

DISTRICT CONSULTATION COUNCIL November 24, 2025

SUMMARY

MEMBERS PRESENT: Byron D. Clift Breland, Steven Estrada, Brandon Floerke, Naveen Kanal (for Marlo Smith), Bridget Kominek, Elaine Loayza, Flavio Medina-Martin, Jennifer Merchant (for Karla Frizler), Cynthia Olivo, Khaoi Mady, Kathleen McAlister, Jaclyn Magginetti, Michelle Patrick Norng, Valentina Purtell, Irma Ramos, Joel Salcedo, Pamela Spence, Kai Stearns, Scott Thayer, Annalisa Webber, and Fred Williams.

VISITORS: Erika Almaraz, Danielle Davy, Julie Leggin, and Gabrielle Stanco.

ABSENT: Candace Lynch and Jennifer Vega La Serna.

CALL TO ORDER: Chancellor Byron D. Clift Breland called the meeting to order at 2:07 p.m.

He noted that Michelle Patrick Norng was joining via teleconference under the AB 2449 “just cause” allowance due to childcare and must participate with both audio and video throughout the meeting. All votes will be taken by roll call.

MEETING SUMMARY

Summary: The summary of the October 27, 2025 meeting was approved. **There was consensus to approve the summary with four abstentions** (Elaine Loayza, Khaoi Mady, Jennifer Merchant, and Pamela Spence) **and two absences** (Cynthia Olivo and Irma Ramos).

STRATEGIC GOALS & PLANNING

Evaluation of the Resource Allocation Model – Establish Post Award Grants Office: The Resource Allocation Model (RAM) is evaluated on an annual basis. This year, proposed changes to the RAM were presented at the October 13, 2025 Council on Budget & Facilities (CBF) meeting with feedback on the changes shared at the November 10, 2025 CBF meeting. Based on the discussion, the proposed changes for 2026-27 included:

- The District and campuses charging an indirect cost rate on categoricals and grants ranging from 0% to 32.70% in order to offset the administrative cost of supporting the programs. In the past, these funds were split 50-50 between the District and the campuses, and used to offset overall expenses in the current year.
- To improve budget and accounting support for categoricals and grants, it is proposed that we shift 100% of indirect cost funds from the District and the campuses, to districtwide funds and utilize the dollars to fund a post-award grants team. The grants team would assist with invoicing; drawdowns; reporting; reconciliations; developing and maintaining a grants database; training project personnel; keeping abreast of new state and federal compliance requirements; updating budgets for new allocations and carryovers; reviewing expense and budget transfers; preparing fiscal-year closing entries and audit schedules. Indirect cost funds over the last two years were: \$750,000 and \$765,000. About 36%-38% came from federal funds. The estimated cost of a grants team (one manager and three staff) is about \$720,000. Offset by indirect cost, the net cost of a grants team is estimated to be -\$30,000.

At this time, CBF recommends that DCC approve shifting 100% of indirect cost funds from the District and the campuses to districtwide funds and to utilize the dollars to fund a post-award grants accounting team. The other proposed changes to the RAM will continue to be discussed at CBF and recommendations will be brought back to DCC at a future date.

During the discussion, members noted or asked the following:

- Fred Williams, Vice Chancellor of Administrative Services, stated that there is cost to both District Services and the campuses, roughly about \$350,000, but was supportive of the shift because a lot of help is needed in this area.
- CSEA noted that it is currently classified positions handling the work.
- Clarification on what post award means, the role of the manager/director currently overseeing the grants, and the delineation between the roles of the new grant manager and campus grant managers.
- The District currently has 300 grants and we want to pursue more grants, so someone needs to be responsible for overseeing the administrative side of the grants.
- Are there existing classified job descriptions? (The Accounting Specialist positions will be used.)
- What if the grant funding is lost? Concern with unstable federal funds. (The largest grants are from the State, but indirect costs can be used to stay within budget. Federal funding is mostly related to financial aid.)
- Will there be administrative support for the manager or will all three staff positions be accounting specialist roles?

There was consensus to approve shifting 100% of indirect cost funds from the District and the campuses, to Districtwide and to utilize the dollars to fund a post-award grants accounting team with two abstentions (Elaine Loayza and Jennifer Merchant).

Evaluation of the Resource Allocation Model – Other: As part of the annual evaluation of the Resource Allocation Model (RAM), the Council on Budget & Facilities (CBF) also discussed the following proposals related to districtwide expenses, contingency for salary and benefits, and District Services carryover funds.

Districtwide Expenses

The following departments serve all four budget centers (Cypress College, Fullerton College, NOCE, and District Services). It is proposed that all four budget centers share in the cost of funding these departments (estimated at \$1.4 million).

