its professional development needs and assess the efficacy of its professional development efforts on a regular basis (III.A.5, III.A5.a, III.A.5.b, III.A.6).

**District Recommendation # 1 Review and Update Board Policies on a Periodic Basis**

In order to comply with the Standards, the team recommends that the Board of Trustees establish a process to ensure that the Board’s policies and procedures are evaluated on a regular basis and revised as appropriate (IV.B.1.e).

**District Recommendation # 2 Board Member Development Program**

In order to comply with the Standards the team recommends that the Board of Trustees in consultation with the Chancellor develop and implement a development program that meets the needs of the newer board members as well as board members who have a considerable amount of experience as a governing board members (IV.B.1.f).

**District Recommendation # 3 Evaluate the Board of Trustees Self Evaluation Process**

In order to comply with the Standards, the team recommends that the Board of Trustees review the elements of its Self Evaluation Process and ensure that the Standards' minimum requirements for a Self Evaluation Process which are: 1) have clearly defined processes in place, 2) have processes implemented and 3) have processes published in the Board's policy manual are included in the Self Evaluation Process. The Board's policy 2E2 prescribes additional requirements when conducting the Board's Self Evaluation. (IV.B.1.g)

**District Recommendation # 4 Evaluation of Role Delineation and Decision Making Processes for Effectiveness**

In order to comply with the Standards, the team recommends the District conduct an evaluation of the new decision-making process and evaluate how effective the new process is in making decisions and in communicating the decisions to affected users (IV.B.3.g).
College Responses to the 2013 External Evaluation Team Recommendations:

**College Recommendation 3: Include and analyze disaggregated data in program review**

*To meet Standards and improve its planning process, the College’s program review should include disaggregated indicators of success, using indirect measures such as grades, retention, and persistence along with direct assessment of course level and program level student learning outcomes (Standards II.A.1, II.A.1.a, II.A.2, II.A.2.a, II.A.2.d, II.A.2.e, II.A.2.f, II.A.2.h, II.A.2.i, II.A.6.a, II.A.6.c).*

**Findings and Evidence:**

The College has modified its program review documents to incorporate an analysis of student success data as well as a summary of course and program level assessment, and the changes resulting from those assessments. The College included meeting minutes that provide evidence that the revised program review model has been thoroughly discussed and that there is support for the proposed revisions.

The College also provided a prototype of student demographic data for an instructional division, as well as a program within that division. The College plans to use this prototype for the next cycle of program reviews due in the Spring 2014 semester. The prototype included five-year trend data on disaggregated student enrollment data. However, the team could not find evidence that the College is reporting disaggregated indicators of student success using measures such as grades, retention and persistence at the program level. A sample division-level program review was also provided. Student success measures such as retention were provided at the division and program level, but the team could not find evidence of disaggregated student success data in the sample report.

The research function at all three Colleges in the KCCD has been centralized since the team visit in October 2012. In addition to the prototype report cited above, the District operates a data warehouse including an Operational Data Store (ODS) using Oracle Discoverer software. Administrators, division chairs, and other staff have access to a wide variety of reports on instructional and student services programs. The team was able to confirm that this tool provides student success data that can be disaggregated along demographic lines. However, it is not clear the extent to which this information is being accessed for decision-making at the program review level. Finally, the College has recently joined the Achieving the Dream (ATD) project, a national organization focused on the improvement of community college success rates and the use of data and evidence in college decision-making. College personnel believe that as involvement and participation in the ATD project continues, these efforts will greatly assist the college in utilizing disaggregated data to improve planning and assessment of college-wide efforts, including the enhancement of program review.

**Conclusion:**

The College has made some progress on this recommendation but the recommendation has not been fully addressed, and the Standards are not yet fully met. While the capability to develop disaggregated data at the program level now exists, the College’s
program review data prototype includes disaggregated enrollment data only. It is important for the College to understand that the recommendation requires disaggregated student success measures as well. Consequently, in order to fully meet the recommendation, the team encourages the College to expand its program level data analysis to include disaggregated student success measures before the next cycle of program reviews are completed in Spring 2014.

The team was provided with a sample of a division-level program review using the new model. The sample included an analysis of SLO assessment and decisions resulting from that assessment. However, the team was not able to determine the extent to which the model has been implemented since the next cycle of program review is not scheduled to be completed until the Spring 2014 semester.

