

# Peralta Community College District Fiscal Improvement Plan Services

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**Phase I – Final Report**  
**June 6, 2019**



HIGHER EDUCATION  
CONSULTING

1130 K Street, Suite 150  
Sacramento, CA 95814  
P: 916-446-5058  
F: 917-287-9576

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## Executive Summary

### Background

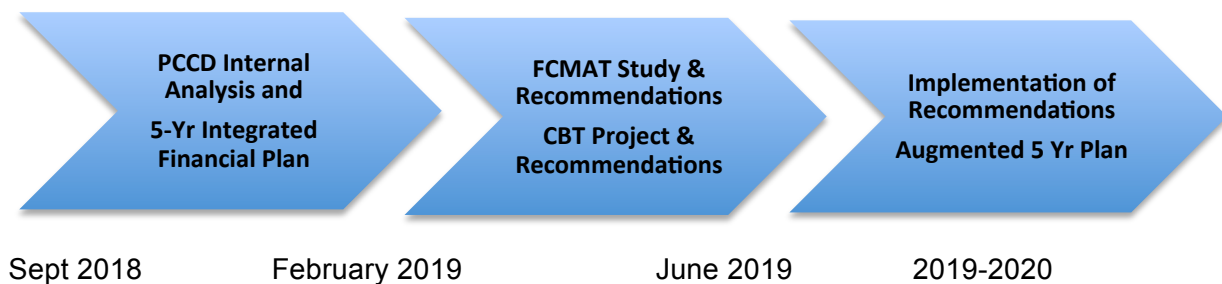
The Collaborative Brain Trust *Fiscal Improvement Plan Services Project* began in February 2019, as a result of several reviews of the Peralta Community College District (PCCD) by its Board of Trustees, internal administration, fiscal auditors, and the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC). These entities all agree that the fiscal health and long-range fiscal stability of the District are at risk under its current conditions and context.

Risk analyses conducted by these bodies, coupled with declining enrollment, a new state Student Centered Funding Formula (SCFF), a structural deficit and high retiree Other Post-Employment Benefits (OPEB), and facilities bonds obligations revealed that external assistance would be beneficial. The Board of Trustees engaged the services of Fiscal Crisis Management Assistance and Training (FCMAT), through the state Chancellor's Office, and technical support by the Collaborative Brain Trust (CBT) to conduct an in-depth institutional assessment and provide recommendations for improvements. The FCMAT and CBT reviews assisted PCCD with its internal analysis and provided insights for development of the actionable fiscal improvement plan required by ACCJC and an emerging, dynamic Five-Year Integrated Financial Plan for the District.

### CBT Project Overview

CBT presented a two-phase proposal to the PCCD Board for the *Fiscal Improvement Plan Services Project*, wherein an in-depth Discovery Phase (Phase I) would be conducted Spring 2019, followed by an Operational Plan (Phase II) during the 2019-2020 year.

Recommendations from the District's own internal analysis, FCMAT, and the CBT Project (Phase I) will shape the CBT Project Phase II (Operational) plan. The timeline for the process is depicted below.



## Project Scope, Objectives, and Guiding Principles

The CBT project focuses on four key objectives in order to ensure the District is prepared for the future by better understanding the risks and opportunities that are most critical to PCCD. Looking towards future financial stability, the CBT team engaged in activities from the perspective of understanding where the District is today and where it desires to be in the next three to five years. Project activities focus on institutional assessment and recommendations not only to restore the fiscal health of the District, but also to embrace meaningful change to positively impact the long-term fiscal stability of the District.

The four key objectives of the project are designed to take a comprehensive, integrated approach to financial improvement in the District. CBT proposed that all four project objectives be engaged *concurrently* to leverage economies of scale in terms of knowledge transfer and consultant capabilities, to decrease the overall cost and shorten the overall timeline, and to ensure that financial planning is integrated from the onset. Activities under each objective span both phases of the project. The four key objectives are:

- **Objective One:** Fiscal Review and Improving Fiscal Stability and Sustainability
- **Objective Two:** Organizational Efficiencies and Accountability
- **Objective Three:** Enrollment Management; Maximizing Student Access & Success
- **Objective Four:** Executive Turnover

There are several guiding principles underlying the CBT project. First, a successful fiscal improvement plan for the District must address enrollment, retention, and completion – this is at the core of the issues that have surrounded PCCD for the past decade, and even more critical under the state’s new Student-Centered Funding Formula. Second, a comprehensively designed plan will position PCCD to mitigate the impact of apportionment swings due to economic events by identifying alternative funding sources, accurately projecting future obligations, and identifying areas of inefficiency for cost savings purposes. Third, the assessment and recommendations are evidence-based, utilizing validated District data, to provide a strong foundation for future planning across PCCD. Fourth, the CBT project will dovetail with the work of the FCMAT Study to provide an integration of recommendations from both projects as the Phase II Operational Plan is developed.

## Project Phases

The CBT *Fiscal Improvement Plan Services Project*, as described above, was divided into two phases:

### Phase One (March – June 2019)

The goal of this first phase was to conduct a District-wide institutional assessment of the four objectives described in the project scope above and provide recommendations for the Phase II Operational Plan for meaningful, sustainable change that will bring fiscal stability to the District. A unified vision, defined approach, and integration of planning efforts are needed to strengthen student access, success, and enrollment growth. These are critical to maximize funding and for ongoing fiscal sustainability for the future.

## Phase Two (September 2019 – May 2020)

The work of this second phase will be based on the findings and recommendations from Phase I. Phase II's objective is to operationalize recommendations for change identified as a result of the institutional assessment conducted. Making the substantive changes necessary in both district operations, and the colleges', are critical to PCCD's future. Developing a unified vision for the District and an overarching set of goals that both align with the State's Vision for Success and provide overall direction to the colleges for collective, proactive work toward student access, success, and enrollment growth will be key to the success of Phase II. Working collaboratively, with common purpose, while responding locally to each college's unique needs, will be at the core of Phase II's approach, with the end goal of student success and fiscal sustainability.

### **Findings and Recommendations**

The CBT team spent a great deal of time ensuring that the Discovery Phase was both multi-faceted and as thorough as possible for its three month time frame. The purpose of this first phase of the project was to provide targeted recommendations that could be used in combination with FCMAT and ACCJC recommendations to support a comprehensive operational plan in Phase II for strategic action for both short-term and long term fiscal stability. In support of that objective, this Final Report does not provide narrative commendations on the many areas of strength in the Peralta District and its colleges, but rather focuses on areas that need attention. While the findings may appear overly critical, a sincere effort was made to portray them accurately and in the proportion found during the Discovery Phase. It should be noted that PCCD faculty, staff and administration in the colleges and in the District office are mostly individuals dedicated to Peralta and its students, who, despite the challenges faced by the District, are receiving an excellent education. However, it is difficult to determine how many prospective students and staff are lost each year due to faulty infrastructure, facilities, systems, and processes, and the resulting negative climate and fiscal impact of that loss. This project's intent is to provide recommendations to support Peralta's ability to thrive and gain stability for the future.

Project approach, activities, detailed observations, findings, and survey results can all be found in the remainder of this report. There is an urgent and critical need for the District Administrative Services and the four colleges to work together with unified purpose to address the fiscal challenges PCCD faces today and for the future. The need for this approach was found to be pervasive in all the activities of Phase I of the project, and can be represented as a progression of coordinated efforts represented in the graphic below.



Six thematic areas of recommendations emerged from the Project's Phase I (Discovery). These recommendations will be used to design the Project's Phase II (Operational Plan). As previously mentioned, recommendations from FCMAT, as well as those from the ACCJC review of the PCCD Fiscal Improvement Plan, will be integrated into the Phase II (Operational Plan). An overview of the six themes and their respective recommendations are outlined below. More detailed information can be found in the full report, which follows this executive summary.

## **Area 1: Leadership and Accountability**

### **Observations/Findings:**

Listening sessions and interviews revealed that leadership in the District is desired; executives are committed to PCCD's mission and the vision of student access and success. However, in the past several years the executive cabinet (Chancellor with vice chancellors and college presidents) has not shared unity in purpose and direction and has often been divisive, competitive, and not operating as a team. It is critical for this body to develop a shared vision and to work in unison, not only to provide for the good of the District and its students, but also to model the attributes expected in cascading levels of leadership throughout the organization.

Lack of accountability has been pervasive throughout both the District administrative services and in the four colleges; yet, most employees desire and support the acquisition and infusion of accountability for smooth operations and achievement of outcomes. Clear and current job descriptions, performance expectations in both character and competence, and accountability measures are needed. Requisite skill sets are often lacking in hiring practices, and there is a paucity of onboarding practices, training, professional development and succession planning across all employee groups. The use of interim assignments and assignment of management work to faculty and staff is excessive. This creates a further lack of accountability, since members within the same union cannot "supervise" peer members. This is true in the case of both faculty and staff who do not have supervisory responsibility. The lack of clarity between centralized and decentralized services (described below) further exacerbates lack of accountability.

The PCCD Planning and Budgeting Integration Model (PBIM) has a strong foundation of participation by all constituencies in the District and its colleges, but has become unwieldy, fragmented, and lacks unified direction. Decisions are slow to come to fruition, impeding progress in the District, and at times work is duplicative or at cross-purposes.

Leadership for overall planning of IT in the District is lacking, including the integration of such planning with other District efforts, and prioritization of IT needs in alignment with District and College Strategic Plans, the State Vision for Success, and the integrated planning and budgeting processes of the District.

Executive turnover has been excessive in the district and has contributed to the leadership issues cited. However, data does not exist for analysis of reasons for this turnover; feedback from the Human Resources department is anecdotal and exit interviews and/or surveys have not been not required.



**Recommendations:**

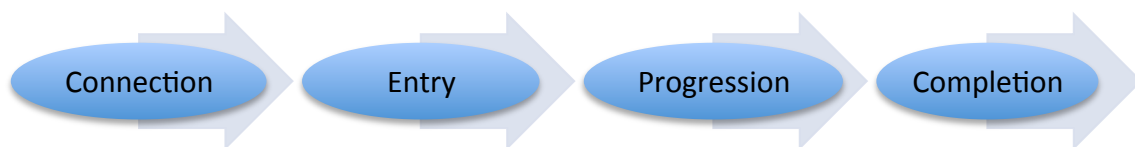
- Streamline and Build a cohesive Executive Cabinet for PCCD; exercise and model a team approach of strong leadership and management of the District and its colleges.
- Build a strong Human Resources framework of roles, responsibilities, and accountability; update job descriptions; implement a system of performance review with integrity and accountability; implement the PeopleSoft Human Resources module and strengthen personnel practices.
- Re-examine, analyze, realign, and clarify centralized and decentralized services; align staffing as appropriate.
- Establish an office of professional development with full-time staffing to address onboarding and ongoing training and development needs of all employees.
- Redesign the PBIM to be a more cohesive, nimble structure, while maintaining participatory practices, in order to address the more rapidly changing landscape of PCCD's community colleges and the needs of its students.
- Provide leadership for Information Technology, develop a Technology Master Plan for the District, and implement recommendations from the Information Technology Focused Review.
- Implement an exit survey and interview process for exiting executive and administrative staff so further analysis can be done to reduce turnover.