- District Campus Safety (Org 1327) about \$169,000 – New
- District Diversity, Culture, Inclusion (Org 1130) about \$277,000
- EEO & Compliance (Org 1425) about \$502,000
- Districtwide Staff Development (Org 1420) about \$448,000

Should the cost of funding these departments shift from District Services to districtwide, below is the estimated distribution of costs.

	DS	CC	FC	NOCE	TOTAL
	-130,671	-507,329	-608,683	-149,379	-1,396,061
%	9.36%	36.34%	43.6%	10.7%	100%

Existing advisory committees will continue to collaborate in the review of existing and future programs.

Contingency for Salary and Benefits

It is proposed that a contingency between 0.5% to 3.0% of permanent positions in the ongoing and self-supporting funds be budgeted to set aside funds for districtwide increases that benefit all budget centers such as future negotiations and the Job Family Study. This contingency is not meant to restrict future negotiations regarding salaries and benefits and would be reevaluated each year as part of the annual review of the RAM. Estimated contingency based on 2025-26 permanent positions using 0.5%, 1%, 2%, or 3% include:

Contingency	DS	CC	FC	NOCE	TOTAL
3%	-651,133	-2,339,623	-2,851,987	-541,322	-6,384,065
2%	-434,089	-1,559,748	-1,901,325	-360,881	-4,256,043
1%	-217,044	-779,874	-950,662	-180,441	-2,128,022
0.5%	-108,522	-389,937	-475,331	-90,220	-1,064,011

District Services Carryover

It is proposed that beginning in 2026-27, any current year surplus at District Services flow to the three campuses (Cypress College, Fullerton College, and NOCE) based on the percentage of RAM revenue each generated during the fiscal year. Existing and 2025-26 carryovers at District Services would be utilized to complete committed projects and purchases. District Services surpluses over the last two years were: \$4.6 million for 2024-25 and \$3.1 million for 2023-24. Estimated redistribution of District Services carryover based on each campuses revenues as a percentage of total RAM revenue include:

	DS	CC	FC	NOCE	TOTAL
	-4,009,816	1,607,490	1,928,819	473,507	0
%		40.1%	48.1%	11.8%	100%

This estimate is using the 2024-25 Settle-Up, less carryover POs still in progress.

Chancellor Cliff Breland introduced the discussion by stating that the item was presented as a proactive approach to looking at how the District can be an organization that moves toward the future prepared. The approach is a change in how we do things, but the District is also running out of one-time funds, and while the campuses have built back enrollment, we also need to look at the front end (instead of being reactive) in order to take care of our employees.

Vice Chancellor Fred Williams stated that there was not agreement on these items in CBF and the proposals were presented to DCC so that members are aware of them as discussions continue in CBF. He also noted that some modifications were made based on discussions at CBF and with the budget officers.

Erika Almaraz, Executive Director of Fiscal Affairs, noted that staff met with other districts to discuss the models they use and what expenses are included as districtwide expenses that benefit all budget centers. The proposals presented were developed based on requests from the campuses on the support they want from Human Resources and IT. However, without the additional funding, District Services cannot provide additional support.

During the discussion, members noted or asked the following:

- There is certainly a need for the four established departments, but the campuses are not completely recovered, especially NOCE.
- The proposals will force NOCE to use one-time funds to cover the deficit for expenses that will include permanent positions because the NOCE budget has no wiggle room. Hope for a compromise so that the financial burden will be spread over the four budget centers, not just three campuses.
- When meeting with other districts to discuss their budget models, they include the departments in their districtwide expenses.
- We can also look at increasing the 9.25% figure for District Services because when the percentage was determined, three of those positions did not exist.
- Support for the departments and positions, but this solution does not do enough as District Services takes on more services for the entire district. We need to look at increasing the percentage overall.
- At Rancho Santiago Community College District, the necessary funding for districtwide expenses is taken off the top.
- What happens with the carryover at District Services now? Concern about not keeping money for future expenses.
- We need more of a give and take model in order for it to be sustainable and that includes more transparency within District Services. Currently with carryover funds, the District decides where the money goes and with this proposal it would be more collaborative.
- Currently, with the District Services budgeting process, the administrative review is done at the end of the year, but it will be moving to a more formal process in January with the same overall budget timeline so you know the requests as the budget is being developed.
- Again, NOCE would need to use one-time funds for permanent positions. Maybe the percentage increase is better to address the costs of the positions, but it should not be the full amount.
- A much bigger discussion is coming due to much tighter budgets due to smaller carryover balances and lower ending balances.
- Another option is to not have the positions because in order to balance the budget, the District had to cover the positions with one-time funds. In response, the Chancellor stated that we have to offer the positions because they are legally required and we need to structurally build in the costs for them.
- Has there been a conversation about auditing what constitutes a district service?
- Is it possible to have a similar chart to compare what the revenue increase looks like if the percentage increased instead of moving the costs to districtwide?
- Can we see what the percentage impact with the four positions would be even if the District Services percent isn't increased?
- The campuses are gaining more than they are giving up (\$1 million vs \$4 million) and District Services needs ongoing funding more than they need carryover funds.
- When the resource allocation model (RAM) was revised in the past, it was because the campuses wanted more transparency, but what we are seeing now are the problems that resulted from that: a lack of negotiations dollars and need at District Services.
- We need more in-depth conversations besides just sweeping funding from District Services.
- We need a contingency percentage. It doesn't matter whether it's at the campuses or the District, but we need to set it aside to handle negotiations or other large-scale projects.