**College Recommendation 5: Conduct research to assure quality in the distance education program**

In order to assure the quality of its distance education program and to meet Standards, the team recommends that the College conduct research and analysis to ensure that courses offered in a distance education mode and related student and learning support services be of comparable quality. (Standards II.A.1, II.A.1.a, II.A.1.b, II.A.2, II.A.2.d., II.A.6, II.B.1, II.C.1)

**Findings and Evidence:**
The team was able to confirm that the College has conducted comparative research on student success in distance education courses vs. courses offered in a traditional mode. The research is summarized at a College level and is also available on a course level, program level, and division level. The team also found that student success measures in distance education vs. courses offered in a traditional mode are included in the College’s revised program review data at both a division level and at a program level. The revised program review document does not specifically require a narrative analysis of student success in distance education courses. However, the document does require an analysis of overall course retention and student success. Conceivably, there could be opportunities for comment in this section regarding distance education courses. The College also participated in a distance education student satisfaction study, which was conducted by the California State Chancellors Office. At the time of the visit the College was analyzing the results of this study and plans to use this analysis as a component planning for its distance education program.

The College has already taken several actions as a result of its research findings on its distance education program. For example, the College has purchased and plans to implement a student assessment tool called SmarterMeasure. The SmarterMeasure tool measures a student’s individual potential for success in an online course. This tool allows a student to assess whether or not they will be successful in a distance education course prior to enrolling the course.

The College also found that most distance education students reside within a reasonable distance from the College. As a result, the College has developed a “distance education
student mentor/tutor program” so that students can receive help in a distance education course beyond the help provided in an online environment. The College had just implemented the program at the time of the visit.

Finally, student services personnel have had some preliminary discussions and plan to formulate a focus group of current students during the 2013-14 year. These students will access and review the online information found on the student services webpages to help the College assess the efficacy of its online student support.

The College identified several other future activities in its Follow-Up Report to ensure that data collection and analysis for distance education courses are institutionalized, and that there is broad participation in the planning and assessment of the distance education program.

**Conclusion**
The College has made significant progress in addressing this recommendation, and the team feels that the recommendation has been addressed, the deficiencies resolved, and the Standards have been met. The College has conducted research to assess its distance education program and has acted on this research by implementing measures designed to improve student success in distance education courses.

To ultimately meet the intent of the Standards, assuring the quality of distance education is comparable to that of traditional course delivery, the College will need to assess the results of its actions once it is able to collect sufficient data. Also, the College will need to complete its focus group research to assess the quality of online student support tools and implement recommended changes to its online student support tools as appropriate.

**College Recommendation 7: Fully integrate human resources planning into the planning process**
*In order to meet Standards related to planning for human resources, the team recommends that the College assess its future human resource needs and fully integrate the results of the assessment into its institutional planning process. Furthermore, the team recommends that the College determine its professional development needs and assess the efficacy of its professional development efforts on a regular basis (III.A.5, III.A.5.a, III.A.5.b, III.A.6).*

**Findings and Evidence**
The College uses program review as the primary means to identify future human resource needs. The College provided evidence, and the team confirmed, that the College now extracts human resource needs from program review and summarizes this information for use in college-wide institutional planning. The team was impressed with the level of detail provided in the report. During the visit the director of administrative services gave the team an updated report that was more robust than the report submitted as evidence in the Follow-Up Report.
The College’s Staff Development Committee was reactivated in spring 2013. One of the first tasks of the committee was to distribute a comprehensive professional development needs survey to all of its employees. The survey results have been tabulated and the team was able to verify that the College has already offered high-demand professional development activities in response to the survey.

Conclusion
The team was impressed with the rapid progress made in addressing this recommendation. The College has developed an infrastructure to identify and plan for human resource needs at an institutional level. The College has also developed a mechanism to regularly assess professional development needs and has acted to respond to the most pressing needs in a timely manner. The team feels that this recommendation has been fully addressed and that Standard III has been met in full.

District Recommendation # 1 Review and Update Board Policies on a Periodic Basis
In order to comply with the Standards, the team recommends that the Board of Trustees establish a process to ensure that the Board’s policies and procedures are evaluated on a regular basis and revised as appropriate (IV.B.1.e).