**Area 2: Enrollment Management**

**Observations / Findings:**

Effective, student-centered enrollment management is at the heart of any institution of higher education in supporting the success of its students. The best way to assess the effectiveness of a district's enrollment management is to examine whether the needs of the students are being met. One way to assess this is by exploration of the district's structures and systems through the framework of the students' "life cycle" which begins with the student's first contact with the district through his/her application, admission, enrollment in classes, and progression through the curriculum to final attainment of goals laid out in the student's educational plan. This can be described as the Student Life Cycle Continuum, as displayed below, with the student progressing through the stages of connection, entry, progression, and completion.

**Student Life Cycle Continuum**



The desire among employees at PCCD for student access and success at the Peralta colleges is noticeably strong. Many Peralta students attend two, three, or even all four of the Peralta colleges in pursuit of their educational goals. This phenomenon is called the “swirl”. It is unclear at this point if the “swirl” is a choice by students or if multiple barriers in scheduling, course offerings, or other factors pose barriers for students, preventing them from attaining their certificate or degree at their “home” college. Regardless, it is prudent for the Peralta colleges to engage in enrollment management strategies that reduce the “swirl”, while also maintaining an educational delivery that is effective, productive, and seamless to the student, streamlining his/her attainment of an educational goal.

Productivity across the four colleges remains below the appropriate funded rate of 17.5 FTES/FTEF. Managing program, course, and delivery options is vital to improving this rate while continuing to meet the multi-faceted missions of the four colleges. Although the colleges engage in some collaborative efforts, a great deal more is needed, such as coordinating calendars, block scheduling, and the placement and numbers of course sections. Coordination of degree criteria and articulation agreements with four-year university partners also assists students in completion and transfer, streamlining time-to-degree completion. Additionally, as described in Area 1, the sharing of best practices across colleges, and eliminating competition are important to effective enrollment management.

**Recommendations:**

- Overall
  - Work collaboratively among the four colleges and the district to meet the needs of students across the District through the entire Student Life Cycle Continuum; exercise close, strong collaboration and communication among Instruction, Student Services, and IT.
  - Work collaboratively among the four colleges and the District to create a coherent, unified schedule, which above all, meets the needs of students throughout the District, superseding the competitive autonomy of individual colleges and individual desires of faculty and staff.
  - Provide training and professional development for faculty, classified staff, managers, and administrators with a special emphasis on efficient service and student success from the student's perspective.
- Connection
  - Improve communication to prospective students through public relations, expanded and customized marketing, outreach to prospective students, and in-reach to current students.
  - Improve digital platforms to make websites, social media, and mobile apps as user friendly as possible.

- Entry
  - Remove obstacles that discourage applicants from enrolling.
  - Remove barriers to filing for financial aid and applying to special programs, especially DSPS.
  - Ensure entry processes can be executed by students at their “home” campus without travel to other campuses or the District Office.
- Progression
  - Continue to emphasize a student-teacher ratio which will ensure fiscal solvency and reach a fiscally appropriate FTES to FTEF ratio of at least 17.5.
  - Analyze enrollment trend data to put resources into programs and courses in greatest student demand.
  - Adopt strategies to support effective, efficient schedules that maximize student access to coursework needed to fulfill their Student Educational Plans (SEPs) (i.e. block scheduling; numbers, placement, and timing of sections, etc.)
  - Develop strategies for growth collaboratively among the colleges and the District that increase dual enrollment, distance education courses, and noncredit education and respond to local community and workforce needs.
- Completion
  - Track students from first enrollment through certificate and/or degree completion by improving technology, expanding early alert systems, implementing the degree audit system, and awarding certificates and degrees automatically when completed.
  - Strengthen approaches / strategies that support transfer and job acquisition.

### **Area 3: District-wide Systems and Processes**

#### **Observations / Findings:**

Systems and processes which support effective and efficient operations for the District are greatly hindered by (a) the lack of automation and (b) conflict and confusion between centralized and decentralized processes and accountabilities. PeopleSoft 9.2 has been only partially implemented. High priorities for automation are core functions and mission-critical processes, such as the Human Resources and Student Services modules. The Human Resources module is critical to reducing risk, cost, and errors in personnel services and also to linking the personnel processes (position control, salary calculations, compensation, etc.) to the financial system of the District – areas cited as critical needs in the Fiscal Plan. The Student Services module is critical to student success and completion as it contains many elements to support students, including the degree audit and award processes and links to student notifications and communications.

Accountability and responsibility for systems and processes across the District continues to be unclear. The hybrid approach which combines centralized and decentralized services depending on the college needing such services and situations where vacancies exist continues to be confusing to staff. This also disrupts workflow, slows productivity, and impedes achievement of outcomes. Additionally, those services considered “centralized” are not always well-supported by District administrative services when needed at the college level.

Challenges in the PBIM (see Area 1 above) cascade to role confusion, duplication, gaps, and slow decision making in the systems and processes of the District. Cumbersome and outdated procedures and job descriptions, management turnover and vacancies, manual processes, and the inability to interface what systems do exist pose constraints for fiscal and facilities management, information technology support, and other mission-critical and core functions at PCCD.

Overall, the systems and processes in the District and its colleges have not been well-coordinated, nor are they integrated with educational master planning. Evidence of integrated Educational and Facilities Master Plans could not be found, and administrative support systems have either outdated or non-existent master plans (e.g. information technology, deferred maintenance, staffing, training and professional development, etc.) These disconnects, silos, and voids have posed barriers to effective, efficient systems and processes across the District.

**Recommendations:**

- Complete the PeopleSoft transition, giving high priority to the Human Resources and Student Services modules.
- Streamline, re-engineer, and redesign systems and processes to increase effectiveness and efficiency; automate manual processes.
- Analyze services to determine which systems and processes are centralized vs. decentralized; once organizational structure and staffing are aligned clarify roles, responsibilities, and accountabilities of those involved and revise job descriptions as needed; determine appropriate protocol for communication and collaboration between the District Office and colleges’ operating procedures; ensure policies and procedures are updated appropriately.

**Area 4: Organizational Structure and Staffing**

**Organizational Structure**

**Observations / Findings:**

District Office staffing has grown over time. Some can be attributed to the centralization of services during the recession, while others have been due to increases in regulations and efforts to correct fiscal and other challenges in the District. Some positions, it appears, have been added and/or titled to attract more highly qualified candidates at higher pay levels and with more senior titles due to the high cost of living and competition in the surrounding area for such professionals. Over time, the structure has grown and been reshaped largely by

external forces and, as in any organization, requires a thoughtful review and planned approach to redesign.

The “sprawl” approach needs to be replaced with a “planned community” approach for more effective and efficient District operations, responsive to contemporary times. Also, vacancies have been used to balance the budget and address the structural deficit rather than examining positions from a critical core of key functions, to those of lesser importance that could be held vacant for a cycle. This has led to heightened fiscal risk, lack of supervision and accountability, lack of achievement of outcomes, inconsistent operations, and poor public relations with some community members and organizations.

Staffing at the college level has also been affected by fiscal challenges in the District and external forces. Staffing patterns have developed over time in an isolated manner at each college in response to initiatives, and with a patchwork of centralized vs. decentralized approaches to services (e.g. research, information technology, marketing, Financial Aid, DSPS, technical specialists, etc.) (See Area 3.)

The organizational structure and staffing of the District Office warrants a thorough review. Any redesign of a multi-college District Office should take into account the desired mix of centralized and decentralized services. Once this has been completed, a review of the organizational structure and staffing of the colleges is also warranted, accompanied by a redesign of the participatory governance structures of the District (i.e. the PBIM, BAM, and other committee structures.) This provides for effective decision making, and lays the foundation for efficient systems and processes, where roles, responsibilities, and accountabilities can be delineated.

Communication and coordination among District and college staff in many areas is lacking. This has led to distrust and the colleges wanting more decentralized services, which becomes less cost-effective. Additionally, in administrative and general services areas (such as business, personnel, research, IT, and maintenance services in particular), decentralization can lead to inconsistencies and redundancy unless strong operating procedures with accountability are in place. Centralization vs. decentralization of staff and services needs further study to determine the best mix for PCCD, taking into account the proximity and culture of the District office and four colleges, budgetary constraints, the ability to maintain consistency in District operations, responsiveness to college staff and student needs, the frequency of staff vacancies and turnover, and the difficulty of finding skilled technicians in administrative and student support services.

**Recommendations:**

- Consider reorganizing the District office, streamlining the vice chancellor structure, and analyzing all positions as first tier (core-critical), second tier, or third tier; use analyses to ensure positions that are mission-critical and/or support core administrative functions are a priority; adhere to fiscal and legal staffing requirements; ensure internal controls are intact; avoid reliance solely on vacancies for personnel budget savings.
- Conduct an in-depth review of the organizational structure of administrative and support services at the District and the colleges; determine the mix of centralized vs.

decentralized staffing and services (based on the criteria cited under observations/findings above); clarify these in writing; align staffing as appropriate.

- Conduct, as a second step, an in-depth review of organizational structure at the four colleges for alignment with centralization decisions. Identify “core staffing” for a Peralta college based on decisions made about centralized and decentralized functions (e.g. Financial Aid Director, DSPS Director/Coordinator, registrar, researcher, IT and maintenance staffing, etc.)
- Re-examine, analyze, realign, and clarify governance structures (e.g. PBIM, BAM, etc.) with decisions on centralization and decentralization.

## Staffing

### Observations / Findings

Executive turnover in the Peralta District has been high. No data was available to CBT for analysis of this phenomenon because exit interviews and/or surveys are not conducted.

The District currently has over \$4M in frozen vacant positions to address just the current year budget deficit. Many of these positions are key positions that reside in the administrative and student support services areas and support vital operational functions.

The “50% Law” requires that a minimum of 50% of unrestricted funds must be spent on classroom instruction. The District currently meets this requirement, but only at the level of 50.07%. Since most current vacancies are in non-instructional areas, filling these positions could cause the District to drop below the 50% threshold. In examining District staffing patterns, it was found that many faculty hired as instructional faculty have been given non-instructional assignments, thereby removing that portion of their pay from the instructional calculation for the 50% requirement. Additionally, the District has exceeded its full-time Faculty Obligation Number (FON) over the past few years, but with decreasing classroom productivity (FTES per FTEF.) Increasing this productivity to the funded appropriate productivity level of 17.5 is one of the necessary priorities for fiscal stability. However, to maintain the 50% Law threshold, and as another important priority for fiscal stability, concurrent enrollment growth must be a priority. An in-depth review of faculty staffing and assignments is needed in addressing the fiscal status and long-term stability of the District.