- There were four proposals and one was passed by DCC. Will they all be addressed separately? (The districtwide expenses and District Services carryover proposals are linked, but the contingency for salary and benefits proposal can be addressed separately.)
- There still remains a need to talk about the RAM overall and a workgroup should be formed.

Chancellor Clift Breland concluded the discussion by noting that the intent is not to take funding away to give it to one area and that the District provides a service for everyone's benefit. It seems we need a better understanding of what districtwide services and expenses are, what is versus what could be, and what is paid by the District that aren't charged to the campuses. He also emphasized that we need to allocate money up front to continue to serve students and that we cannot talk about dollars available for negotiations without knowing what we're working with based on the RAM.

The proposals will be discussed again at CBF in December to get additional feedback.

OPERATIONAL REVIEW

NOCCCD Districtwide Employee Climate Survey Results: Gabrielle Stanco, District Director, Research, Planning & Data Management, presented selected results from the Districtwide Employee Climate survey results from spring 2025. The survey was locally developed (originally based on the Cypress College Employee Climate Survey) to gather employee feedback about employee satisfaction on general job satisfaction; campus climate; diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility; decision-making processes; and planning and program review processes.

Chancellor Clift Breland expressed a need to take the survey seriously and get feedback to improve communication and better understand what's working well and where we've missed the mark.

During the discussion, members noted or asked the following:

- Was it a standard instrument that has been used at other institutions to compare where we stand with the norm?
- Do we have the disaggregated data to follow up on certain areas/questions? Especially the general respectful culture and negative stereotypes.
- Rancho Santiago CCD had a climate survey and used the results to make changes to discuss the academic calendar earlier and included the senates.
- The elephant in the room is the Board of Trustees. We do all the work we do and then it gets to the Board and they make a decision and it's hard to understand what they thought or what their line of thinking is. We need to improve the relationship with the Board and improve our processes.
- The numbers in the survey are quite low and it seems to be due to sudden decisions that affect the campuses with no explanations to the quick changes. Communication is also lacking, and it requires both talking and listening.
- A lot of the responses hit the nail on the head, especially with shared governance. It doesn't seem like classified voices are taken into consideration.
- District Services participation improves each year, but it would be helpful to include the proportion of employees to help with perspective.
- A lot of the negative was from a different perspective as it relates to the union and senates, and that is changing with different leadership.

- Reach out to the unions to help solicit participation.
- The Institutional Effectiveness Coordinating Council (IECC) discusses the survey results and how they are presented, but then it drops off. Maybe continue to discuss it and take action? Maybe acknowledge it at Opening Day? Do something with the survey results beyond sharing them.
- Is it possible to get the campuses their own report so they can dive deeper into the results for their institution?

District Technology Committee – Change to Charter: Khaoi Mady, Interim Executive Director of Information Technology, presented an updated District Technology Committee (DTC) Charter which was revised to replace the Vice Chancellor of Educational Services & Technology as the non-voting chair with the Executive Director of Information Technology. The change, which was approved by DTC, was made because the Vice Chancellor role no longer exists in the same capacity.

During the discussion, members expressed concern about the Executive Director being a non-voting member and needed clarification on who the five IT management representatives are. It was also noted that the CSEA representatives should not be listed as site-based IT technical leads because they are union appointments.

This item will return to a future meeting for consideration.

NOCCCD Retiree Email Accounts: Khaoi Mady presented information on how the District can formally implement a standard for retirees to retain an active NOCCCD email accounts that was discussed at the District Technology Committee. The recommendations of criteria for an active NOCCCD email account were provided by members of DTC, but have not been formally approved, and were presented to DCC for review and discussion.

The recommendations were suggested in order to provide email account access to retirees on a consistent basis with an opt in plan that includes an email address in a slightly different email format (username@retired.campu65s.edu).