Findings and Evidence:
The Board of Trustees has been reviewing its Board Policy Manual and has created a schedule that ensures on-going review of policies over a two-year time period and that change will assist in ensuring its policies are reviewed on a continuous basis with changes made as needed to keep the policies current.

The KCCD Board Policy currently includes eleven sections, including sections 5, 7, and 9, which are collective bargaining agreements that are negotiated every three years. Because those items are reviewed and negotiated regularly, the Board decided to remove those three sections from its policy manual. For the on-going review of policies by the Board, it has been determined that in odd numbered years, board policy sections 1, 3, and 11 will be reviewed. In even numbered years, board policy sections 2, 4, 6, 8, and 10 will be reviewed. In all instances, the Kern Community College District makes any regulatory changes resulting from changes in laws that may be referenced in various Board Policies.

Initially, a calendar was created to facilitate the review of section 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, and 11. The calendar was revised in July 2013. The Chancellor and Chief Financial Officer are charged with coordinating the evaluation of Section 1 and Section 3 of the Board Policy Manual and for the process of making recommended revisions to Board Policy by the October, 2013 KCCD Board of Trustees meeting.

A review of minutes of meetings from the Board of Trustees, the Chancellor’s Cabinet meetings and other structured participatory governance meetings show active conversations and activities to update Board Policies on an on-going and routine
schedule. The District Office established a review policy based on Board direction and those processes are in place and functioning as intended.

**Conclusion:**
The District has defined a process for the periodic review and appropriate revision of the KCCD Board Policy Manual to ensure an ongoing and systematic review of Board policies and revisions where appropriate. This process began in January 2013 and will be evaluated for its efficacy and needed modifications by May 2014.

The College meets the requirements of Standard IV.B.1.e and has implemented actions that fully address District Recommendation #1.

**District Recommendation # 2 Board Member Development Program**
*In order to comply with the Standards the team recommends that the Board of Trustees in consultation with the Chancellor develop and implement a development program that meets the needs of the newer board members as well as board members who have a considerable amount of experience as a governing board members (IV.B.1.f).*

**Findings and Evidence:**
Board Policy 2 E Board Members are receiving information on available professional development training opportunities from a wide range of governing board training providers. In addition to these external training opportunities, the board members also have the option of taking internally prepared training programs. Board members during the conversation with the team chair commented on specific trainings they attended and noted the comprehensive development plan developed meets the needs of new trustees and the more experienced members of the governing board. The board member development plan is now part of Board Policy 2F entitled *Board In-Service Development Plan.*

Development of the new training plan for governing board members has been accomplished and is being followed by members of the board who spoke with the team chair during the site visit. The Board Policy has been developed and is operational.

**Conclusion:**
The College meets the requirements of Standard IV.B.1.f and the requirements of this recommendation have been fully implemented.

**District Recommendation # 3 Evaluate the Board of Trustees Self Evaluation Process**
*In order to comply with the Standards, the team recommends that the Board of Trustees review the elements of its Self Evaluation Process and ensure that the Standards’ minimum requirements for a Self Evaluation Process which are: 1) have clearly defined processes in place, 2) have processes implemented and 3) have processes published in the Board’s policy manual are included in the Self Evaluation Process. The Board's policy 2E2 prescribes additional requirements when conducting the Board’s Self Evaluation. (IV.B.1.g)*
This Recommendation was intended to address not the contents of the governing board’s evaluation process but the fact that an evaluation of the process could not be located nor could the 2012 team determine that an evaluation of the process had occurred. In preparation for the Follow-Up Report, it appears that there was an evaluation of the existing process, and, as a result, the timeline for conducting the evaluation and the frequency of the evaluation of the governing board’s self-evaluation was reexamined.

The process was previously noted as being in place and operational. What was missing was evidence of the evaluation of the existing process. Supporting evidence provided to the team and included in the Follow-Up Report reiterates what had previously been identified and reported in the Team Evaluation Report from the comprehensive evaluation conducted in October 2012. In the Follow-Up Report, the College again lists the same evidence previously reviewed by the team with no comments about how the Board reviews the self evaluation instrument and makes any necessary adjustments.