The colleges do not all have financial aid directors and there is a district registrar rather than a registrar at each college, causing students to be sent at times to the District office to complete paperwork. These position gaps create hardships for students and could deter them from enrolling.

- Unless and until staffing and service needs are analyzed, and enterprise systems and applications are fully implemented, it is unclear as to whether the funding and staffing levels of IT across PCCD are adequate; these should also be analyzed based on the District’s decision on a centralized vs. decentralized approach to IT; additionally, future demands as bond dollars are expended on renovated and/or expanded facilities may result in either increased or decreased staffing and resource needs.

### **Recommendations**

- Conduct exit interviews and/or surveys of key personnel, especially at the executive and administrative levels of the District and implement strategies for reducing the turnover rate.
- Develop a comprehensive staffing plan that aligns with the decisions made regarding centralization and decentralization of services; fill vacancies as appropriate to meet core functions and address mission-critical systems for student success.
- Build a strong Human Resources framework of roles, responsibilities, and accountability; update job descriptions; implement a system of performance review with integrity and accountability; implement the PeopleSoft Human Resources module and strengthen personnel practices.
- Conduct an in-depth review of faculty staffing and assignments to help address the fiscal status and long-term stability of the District.

## **Onboarding, Training, and Development**

### **Observations / Findings**

Other important issues related to structure and staffing pertain to skill sets and development needs of staff in multiple areas of the District and colleges. Some employees lack the skill sets to perform job functions; others have been hired lacking initial skill sets, and have not been provided training, or been required to attain such training; yet others refuse to do assigned work and/or have excessive absences impeding progress of daily operations. Additionally, onboarding of new employees, training, and development are lacking.

- There is no Office of Staff Development, nor a Director of Staff Development, nor any other Staff Development position in the District; a rotating faculty coordinator position with reassigned time to conduct flex activities for faculty is in place.
- A comprehensive onboarding program for new employees at all levels of the organization is needed; a comprehensive onboarding program for new students at the four colleges is also needed for such areas as technology usage, services available, etc.

### **Recommendations**

- Establish and staff a professional development office in the District office to address the above findings and support training and development needs of all employees; coordinate the work of the faculty flex coordinator with this office.
- Incorporate orientation to District and College infrastructure (e.g. use of email, Canvas, etc.) into new student onboarding procedures.
- Provide training and development for managers and classified staff in addition to flex activities for faculty, especially in high priority, core functions such as IT and the business office.

## Area 5: Fiscal Stability

### Observations / Findings:

The overall fiscal health of the District is at risk due to multiple factors including a structural deficit that is exacerbated by previous lack of development and oversight of budgets, declining enrollment/revenue, a growing Other Post-Employment Benefits (OPEB) liability that relies heavily on a revocable trust funded through debt of the District, and audit findings that cite a lack of internal control. The current structural deficit is being addressed primarily through the freezing of multiple key positions and reduction to an operating budget that does not adequately address scheduled maintenance.

The new Student-Centered Funding Formula (SCFF) includes hold harmless funding in the near term while the District regains its FTES. While PCCD anticipates favorable fiscal projections under the new formula, it is uncertain at this time whether the SCFF will be capped and/or fully funded, and the enrollment gap remains a challenge for the District, as FTES targets are yet to be met. The gap between actual and projected funding continues to be potentially much greater than the current District projection model suggests without sufficient enrollment growth – a key factor still required in the SCFF. Additionally, District budget projections do not clearly show the continued reliance on the parcel tax, and the potential deficit “cliff” the district faces in the next few years in the absence of realized, and funded, enrollment growth. These are all extremely critical factors in considering fiscal risk of the District. Even without these future threats, the District has a current structural deficit that is only temporarily addressed by freezing over \$4M in vacant positions, some of which are mission-critical and/or essential to meet core functions of the District.

Executive turnover and management vacancies have created a culture of mistrust, and employees are often placed in situations without supervision or the appropriate leadership for priority setting and decision making. The current vice chancellor structure appears unwieldy, and creates silos in the District, especially in such areas as (a) business and information technology services, and (b) leadership for implementation of educational initiatives that involve both instruction and student services. Also, vacant management positions, lack of supervisory skill sets, and lack of technical skill sets required in professional technical positions have all contributed to errors, fiscal risk, and ineffective controls and monitoring. The lack of integrated and automated business processes, and role confusion over centralized vs. decentralized services impact overall productivity and further increase risk.

### Recommendations:

- Consider reorganizing the vice chancellor and District business offices structure.
- Establish realistic revenue projections based on reasonable enrollment targets allowing for any reduction in revenue related to the hold harmless period of SCFF; provide detailed footnotes of budget assumptions in budget projection models; engage in multi-year planning to mitigate anticipated loss of ongoing revenue.



- Review the current OPEB planning as referenced in the Five-Year Plan; explore feasibility of establishing an irrevocable trust as it relates to any limitations under the current debt repayments.
- Address the integrity of fiscal procedures and Internal controls through staff training, filling key vacancies with qualified people, automating business processes, and clarifying centralized vs. decentralized services.
- Strengthen purchasing and contract oversight; provide professional development and engage managers in addressing difficult work environments, redundant processes and inefficiencies; re-engineer processes and staffing patterns as necessary.
- Review, revise, and automate business processes; integrate financial, human resources, and student information systems appropriately.
- Examine centralized and decentralized services to streamline, encourage collaboration, and eliminate duplication; align organizational structure and staffing with District and college priorities.

## Area 6: Public Image and Marketing

### Observations / Findings:

There is an overall lack of public awareness of the Peralta District and, to a lesser degree, its colleges, as evidenced in survey results. This might be viewed as a negative from a marketing perspective, but it is positive in that the public is also unaware - and therefore not negatively impacted by - Peralta's fiscal and management difficulties. This presents an opportunity for the District to fill the void with positive messaging.

Feedback from surveys was mixed. Respondents cited they would not recommend Peralta to friends and family as a place to work, but would recommend it as a place to attend college.

### Recommendations:

- Create consistent, positive messaging for both the Peralta District and its colleges.
- Expand both outreach and in-reach marketing of college programs.
- Create web, social media, and mobile platform marketing experiences for area residents.
- Customize marketing approaches by student demographics, delivery modes, and business and industry market segments.

## Summary and Next Steps

It is hoped that the District Board and administration will strongly consider the recommendations as crucial to the long-term fiscal stability of the District and its colleges, even though they will require substantive change in District and college operations and practices. These recommendations, along with those from FCMAT and ACCJC, will be used to shape the framework for the *CBT Fiscal Improvement Services Project - Phase II*.

## Introduction to the Full Project Report

The Peralta Community College District (PCCD) and its colleges have a long-standing history of providing outstanding higher education services to the residents of Northern Alameda County and the extended region. However, in recent years a series of events have caused great concern over the future fiscal stability of the District. The recent recession followed by a growing and thriving economy has resulted in a drastic rise in the cost of living and a concurrent drop in student enrollments in the Peralta Colleges. This has also contributed to such challenges as executive turnover, audit findings, and a structural deficit in the District budget. A new Student-Centered Funding Formula (SCFF) for California's community colleges and several important legislative initiatives pose further challenges for the District and its colleges. Long-term fiscal health and stability are of great concern to the District as well as to such external reviewers as PCCD's fiscal auditors and the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC) of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC), the regional accrediting body for PCCD's four colleges.

The Board of Trustees and District administration have taken the situation seriously and responded swiftly and aggressively in a three-pronged approach to address the current landscape. The following three key actions have been taken:

1. An in-depth **internal analysis** has been conducted, and the *PCCD Integrated Five-Year Financial Plan* has been developed; this serves not only as a response to ACCJC for a fiscal improvement plan but also continues the integration of institutional effectiveness with budgeting and resource allocation processes.
2. The Board of Trustees has requested and been granted from the California Community Colleges' Chancellors Office an external study by Fiscal Crisis Management and Assistance Team (FCMAT) to conduct a **management assistance study** that includes an analysis of fiscal health risk, staffing, spending, and other post-employment benefits (OPEB); it also provides fiscal management training to staff. The FCMAT report of findings and recommendations is anticipated June 2019.
3. The Board of Trustees has engaged the Collaborative Brain Trust (CBT) in a **project for fiscal improvement plan services** by conducting an in-depth external assessment of the district to complement its internal assessment. The project encompasses examination of fiscal services, effectiveness and efficiency of district systems and processes, enrollment management, and executive turnover. The project is planned over two phases: first, to conduct a comprehensive institutional assessment of PCCD and provide recommendations for improvement by June 2019; and second, to provide support for the implementation of these recommendations, and also those from FCMAT, over the next year.

This document constitutes the final report of the *CBT Fiscal Improvement Plan Services Project – Phase I (Discovery)*. The chapters that follow provide an overview of the project, its purpose and approach, findings, and recommendations. An Executive Summary is provided, as well as a Summary and description of next steps for Phase II of the Project, which will provide support for the District as it operationalizes the results from Phase I. Integration of

FCMAT findings, and recommendations from ACCJC are also planned for Phase II of the project.

## Project Overview and Approach

The *CBT Fiscal Improvement Plan Services Project – Phase I (Discovery)* was conducted during the Spring Semester of 2019. Upon approval by the Board of Trustees on February 26, 2019 the team commenced its comprehensive institutional assessment of the Peralta District to ascertain its current status, provide findings and recommendations to strengthen its fiscal health, and to lay a foundation for meaningful change in Phase II to support long-term fiscal stability of the District. Both qualitative and quantitative data and evidence was collected and analyzed under four project objectives:

- Objective One: Fiscal Review and Improving Fiscal Stability and Sustainability
- Objective Two: Organizational Efficiencies and Accountability
- Objective Three: Enrollment Management; Maximizing Student Access & Success
- Objective Four: Executive Turnover

In addition to extensive data review and analysis, Phase I (Discovery) incorporated listening sessions, interviews, and focused discussions at the District Office and at all four colleges. Trustees, executives, governance leadership, administrators, managers, faculty, classified staff, and students were all included in these sessions. Dialogue generated critical thinking about Peralta's fiscal challenges and how to best serve its students and the region. Representative quotes from these sessions can be found in Appendix D. Additionally, several surveys were conducted with excellent response rates.

The CBT team spent a great deal of time ensuring that the Discovery Phase was both multi-faceted and as thorough as possible for its three month time frame. The purpose of this first phase of the project was to provide targeted recommendations that could be used in combination with FCMAT and ACCJC recommendations to support a comprehensive operational plan in Phase II for strategic action for both short-term and long term fiscal stability. In support of that objective, this Final Report does not provide narrative commendations on the many areas of strength in the Peralta District and its colleges, but rather focuses on areas that need attention. While the findings may appear overly critical, a sincere effort was made to portray them accurately and in the proportion found during the Discovery Phase. It should be noted that PCCD faculty, staff and administration in the colleges and in the District office are mostly individuals dedicated to Peralta and its students, who, despite the challenges faced by the District, are receiving an excellent education. However, it is difficult to determine how many prospective students and staff are lost each year due to faulty infrastructure, facilities, systems, and processes, and the resulting negative climate and fiscal impact of that loss. This project's intent is to provide recommendations to support Peralta's ability to thrive and gain stability for the future.

