



**ACCREDITING
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for COMMUNITY and
JUNIOR COLLEGES**

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June 30, 2009

Mr. Elihu Harris
Chancellor
Peralta Community College District
333 East Eighth Street
Oakland, CA 94606

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OFFICE OF THE CHANCELLOR
Peralta Community College District

Dear Chancellor Harris:

The Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges, Western Association of Schools and Colleges, at its meeting June 9-11, 2009, reviewed the institutional Self Study Reports for Berkeley City College, the College of Alameda, Laney College, and Merritt College as well as the visiting team reports for each college. The Commission acted on each college; and you will receive copies of those Commission action letters.

The Commission requested that I convey to you concerns regarding the district recommendations included in each action letter and numbered appropriately to correspond to the individual college's team report. These are noted below:

Recommendation: (College of Alameda only, #5) In order to meet the Standards, the team recommends that the college advance and refine the implementation of the district-wide computer information system (Standards 3C.1.a, 3C.1.c, 3C.1.d, IV.B.3.6).

Recommendation: Management Systems (Berkeley City, Laney and Merritt Colleges)

The team recommends that the district immediately resolve the functional issues associated with the implementation of the district-wide adopted software management systems for student, human resources, and financial aid administration (Standards III.C.1.a, III.C.1.c, III.C.1.d, and IV.B.3.b).

Recommendation: Financial Resources and Technology (Berkeley City, College of Alameda, Laney and Merritt Colleges)

The team recommends that the district take immediate corrective action to implement all appropriate controls and necessary MIS system modifications to achieve access to a fully integrated computer information management system, including modules for student, financial aid, human resources, and finance, in order to assure financial integrity and accountability. All corrective action and system testing should be completed within two years and the governing board should receive regular implementation progress reports until project completion (Standards III.D.1.a, III.D.1.b, and III.D.2.a).

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Recommendation: *Board and District Administration (Berkeley City, Laney and Merritt Colleges)*

The team recommends that the district assess the overall effectiveness of its service to the college and provide clear delineation of functional responsibilities and develop clear processes for decision-making (Standard IV.B.1, IV.B.3:a,b,c,f,g).

Recommendation: *(Laney College only, #7) Governance and Consultation* The team recommends that all college leadership groups participating in district governance strive to clarify and strengthen the individual and collective understanding and adherence to appropriate consultation practices and defined decision-making processes and authority in order to meet the standard (IV.B.1.d,e).

The Commission accredits colleges, thus, the action letters direct the colleges to resolve these issues to meet the standards. However, in cases where the district or system operations and leadership play an important role in assuring institutions come into compliance with accreditation standards, it is the Commission's practice to identify the relevant issues in writing for the district Chancellor. Standard IV.B.1-3 lists those sub sections specific to the district's and board's responsibilities with respect to financial management. Internal controls and sound fiscal management are joint responsibilities at the campus and district levels (Standard IV.B.2.d; IV.3.c,d). In addition, the Commissioners expressed concern regarding recent audit findings including the financial aid audit at Berkeley City College.

The action letters detail follow-up responsibilities for each college; each must report on the status of the district recommendations regarding the management information system and financial resources and technology and resolution on the recommendation on board and district administration by March 15, 2010. Resolution of the management information system and financial resources and technology recommendations is required by March 15, 2011.

The recommendations contained in the Evaluation Team Reports represent the observations of the evaluation teams at the time of the visit. The Commission reminds you that while you may concur or disagree with any part of the teams' reports, the colleges are expected to use the reports to improve the educational programs and services of each institution.

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On behalf of the Commission, I wish to express continuing interest in the institution's educational quality and students' success. Professional self-regulation is the most effective means of assuring institutional integrity, effectiveness and quality.

Sincerely,



Barbara A. Beno, Ph.D.
President

BAB/tl

cc: Dr. Betty Inclan, President, Berkeley City College
Dr. George Herring, President, College of Alameda
Dr. Frank Chong, President, Laney College
Dr. Robert Adams, President, Merritt College