In preparing the Follow-Up Report, the District commented that the governing board was going to review its process during the October 30th Board Meeting. Prior to that time, the District provided evidence to show that all of the governing board policies, forms, and other material prepared to guide the self evaluation process were reviewed and approved by the Board. The documents used have been deemed to remain appropriate and the self-evaluation process is working as intended as evidenced by the lack of changes made to the current practices.

Through analysis and review of those materials the District had in fact conducted an evaluation of its self-evaluation process thereby meeting the requirements of this recommendation and bringing the District (and College) into compliance with the requirements of Standard IV.B.1.g.

Conclusion:
The Kern Community College District Board of Trustees has a process in place to evaluate the practice used by the District to complete a governing board self-evaluation. This recommendation has been addressed as action has been taken to fully implement changes that address the requirements of Standard IV.B.1.g, and the Board is in compliance with this Standard.

District Recommendation # 4 Evaluation of Role Delineation and Decision Making Processes for Effectiveness

In order to comply with the Standards, the team recommends the District conduct an evaluation of the new decision-making process and evaluate how effective the new process is in making decisions and in communicating the decisions to affected users (IV.B.3.g).

Findings and Evidence:
The team evaluated actions to implement this recommendation from several different approaches. Evidence was provided to show that the decision-making process specifically
related to issues of centralization and decentralization of support services provided in
support of the colleges is evaluated regularly and modifications are made quickly once a
change is considered necessary. Minutes from meetings combined with information
obtained during interviews confirmed that the decision making processes are being
evaluated on a regular basis. This is occurring as decisions are being made. As they
move through the decision-making process, the participants comment about the
effectiveness of the process. As a result of these reviews, changes have been made and
the process refined. The last approved document that was prepared to publicize the
Decision-Making Process was dated April 2012. At the time of the team visit, the team
was uncertain about actions taken to review the decision process. During this visit, more
information was obtained and, as a result, confirmed that the processes used to make-
decisions are being reviewed.

The team had lengthy conversations with each executive at the District Office who was
responsible for providing support for college-level functions. It was clear that each
support area was determined in consultation with the colleges. The conversations
revealed that the functionality and level of control over the various activities change over
time with functions being centralized and then decentralized depending on what is
appropriate and necessary at that time and considering the limited amount of resources
that have been available during the recession when resources were being reduced. The
last full-scale review of functions provided by the District Office occurred in May 2012
using the Decision-Making Process noted above.

Interviews with District Office Vice Chancellors and representatives from the colleges
revealed that the decision-making process and the review of the process are on-going and
routine. The reviews of District services frequently focus on the support of college
activities with the conversations including the overarching topics of how to provide
services using traditional organizational theory models of decentralized services,
centralized services, or a blend of the two. The Kern Community College District uses
the practice that best serves the colleges with some services centralized at the District and
others decentralized with the college having primary control. The decisions involve a
collaborative process and the decision on whether to offer decentralized or centralized
services is different for types of services provided.

Some services like technology have both a centralized service and a decentralized service
component. At the time of this visit, the team learned that the services are consistent with
the previously reported division of functions being consistent with those included in the
College’s Self Evaluation Report. One area that was unclear was how human resource
services were being provided to the College. The concerns previously stated by the
Evaluation Team have been resolved with the decision-making model used being a key
factor when evaluating services offered at the colleges.

To provide more detail for the next review of the Decision-Making Process, the Follow-
Up Report notes that the Consultation Council will evaluate the process in fall 2013. This
evaluation will provide further documentation to support other evidence to show how the
Decision-Making Process is being evaluated and what changes, if any, are made based on the evaluation.

The team suggests that the College and the Kern CCD modify their Decision-Making Flowchart in a way that shows the feedback and evaluation process that occur. Currently the chart is linear and is formatted in a way the highlights where decisions are made from an organizational viewpoint. In this format, a feedback-loop is not normally recorded as the intent is to show where decisions are made along a continuous line going up the chain of command until a decision is made.

**Conclusion:**
The College and Kern CCD have provided evidence that shows the Decision-Making process is being evaluated. The requirements of this recommendation have been implemented and the District now meets Standard IV.B.3.g. It is suggested that the College and the District provide more information on the structure of the evaluation and include documentation of the data obtained from the evaluation.