## Surveys

### Internal Survey

A survey was conducted for faculty, staff, administrators, and students. The purpose of the survey was to better understand the feelings of employees and students toward the District and the colleges. There were 831 responses to the survey, including 500 from students. Responses were received from full-time and part-time faculty, administrators and classified staff from the District and all four Peralta colleges. The results of this survey are included in Appendix A.

### External Surveys

CBT ran two surveys of the external community: a general external community survey with results weighted to be representative of Peralta's service area, and a supplementary survey of ESOL learners.

**External community survey.** CBT commissioned [Penn Schoen Berland](#), a leading research firm, to run a survey of District residents aged 18 and older. The survey was designed to help the District and individual colleges increase the recruitment and retention of adults; understand and better forecast demand for college programs; and identify the motivations and barriers to enrollment. The questionnaire asked about:

- Job security and reasons for seeking further education and training
- Interest in enrolling in education and training programs
- Whether they are interested in degree or certificate programs, and in which fields
- Preferred delivery mode (online, hybrid, in-person)
- Awareness and opinions about Peralta colleges compared to other local and national colleges
- Awareness of issues affecting Peralta CCD, and impact of news coverage

Penn Schoen Berland (PSB) conducted 333 interviews among adults aged 18–55 from northern Alameda County via an online poll fielded between April 18 and May 22, 2019. All interviewees have not ruled out enrolling in an education or training program in the next six months.

Survey results were weighted by age and race using Peralta CCD area census data from the [California Adult Education Program](#) to achieve broad representation of demographics in the Peralta colleges' service area. Results from the Survey can be found in Appendix B.

**English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) survey.** The PSB poll used a panel of adults who have pre-registered to be on a market research panel and answer surveys. There was concern that non-English speakers are less likely to be included in national consumer panels, so CBT worked with the Laney College ESOL Department to survey current and potential ESOL students as a pilot project. If informative, and based on results from this pilot, future efforts across a larger audience could be employed, and the instrument might serve marketing purposes as well. A [questionnaire in 15 languages](#) was posted and work was done with faculty and community-based organizations to recruit non-students to take the survey. Results of the survey can be found in Appendix C.

## Information Technology Focused Review

Midway during Phase I it became apparent that information technology (IT) issues were causing challenges in all areas under review. As an important infrastructure for fiscal health, enrollment management, and support of the student access and success, this critical area of need was discussed with the Chancellor. A more in-depth, focused review was conducted of this area, resulting in a separate companion report to this document.

It was determined that a two-pronged approach was needed for IT: First, an operational plan developed to organize and sequence already agreed-upon priorities for the District; And, second, a written process for developing a comprehensive Technology Master Plan for the District, through a participatory process, that would align with Peralta's educational, enrollment, and facilities plans. The first component is recommended for implementation immediately as an "inter-phase" (between Phases I and II) project, and the second is recommended to be added to the ongoing project in Phase II.

## Observations, Findings, and Recommendations

Observations and findings were analyzed, and recommendations formulated. These recommendations were grouped into six thematic areas for operationalizing during Phase II. Recommendations under each theme are outlined below. Additionally, there is an urgent and critical need for the District Administrative Services and the four colleges to work together with unified purpose to address the fiscal challenges PCCD faces today and for the future. The need for this approach was found to be pervasive in all the activities of Phase I of the project, and can be represented as a progression of coordinated efforts represented in the graphic below:



### 1. Leadership and Accountability

#### Observations / Findings

Listening sessions and interviews revealed that leadership in the District is desired; executives are committed to PCCD's mission and the vision of student access and success. However, in the past several years the executive cabinet (Chancellor with vice chancellors and college presidents) has not shared unity in purpose and direction and has often been divisive, competitive, and not operating as a team. It is critical for this body to develop a shared vision and to work in unison, not only to provide for the good of the District and its students, but also to model the attributes expected in cascading levels of leadership throughout the organization.

Lack of accountability is pervasive throughout the District administrative services and in the four colleges, yet employees desire and support the acquisition and infusion of accountability for smooth operations and achievement of outcomes. Clear and current job descriptions, performance expectations in both character and competence, and accountability measures are needed. Requisite skill sets are often lacking in hiring practices, and there is a paucity of onboarding practices, training, professional development and succession planning across all employee groups. The use of interim assignments, and assignment of management work to faculty and staff is excessive and creates a further lack of accountability, as members within the same union cannot “supervise” peer members. This is true in the case of both faculty and staff who do not have supervisory responsibility. The lack of clarity between centralized and decentralized services (described below) further exacerbates lack of accountability.

The PCCD Planning and Budgeting Integration Model (PBIM) has a strong foundation of participation by all constituencies in the District and its colleges, but has become unwieldy, fragmented, and lacks unified direction. Decisions are slow to come to fruition, and at times work is duplicative or at cross-purposes.

Leadership for overall planning of IT in the District is lacking, including the integration of such planning with other District efforts, and prioritization of IT needs in alignment with District and College Strategic Plans, the State Vision for Success, and the integrated planning and budgeting processes of the District.

Executive turnover has been excessive in the district and has contributed to the leadership issues cited. However, data does not exist for analysis of reasons for this turnover; feedback from the Human Resources department is anecdotal and exit interviews and/or surveys have not been not required.

### **Recommendations**

- Streamline and Build a cohesive Executive Cabinet for PCCD to model and exercise strong leadership and management of the District and its colleges.
- Build a strong Human Resources framework of roles, responsibilities, and accountability; update job descriptions; implement a system of performance review with integrity and accountability; Implement the PeopleSoft Human Resources module and strengthen personnel practices.
- Re-examine, analyze, realign, and clarify centralized and decentralized services.
- Establish an office of professional development with full-time staffing to address onboarding and ongoing development needs of all employees.
- Redesign the PBIM to be a more cohesive, nimble structure, while maintaining participatory practices, in order to address the more rapidly changing landscape of PCCD’s community colleges and the needs of its students.
- Provide leadership for Information Technology, develop a Technology Master Plan for the District, and implement recommendations from the Information Technology Focused Review.

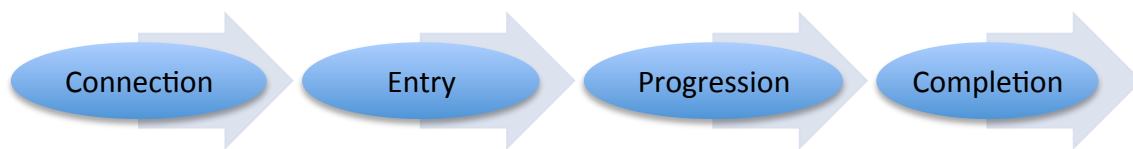
- Implement an exit survey and interview process for exiting executive and administrative staff so further analysis can be done to reduce turnover.

## 2. Enrollment Management

### General Observations and the Student Life Cycle Continuum:

Effective, student-centered enrollment management is at the heart of any institution of higher education in supporting the success of its students. The best way to assess the effectiveness of a District's enrollment management is to examine whether the needs of the students are being met. One way to assess this is by exploration of the district's structures and systems through the framework of the students' "life cycle" which begins with a person's first contact with the district through his/her application, admission, enrollment in classes and the progression through the curriculum to final attainment of goals laid out in the student's educational plan. This can be described as the Student Life Cycle Continuum, as displayed below, with the student progressing through the stages of connection, entry, progression, and completion.

### Student Life Cycle Continuum



Upon completion the student is awarded a certificate or associate degree and enters the job market or transfers to the four-year university for continued education for the baccalaureate degree.

Effective and efficient organization of the district and its colleges is crucial to maximize student access and ensure student success. Key elements of such an organization include: a student services approach that is user friendly so that the maximum number of new and continuing students enroll; an instructional approach that maintains a viable curriculum, employing varied teaching methodologies; a scheduling framework that is fiscally responsible and student friendly so that a student can access necessary coursework and progress toward an educational goal; fully operational infrastructures such as facilities and technology; and strong academic and student support services such as tutoring, counseling, and Human Resources services. A key commitment must be to the student first; and institutional decisions, activities and actions should be based upon communication, cooperation, coordination and collaboration among the colleges and district to support the full Student Life Cycle Continuum.



## Recruiting, On-boarding and Tracking Students

### Observations / Findings:

CBT ran a survey of northern Alameda County residents to estimate the relative size of potential student populations; test some marketing messages; and get residents' opinion of individual Peralta colleges and of the District itself. The District and College reputation data are reported in [Section 6](#). The full results of the survey are included in Appendix B.

Despite the strong job market in the East Bay, 1 in 5 local workers express concerns about job security in the next 12 months, and 1 in 3 don't think it will be easy to find a new job with similar benefits and pay (see Appendix B).

Most workers believe they are not ready for technological changes in the next five years. Adapting to technological change is the area they will need the most help with. One in four workers said that it was "very likely" that "I will need additional education to keep up with advancements in my field" (see Appendix B).

Those who are insecure about their jobs<sup>1</sup> are **twice as likely** to enroll in an educational or training course or program in the next six months (see Appendix B).

Potential students in northern Alameda are most interested in certificate and continuing professional education programs (see Appendix B).

Full time programs are more popular than part time, although there is much interest in an intensive "boot-camp" option. IT and Computing, Business/Management, and Healthcare are the programs most likely to be considered.

Online and hybrid instruction is very popular: One in four of respondents said that they would consider a fully online program, and three-fourths would consider a hybrid online and in-person program.

Marketing and Outreach to the general public about the colleges is very weak and disorganized. The five websites (district and the four colleges) are outdated not user-friendly for students and others who support students and prospective students.

Web-based resources and materials are not cohesive, and the web sites are dissimilar, without common formats. It is also very difficult to find information. Student listening sessions, and the external community survey of potential students, revealed the need for more mobile-accessible platforms.

Most potential students in northern Alameda County aged 55 and younger use their smartphones to search for information about education programs and courses. 30% of potential students under the age of 25 said they "mostly use smartphone" to search for online information about programs and classes (see Appendix B).

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<sup>1</sup> Respondents were classed as insecure if they answered, "very likely" or "somewhat likely" to the question, "Thinking about the next 12 months, how likely do you think it is that you will lose your job or be laid off?"



More than half the applicants to the colleges fail to enroll. The percentage of applicants who enrolled fell from 47.2% to 45.7%.

Figure 1: Percent of Applicants who enroll

Total applicants and enrollments Fall 2016 and Fall 2018		
Stdnt Enrl Stat..	Term	
	Fall 16	Fall 18
Enrolled	47.2%	45.7%
Did not enroll	52.8%	54.3%
Grand Total	100.0%	100.0%

This large percentage of applicants who do not enroll is explained, in part, by the fact that all Oakland Unified School District (OUSD) seniors are required to fill out an application for one of the Peralta District colleges. This exaggerates the number of applicants and increases the gap between application and enrollment; but it by no means explains the gap entirely. Interestingly, the data shows that students 24 years of age and older have a higher rate of applying and not enrolling. In fall 2018, more than 63% of applicants 24 and older, did not enroll. This certainly bears further investigation.