Members noted that faculty at large want to keep the same email in order to have students contact them in the future, in response, it was suggested that an auto reply or forward could be added to the original email address for a period of time to note the new email address. It was also noted that the recommendations are a compromise because legal counsel advised eliminating access to email addresses for retirees.

This item will return to a future meeting for additional discussion.

POLICY

Revised Chapter 4 Policies – Scholastic Terminology: At the April 28, 2025 DCC meeting, members expressed a desire to replace the term “probation” with a different term like “notice” throughout district policies. Additionally, the Board of Governors is in the midst of reviewing amendments to Title 5, California Code of Regulations, §55031–55034 and 55046, which would update the naming references to “probation” and “dismissal” and revise and standardize academic renewal standards within the California community college system.

In response to the request of DCC and the anticipated changes, the following BPs and APs were revised to update the change in terminology (replacing “probation” with “notice” and replacing “dismissal” with “pause”):

- **AP 4220, Standards of Scholarship**
- **BP 4225, Course Repetition**
- **BP 4250, ~~Probation, Dismissal~~, Scholastic Notice, Pause, and Readmission**
- **AP 4250, ~~Probation, Dismissal~~, Scholastic Notice, Pause, and Readmission**

Members expressed support for the revisions and briefly discussed options for replacing use of the word “dismissed” in the policies, but opted to let it remain.

There was unanimous consensus to approve the revised Administrative Procedures and post them on the District website and forward the revised Board Policies to the Board for their consideration.

New AP 3440, Service Animals: The Community College League of California (CCLC) Policy and Procedure Legal Updates Service indicates that all districts are legally required to establish an administrative procedure to address the use of service animals. After reviewing CCLC’s recommended language, staff developed AP 3440, Service Animals to ensure compliance and clarity which was shared with DCC for a first reading on September 17, 2025. Based on the discussion at that meeting, staff proposed further edits to AP 3440 and DCC received a second reading of the newly developed AP 3440, Service Animals with revisions noted in red.

Julie Leggin, District Director, Risk Management & Workplace Safety, led a brief overview of the revisions which are based on the suggestions that were received noting that while the language was altered, the intent remained the same of trying to balance the law with equitable treatment of employees and animals.

This item will return to a future meeting for additional discussion.

Inclusive Facilities Efforts: At the February 24, 2025 DCC meeting, members discussed a proposal to develop an administrative procedure to make inclusive restrooms for district buildings/facilities a priority and/or requirement after learning that a new Fullerton College building did not include an inclusive restroom. At that time, it was noted that there has been legislation in place since 2017 regarding restrooms and in 2024 the law was reinterpreted and states that the Department of State Architects (DSA) requires inclusive restrooms.

As a follow up to that discussion, an inventory of all gender-neutral restrooms located across the District as well as restrooms that will be included in future projects was provided along with college maps which include infographics to highlight both gender neutral/inclusive restrooms and lactation rooms.

Chancellor Clift Breland shared the information to provide an update on what the District is doing and has tried to do in relation to compliance. Vice Chancellor Fred Williams highlighted that inclusive facilities have been included in new projects, and when possible, also with renovations, and noted that DSA does not require a certain number of restrooms beyond the requirement.

Update on AP 7400, Employee Travel and Conference Attendance: DCC received a second reading of revised AP 7400, Employee Travel and Conference Attendance at the October 27 meeting. At that time, members recommended the development of a workgroup, to include representatives from the professional development committees from each campus, to help develop a procedure. The workgroup has been established and will meet on December 9.

OTHER

Burden-Free Access to Instructional Materials: DCC received information on new regulatory provisions regarding Burden-Free Access to Instructional Materials that were adopted by the Board of Governors with college districts required to conform policies and procedures to the regulatory requirements by January 26, 2026.

During the brief discussion, it was emphasized that the legislation requires that all students need to have all materials by the first class. Members expressed concern over publishing companies only allowing free access to the first couple of chapters by the first day of classes. The materials are supposed to remain free, not partially free, and they are not complying with the intent and spirit of the law.

Update on Block Grant: Chancellor Clift Breland shared that the District had been waiting to hear from the State what the Block Grant funding amount would be and recently learned that the District will receive \$1.46 million. The allocation of funds will be determined by the District Grants Office by the following week.

Next DCC Meeting: The next DCC meeting will take place on Monday, January 27, 2026 in Room 105 at the Anaheim Campus.

ADJOURNMENT: Prior to adjourning the meeting, Chancellor Clift Breland noted that it was the last DCC meeting for Fred Williams prior to his retirement and acknowledged the lasting legacy he leaves behind. He also wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving. The meeting was adjourned at 4:21 p.m.