Figure 2: Percent of Applicants who enroll by age

Total applicants and enrollments Fall 2016 and Fall 2018 by Age			
AGE (19 and under/over)	Stdnt Enrl Status	Term	
		Fall 16	Fall 18
<23 years	Enrolled	53.6%	52.0%
	Did not enroll	46.4%	48.0%
24 and older	Enrolled	40.3%	36.8%
	Did not enroll	59.7%	63.2%
Grand Total		100.0%	100.0%

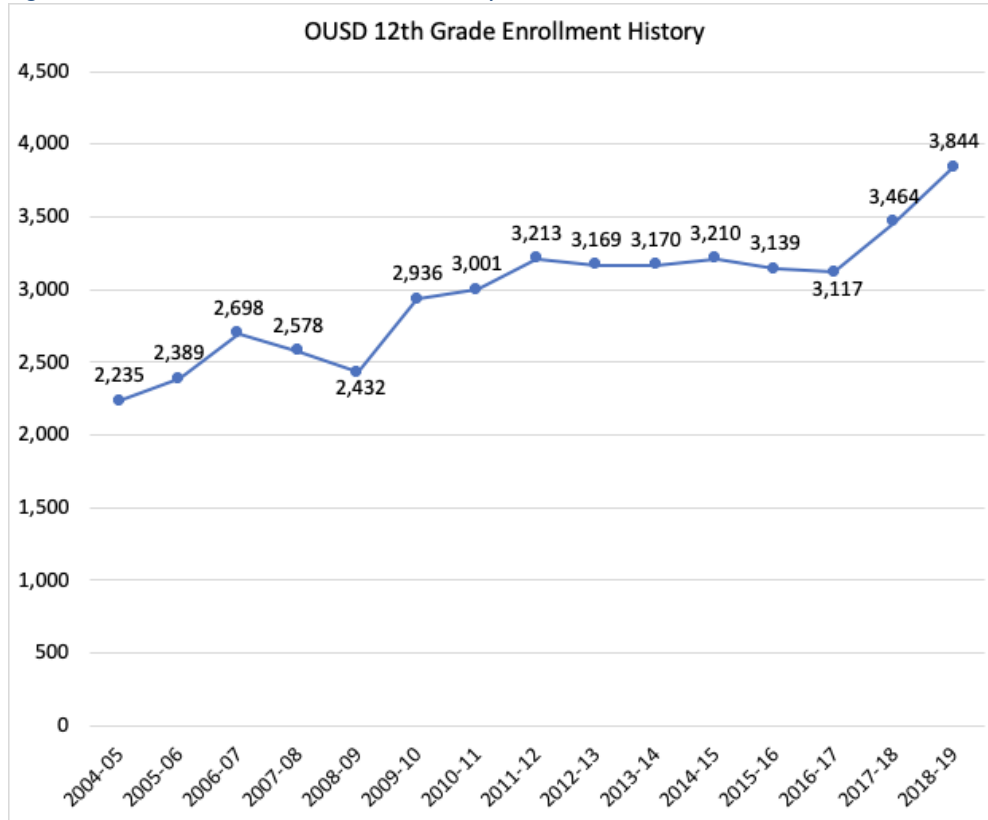
The numbers of students applying decreased from 9,305 in Fall 2016 to 8,001 in Fall 2018. The numbers of these students who apply and do not enroll is substantial. In fall 2018, 4,341 students applied and did not enroll. Nearly half of these students (2,079) were 24 years old or older.

Figure 3: Number of Applicants who enroll

AGE (19 and under/over)		Term	
		Fall 16	Fall 18
<23 years	Enrolled	2,596	2,451
	Did not enroll	2,250	2,262
24 and older	Enrolled	1,796	1,209
	Did not enroll	2,663	2,079
<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>9,305</b>	<b>8,001</b>

Grade 12 enrollment at OUSD is rising rapidly, offering more potential students for both dual enrollment and enrollment after high school. The “capture rate” of high school seniors (graduates) should be tracked and analyzed in conjunction with the population trends in local high school districts.

Figure 4: OUSD 12<sup>th</sup> Grade enrollment history



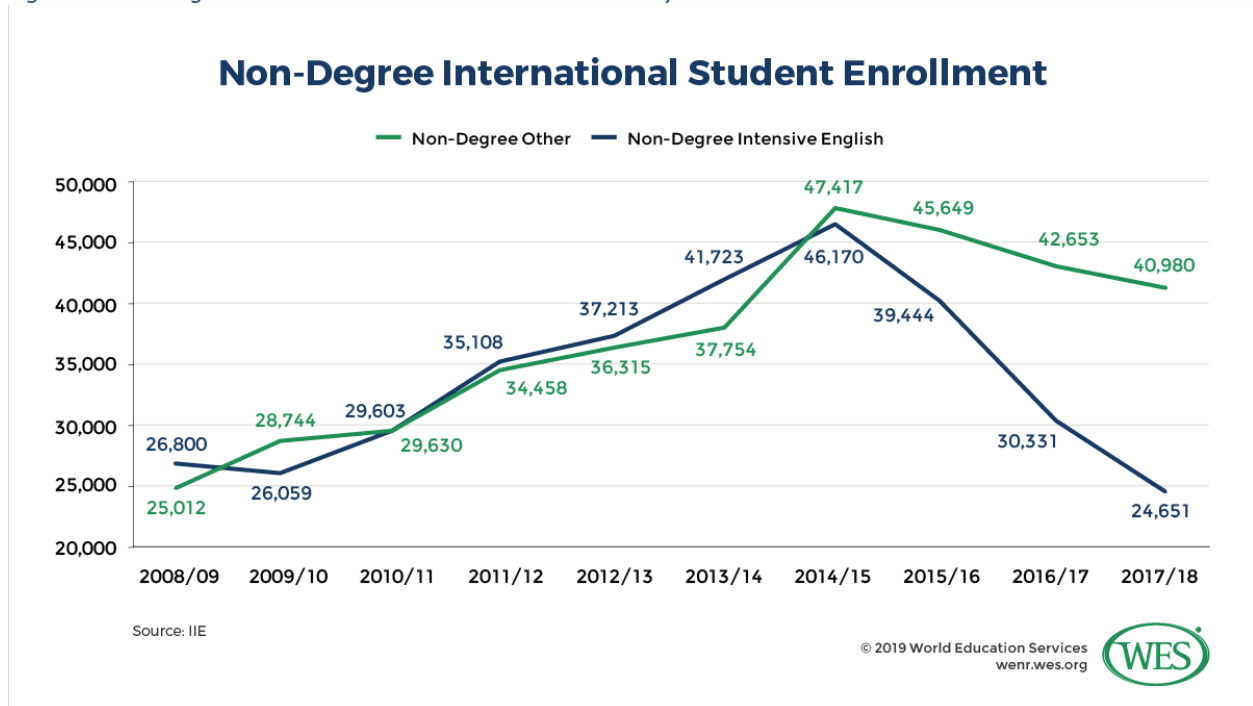
Source: <https://dashboards.ousd.org/>

Almost half (46%) of young Northern Alameda residents said that it was “essential” or “very important” to be able to use their smartphone to apply to an educational program (see Appendix B).

Customer service is uneven across the district and some students perceive that they have been treated rudely. There were also positive comments. In the Internal Survey (see Appendix A), students reported that they found staff in A&R and Financial Aid to be friendly and supportive.

The enrollment of international students declined by 11.5% in the last year. This is largely due to outside forces, including national immigration policies and a decline in US language school enrollments. The District has relied heavily on recruitment from language academies, such as Kaplan International Schools in Berkeley and San Francisco. Nationally, non-degree international student enrollment (mainly represented by language schools) peaked in 2014-15 and has declined over the past three years.

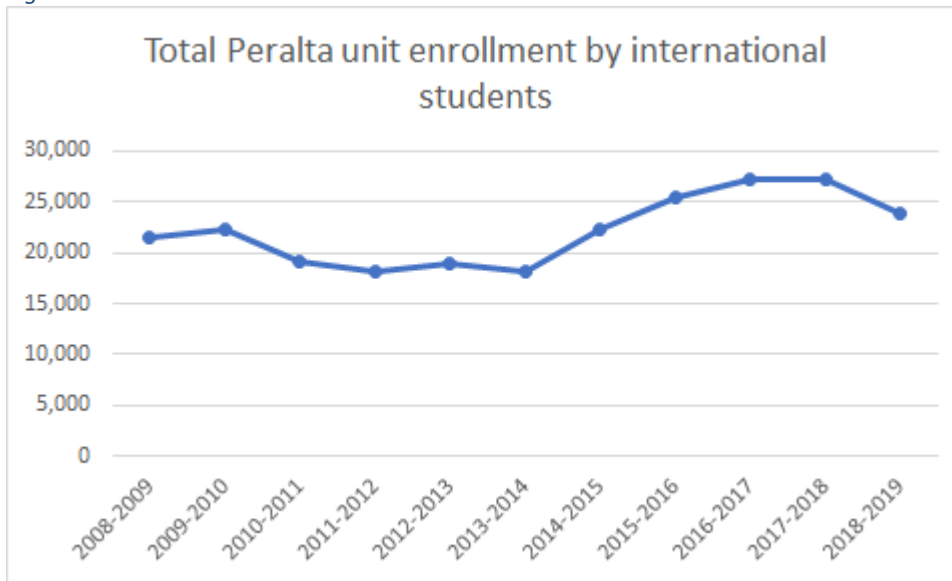
Figure 5: Non-Degree international student enrollment history



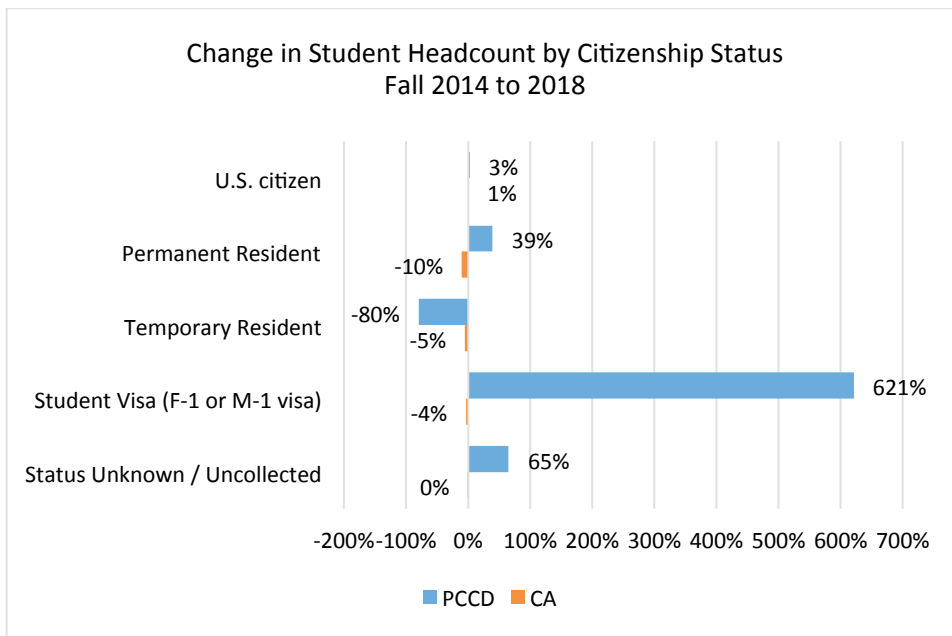
More foreign students are learning English in their home countries. This is especially true in China which has been the largest representation of the district’s international students. The second largest representation has been from Saudi Arabia and that country has eliminated their SACM scholarship program. The H-1B quotas have been lowered, reducing student expectations to work in the United States after graduating from a 4-year college. The District may need to increase recruiting activity in China, both directly and through qualified agents, in order to maintain FTES.

Total International student units at Peralta declined 14.6% between AY 2018 and AY 2019, and may well decline further in AY 2020.

Figure 6: International students unit enrollment



There was a significant increase in the number of students at Peralta colleges who are Permanent Residents. This contrasts with a 10% decline Statewide. For Temporary Residents, there was an 80 drop at Peralta and only a 5% drop Statewide. Students with F1 or M1 Visas, increased more than 6-fold at Peralta, while there was a 4% drop statewide. There was also a significant rise in the number of students with citizenship status unknown or uncollected. Not shown on the chart, there was an increase in the number of students at Peralta with citizenship status (Other). The number grew from 1 in 2014 to nearly 1,000 in 2018.



Prospective students have the opportunity to fill out interest cards, but follow-up on the information, by the District and the colleges, is lacking.

College websites often become dysfunctional, especially during peak registration times during which applicants and ongoing students cannot access Passport or Canvas.

Financial Aid processes are cumbersome and time consuming. While this is common across all college districts due to federal requirements, it is excessive at Peralta. Financial Aid Directors are not on-site at each of the four Peralta colleges, and students often do not receive funds in a timely manner.

Almost 4 in 10 potential students (38% overall, and 45% of women) say that it's "very important" that colleges have an easy application process (see Appendix B).

DSPS eligible students have to apply and fill out forms at each college if they attend more than one, which is a critical barrier for students in the Peralta District, where it is common for students to attend two, three, or even all four of the District's colleges in their educational pursuits.

Mobile registration is important to potential students, but not available across the four colleges.

Half of potential local students aged 18–24 say that it's "essential" or "very important" to be able to use a smartphone to register for a course.

There is a district registrar rather than a registrar at each college, causing students to be sent at times to the District office to complete paperwork. This is a hardship on the students and could deter them from enrolling.

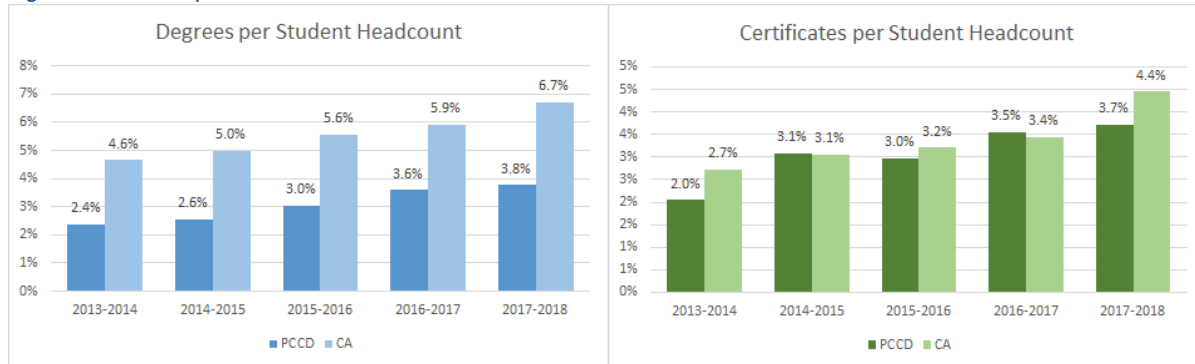
Student Individual Education Plans (SEPs) are being prepared, but there is no system in place to communicate the information to instructional schedule planners.

*"I'm a DSPS student. I needed a class at one of the other colleges. I had to apply all over again and provide additional paperwork. By the time I was approved it was too late to take the class."*

*Student*

Currently there is no degree audit program in place. A significant number of students have earned more than 6 units and as many as 70 but have not been awarded a certificate or degree. PCCD has a lower rate of degrees and certificates awarded than the state and the gap is widening. Implementation of the PeopleSoft 9.2 upgrade is underway and the Student Services module will support the degree audit process.

Figure 7: Awards per student headcount



Starfish is in place, but usage is not maximized at all campuses. This system requires a faculty member to alert offices such as counseling or DSPPS if a student appears to be floundering. There is no automatic flag.

At the present time the reporting of attendance data is not timely or complete. Between 15% and 30% of required attendance rosters are not turned in on time and staff must hound faculty to get the information which is crucial for reporting FTES. Additionally, in some instances tutoring attendance, which can be counted for noncredit FTES, is not collected at all.

**Recommendations**

- Hire a marketing/public Information expert and develop a cohesive marketing plan including social media, mobile applications, web sites as well as traditional media outlets.
- Develop a template for websites so there is a sense of common purpose among the colleges and District.
- Analyze the data more deeply to identify the reasons applicants do not enroll.
- Automate and systemize follow-up on student interest cards.
- Evaluate the steps a prospective student must take in Student Services offices to identify the bottlenecks and barriers.
- Consider using the “mystery shopper” model to see what the student experience really is.
- Develop a mobile application process.
- Place registrars at the college campuses.
- Place Financial Aid directors on each campus.

- Follow up with people who start the process but fail to enroll.
- Research and track the trend of the “capture rate” of high school seniors/graduates.
- Ascertain whether or not the increasing high school population is resulting in increased enrollments at PCCD and explore strategies for increasing enrollments.
- Proactively work with the OUSD and other district high schools so that seniors have a solid idea of the district’s colleges and what they offer.
- Streamline the application process for DSPS services at all the colleges.
- Install a degree audit system as soon as possible to enable the district to automatically award degrees and certificates to those who have earned them.
- Ensure that Starfish Early Alert is fully activated by the beginning of the Fall 2019 semester.
- Develop and implement a district-wide plan to encourage currently enrolled veterans to self-identify. Standardize websites and marketing collateral developed for veterans.
- In addition to engaging local high school graduates, the Colleges need to identify and market effectively to potential students aged 18+ who are likely candidates to enroll in degree and certificate programs. These potential students include: displaced workers and those who worry about being displaced soon; Adult skill builders; Adult students; ESOL students; Online students; and Veterans
- Deploy targeted digital marketing to recruit adults. Focus on adult skill builders, displaced workers, and those who worry about being displaced by technological change.
- Work with community-based organizations to recruit recent immigrants to ESOL and ESOL/CTE programs.
- Work with IT to identify and install systems that are connected to each other and refine the enrollment processes to ensure a seamless and smooth process for applicants.
- Develop a communication path based on data analysis from Student Services to Instruction regarding SEP information.
- Consider developing a district run international student recruitment plan that includes direct recruitment in identified countries.
- Develop a broad staff development plan that addresses soft and hard skills from customer services to work related job requirements.
- For all of the above recommendations, encourage all four colleges and the district to work together collaboratively more than competitively so that the needs of the students come first.



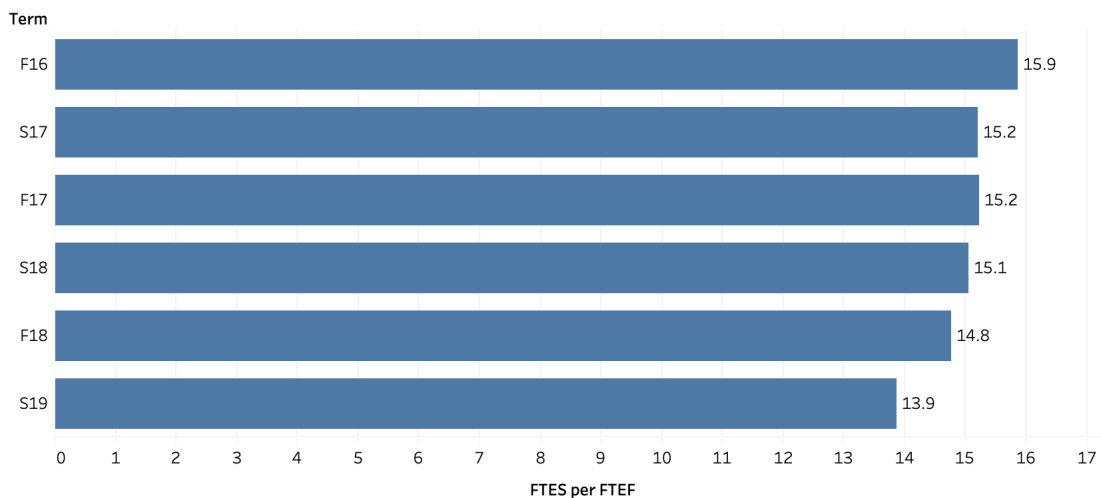
## Scheduling for Students' Success

### Observations / Findings:

The district vice chancellor and the colleges' instructional vice presidents meet regularly to discuss instructional issues. There is a general productivity goal of 17.5 FTES/FTEF, but this has not been reached in years. Academic VPs have a requirement to reach 17.5 in their contracts, but this has not been happening. The district average has fallen from 15.9 in Fall 2016 to 13.9 in Spring 2019.

Figure 8: Productivity by term

Peralta Productivity by Term



The district's Strategic Enrollment Management Plan is up to date as are the colleges'. However, their development was not synchronized, and the formats vary. In some instances, specificity of outcome dates and responsible actors is not clear.

The Budget Allocation Model allocates funds to the colleges based upon FTES. This enhances competition and makes it more challenging to develop schedules through collaboration rather than competition.

Schedule building is based upon a rollover schedule which makes it difficult to make major changes to address new student needs. Often scheduling is based upon faculty convenience rather than student need. It is also the case that IT challenges have made changing schedules difficult. Apparently, some changes are made and then don't show up in the final schedule. An example is that prerequisites for some courses have been eliminated and removed from the schedule during its development, only to reappear in the final schedule.

The process for allocating and managing FTEF at the colleges from the presidents to the vice presidents to the deans and department chairs is not clear. Some

*"I don't have enough students to fill my section, and then I hear [faculty member at another college] is adding another section of what I teach."*

*College Faculty Member*

colleges have overspent their 1300 accounts. There does not seem to be a connection between allocating FTEF and an expectation of an FTES goal at the department and course level. (It is recognized that some courses/programs are important but can never reach 17.5 because of space or regulation. It has always been the case that other courses, particularly in general education areas, must carry some of the “load” for those programs and be super productive.)

Program review has been disorganized with departments asked to fill out reports based on data that is sent to them late in the calendared process. It has been viewed as an annoyance rather than as a useful tool. A new Program Review and Program Discontinuance process will be in place in Fall 2019.

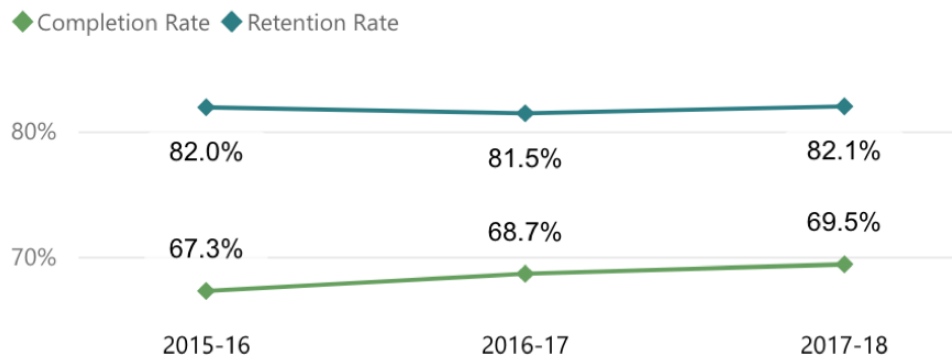
Spring 2019 Student Swirl Pattern (first week after census)	
19,970	Total headcount at all colleges (Spr19)
5,729	# attending 2 or more colleges
29%	% attending 2 or more colleges

In Spring 2019 there were 19,970 students attending the district’s colleges. Twenty-nine percent of these were attending two or more of the colleges. At present this “swirl” is most often seen as a problem of competition among colleges rather than a challenge to improve collaborative scheduling to support the students.

District wide the course retention rate has hovered at around 82% for the past three academic years. Over the same period the course completion rate has increased from 67.3% to 69.5%.

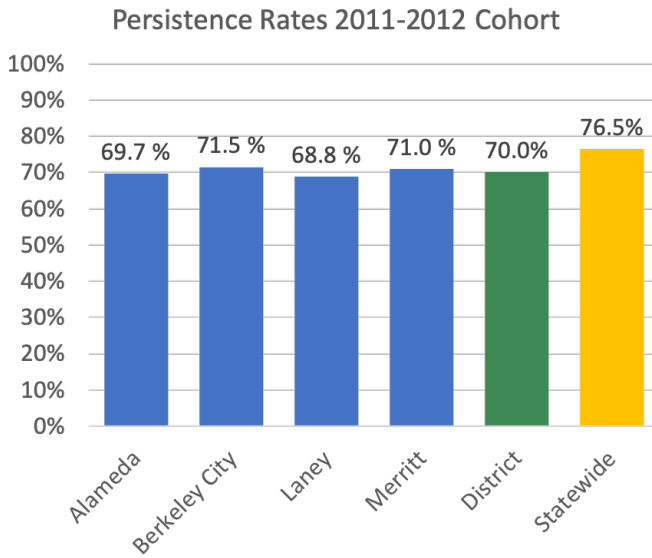
Figure 9: Completion and retention rates

**College Completion & Retention Rates**



Persistence rate data was requested from the district but was only available through 2014. Data was obtained from the state Chancellor's Office and is defined as the percentage of degree, certificate and/or transfer seeking students starting for the first time in 2011-12, tracked for six years through 2016-17 who enrolled in the first three consecutive terms. Peralta's persistence rate was 70% compared to a statewide rate of 76.5%.

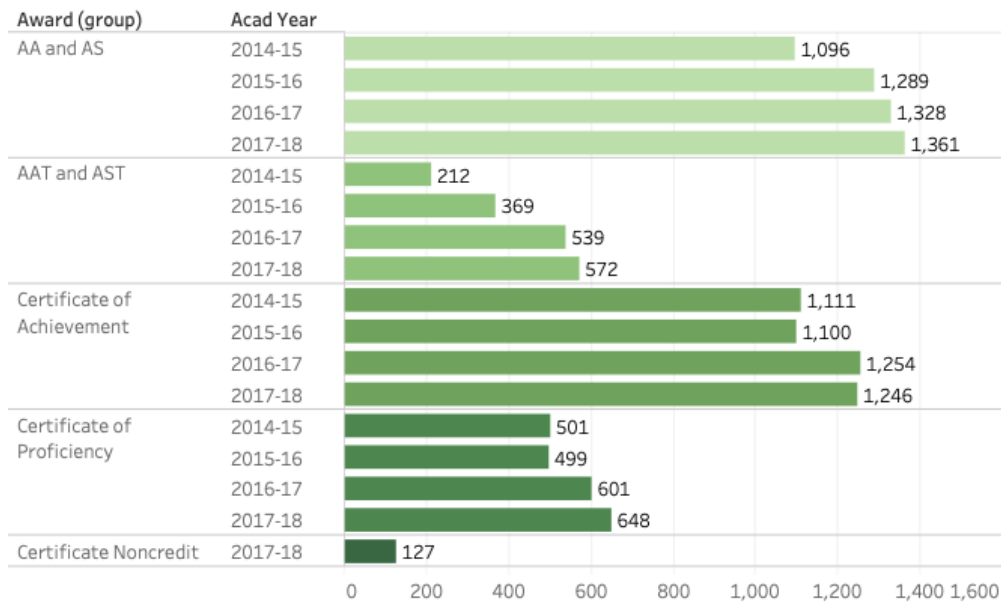
Figure 10: Persistence rates



From 2014-15 to 2017-18 all four colleges have increased awards in all categories except certificates of 60 units. (see *Figure 11: Award history*). It is a good thing to decrease the latter category. The number of awards granted has increased despite the decreases in student headcount and FTES. This is good news. However, there are many programs that only award from 0 to 5 degrees annually. Aggregating the four colleges, there are 89 programs that have awarded 20 or fewer degrees in the past four academic years. There are 61 programs that have awarded 10 or fewer degrees.

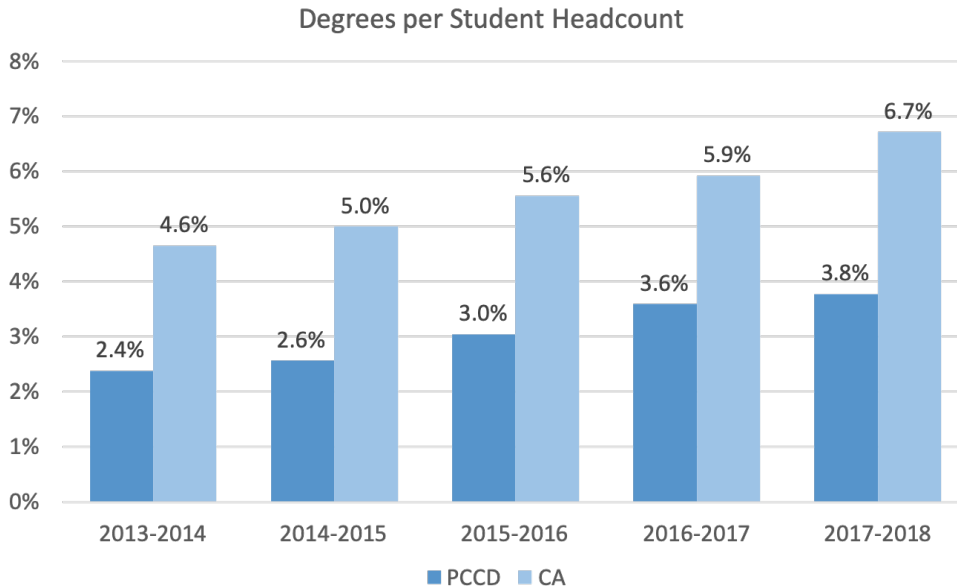
*Figure 11: Award history*

**PCCD Award History by Age**



Despite this growth in the number of awards, Peralta still lags behind the Statewide community college average, per 100 students. In 2017-18, Peralta granted 3.8 awards per 100 students versus the Statewide level of 6.7.

Figure 12: Degrees per student headcount



Articulation agreements with 4-year institutions are required to be done by individual colleges and are not the same among the four colleges. This creates problems for students who swirl, as the mix of courses they take may not fit the agreements. There does not appear to be any coordination among the colleges in this area.

There is little communication or collaboration among the colleges' departments to insure smart scheduling of classes. There are some exceptions such as Math, English, Cultural Studies and Kinesiology. It is the case that within colleges, the various departments do not collaborate on building schedules that optimize student needs.

In the Internal Survey ([see Appendix A](#)) faculty, classified staff and administrators agreed that the colleges' schedules often conflict with one another. They also agreed that the schedules should be developed in a coordinated manner and that this would help students complete their educational goals more quickly.

Guided Pathways programming is advancing and there have been two districtwide meetings to discuss the process but there is insufficient collaboration among the colleges to ensure efficiency and avoid duplication.

Dual enrollment programming is growing and as a result some of the colleges have decreased attention on concurrent enrollment which can still be a factor in FTES growth.

There is no district master schedule to enable assessment of offerings across the district.

All colleges claim to have block scheduling but there is definite drift, with courses offered at odd times conflicting with other course beginning and end times. This hampers students from maximizing the number of courses they can take.

There is disagreement about the efficacy of early course cancellation processes. However, if the decision to cancel is taken late in the process, students cannot find courses to replace the cancelled course.

College hours are usually right in the middle of the day and are different at the four colleges which limits students maximizing the number of courses they can take in a block.

Late start classes are all over the map.

A significantly large number of full-time faculty (67%) are engaged in reassigned time activities. This is problematic for two reasons. Some departments have 5-6 people designated in a “chair” capacity. Many seasoned faculty are not sharing their expertise with students in the classroom. At this time, the Education Code’s 50% rule will not be maintained if the vacancies in the District’s organizational charts are filled. It is not clear that all reassigned positions have job descriptions or an evaluation process to ensure accountability.

Some disciplines are over-scheduled across the four colleges. For example, Spanish 1A offers eight sections but has an FTES/FTEF of 12.9. Popular courses which are doing well could probably be better managed. For example, Psychology 1A has 22 sections and a fairly healthy FTES/FTEF of 15.2. It probably could reach 17.5 with fewer sections (after careful analysis).

There is awareness among faculty, staff and Board members about the importance of FTES growth but it is not clear that people understand the State formulas and the relationship to schedule planning. For example, a late start class automatically earns less FTES than a regularly scheduled class. It is not clear that faculty, staff and Board members understand the impact of the new funding model (SCFF) which requires changes in the relationship between Student Services and Instruction.

*“My program is unique and what I do is none of the other colleges’ business.”*

*College Faculty Member*

Useful enrollment and scheduling data such as course history across semesters is not readily available to all potential users.

There is currently no software to assist deans and faculty within colleges and across the district to use predictive modeling. This would help in the development of course schedules that respond directly to student needs.

There is a lack of agreement about the benefits to expanding Distance Education (DE) offerings. Faculty are concerned that DE will compete with and take students from their landed class offerings. The Distance Education Committee has prepared recommendations about instructor preparation for teaching DE which will be addressed in Fall 2019.

Workforce Development, Contract Education and Career Technical Education is currently managed through three streams. There is an Associate Vice Chancellor of Workforce Development and Continuing Education. There is a Director of Strong Workforce and Career Education and there is a liaison from the adult school community, Executive Director of Northern Alameda Adult Education Collective located at the district offices. There is clearly

some communication among these offices. The colleges host two Strong Workforce sites and there is work going on to develop robust advisory committees. But the structures for development are fragmented and greater collaboration needs to be developed.

Poor facilities maintenance which have closed down buildings and elevators etc. and ineffective IT programming have inhibited successful delivery of the colleges' educational programs. In the [Internal Survey](#), facilities quality and cleanliness were cited by students, faculty, staff and administrators as needing improvement.

### **Recommendations**

- Continue to emphasize productivity with a district wide goal of 17.5 FTES per FTEF.
- Create expectations of earned FTES outcomes linked to allocated FTEF.
- Create staff development training on the impacts of the new funding formula for staff, faculty and Board members.
- Open discussions among college disciplines within colleges and between colleges to enhance efficient schedule building.
- Evaluate the course cancellation process to ensure its efficacy.
- Develop a "blueprint" of which courses will not be offered too often (because they tend to get canceled) but will be guaranteed not to be canceled when offered. Make sure this information is clear to students.
- Develop strong communication paths between Student Services and Instruction to maximize the ability to plan optimal schedules to meet student needs,
- Ensure that program review is a meaningful, useful process that enhances the colleges' programs.
- Analyze and evaluate the various reassigned time activities and develop job descriptions and accountability measures for them.
- Ensure that scheduling reflects the course needs of the various pathway programs.
- Ensure that similar block schedules are in place at all four colleges.
- Consider using a "mystery shopper" model to see if students can get a full schedule of classes over two semesters that meet their needs.
- Eliminate the habit of using rollover materials to build a new schedule.
- Consider changing the times of college hours and making them the same at all colleges so that students can enroll in more courses on a given day.
- Assess the true value of college hours for the student and consider eliminating them.
- Analyze the course activity of students who "swirl" to see if scheduling changes can assist them to efficiently achieve their goals.
- Continue to grow dual enrollment and concurrent enrollment programs.

- Continue to develop strong communication among those responsible for workforce development and career education.
- Analyze the district's business community for opportunities to assist them in workforce development.
- Develop more noncredit certificates.
- Increase the number of online sections available
- Analyze the number of degrees and certificates offered for relevance and activity.
- Work with IT to develop crucial program packages such as Degree Audit, predictive modeling, automated Noncredit Attendance taking etc.
- Improve facilities and institute a Deferred Maintenance schedule that ensures classrooms and student areas such as libraries are accessible and usable.
- For all of the above recommendations, encourage all four colleges and the district to work together collaboratively more than competitively so that the needs of the students come first.

*"She [district office staff member] says the college is supposed to do it, but he [college staff member] says the District is supposed to do it."*

*Classified Staff Member*

### 3. District-wide Systems and Processes

#### Human Resources and Student Services

##### Observations / Findings:

Systems and processes which support effective and efficient operations for the District are greatly hindered by (a) the lack of automation and (b) conflict and confusion between centralized and decentralized processes and accountabilities. PeopleSoft 9.2 has been only partially implemented. High priorities for automation are core functions and mission-critical processes such as the Human Resources and Student Services modules. The Human Resources module is critical to reducing risk, cost, and errors in personnel services and also in linking the personnel processes (position control, salary calculations, compensation, etc.) to the financial system of the District – areas cited as critical needs in the Fiscal Plan. The Student Services module is critical to student success and completion as it contains many elements to support students, including the degree audit and award processes, and links to student notifications and communications.

Accountability and responsibility for systems and processes across the District continues to be unclear. The hybrid approach which combines centralized and decentralized services depending on the college needing such services, and where vacancies exist, continues to be confusing to staff. This also disrupts workflow, slows productivity, and impedes achievement



of outcomes. Additionally, those services considered “centralized” are not always well-supported by District administrative services (see Area 4.)

### **Recommendations**

- Complete the PeopleSoft transition, giving high priority to the Human Resources and Student Services modules.
- Streamline, re-engineer, and redesign systems and processes to increase effectiveness and efficiency; automate manual processes.
- Analyze services to determine which systems and processes are centralized vs. decentralized; clarify roles, responsibilities, and accountabilities of those involved and revise job descriptions as needed; determine appropriate protocol for communication and collaboration between the District Office and colleges operating procedures, including those services that are centralized vs. decentralized.

## **Information Technology**

### **Observations/Findings: Office of Information Technology**

The “Office of Information Technology” has two departments to support the District’s applications and the network. These departments each have a director. Each of the departments reflect two vacancies. At least two of these positions are being recruited. The overall Office Staff Services Specialist position is vacant as well. As with many functions at the District it appears these vacancies contribute to the lack of support that each of the colleges identify in our interviews. Each college has a technical person that does not report or significantly coordinate with the Vice Chancellor of Technology. The delineation of responsibilities between the college operations and the centralized District operations is not clear.

The District does not have a comprehensive Technology Master Plan (TMP), nor does it have protocol for the implementation and/or transition to new technologies. Implementation, roll-out, and training for new software and enterprise system applications has been awkward, fragmented, and not managed well. The exception to this was the transition to *Canvas*, which many cited as a smooth transition; the Distance Education Coordinator, and her team are to be commended for this process working well.

Vice Chancellor oversight and accountability for working in a collaborative manner with other vice chancellors and college presidents is needed, as well as leadership for hiring, supervising, evaluating, and training IT staff.

The District has attempted to upgrade the PeopleSoft suite of programs but has only partially achieved previously set goals. These goals should be clearly articulated within the Technology Plan. It doesn’t appear that the District currently has the bandwidth or the internal expertise to make significant progress on these types of upgrades while attempting to support day to day operations.

Several core operations and mission-critical functions are not yet automated. PeopleSoft versions are outdated in some areas, and key components have yet to be implemented.

Access to data for decision making by administrators is limited. For example, fiscal services is unable to “close the books” on a monthly or even quarterly basis, leading to errors, reconciliation delays, and cost overruns. Errors are likely with manual and duplicative data entry, and District liability is high, especially in fiscal and personnel services.

The District does not currently have a comprehensive Disaster Recovery Plan (DRP) that should be included in the Technology Master Plan. The DRP is essential for the District to address unforeseen events that could jeopardize both student data and District operations.

**Observations / Findings: IT Safety and Security**

- The District does not have a Disaster Recovery Plan / Disaster Recovery System, which is essential to address unforeseen events that could jeopardize student data and the operations of the District.
- Payment Card Industry (PCI) requirements are not in compliance, causing a significant liability to the District.
- A clear exit process with respect to IT access and privileges does not exist, resulting in people no longer employed by the district retaining access to college and district IT resources.
- Security cameras and their oversight and coordination between facilities and IT staff needs to be examined.

**Observations / Findings: Compliance, Legal, Fiscal/Purchasing, and Ethical Issues**

- There are several areas of non-compliance, such as PCI requirements, 508 compliance, purchasing policies and procedures, etc.
- Board Policies and Administrative Procedures have not been followed, causing improper purchasing, and in one case purchasing without prior Board authorization.
- There have been questionable contracting agreements, where at best exorbitant costs have accrued from poor management of such agreements, and at worst unethical and perhaps illegal favoritism may have been in play.
- College employees often begin work without having network and system access credentials due to hiring processes failing to complete prior to the employee’s first day of employment; likewise, people no longer employed by the District often inappropriately retain access to college and District IT resources; during busy workload times there is a backlog of account creation and deletion tasks.
- Several core operations and mission-critical functions are not yet automated; PeopleSoft versions are outdated in some areas, and key components have yet to be implemented; access to data for decision making by administrators is limited; fiscal services is unable to “close the books” on a monthly or even quarterly basis, leading to errors, reconciliation delays, and cost overruns; errors are likely with manual and duplicative data entry, and District liability is high, especially in fiscal and personnel services.

### **Observations / Findings: Systems and Communications**

- “OnePeralta” is confusing to both internal and external stakeholders, especially since PeopleSoft versions 9.0, 9.1, and 9.2 are in various phases of usage, and some critical components are not in use at all.
- IT communications are not shaped to effectively serve a non-technical audience, including trustees, administrators, faculty, and staff.
- Response time to phone calls, emails, and work requests is unacceptable to users and not user-friendly; this is exacerbated by departmental vacancies, lack of skills by IT staff, and confusion over centralized vs. decentralized services and “whose job is this?”; a common reply by IT staff is “That’s not my job”.

It is unclear to staff at the colleges how IT priorities are set; colleges report that IT projects seem to “fall into a black hole”, are not finished, and people don’t know what is planned for next steps or as a contingency.

- Communication of decisions made, software and transition timelines for implementation, and other district-wide changes need to be communicated more transparently and timely to the colleges.

### **Recommendations**

- Identify a Chief Technology Officer (CTO) for the District. The CTO must actively seek solutions to current technology needs, and work collaboratively with peer executives. Together, they provide executive level leadership to anticipate future needs of the District for both academic and operational technologies.
- Examine the current structure of the Information Technology Department and its placement in the District Office organizational structure. Consider placement under the Vice Chancellor of Administrative Services to eliminate silo operations. Consider the use of site-based (one in each college) IT professionals that report to the CTO in order to maximize both infrastructure consistency and rapid local response. Determine remaining IT structure, including the review of Director and technical staff positions. Ensure current job descriptions and skill sets of each position, providing training where needed. Consider the value of a Special Projects position that reports directly to the CTO to work on annual technology initiatives and priorities.
- IT Planning short-term: Develop in the next 90 days a short-term plan for IT for the 2019-2020 year which includes (a) correction of safety, security, and compliance issues; and (b) a plan for implementation of PeopleSoft and related components to automate and support core operations (e.g. Fiscal, Human Resources/Personnel, etc.) and mission-critical functions (e.g. student records, degree audit, program review, scheduling, etc.).
- IT Planning long-term: Develop a 3-5-year strategic Technology Master Plan (TMP) with timelines, accountabilities, and deliverables. Utilizing a participatory process, base TMP on PCCD’s Educational and Facilities Master Plans, industry standards,

state initiatives, facilities bond expectations, and future projections and trends in higher education.

- Determine effectiveness of IT support for students; conduct surveys and/or student focus groups to ascertain IT support needed by students at each of the four colleges.
- IT safety and Security: Correct Payment Card Industry (PCI) protocol and other compliance, safety, and security issues identified in findings; develop Disaster Recovery Plan; secure IT access for onboarding and exit of employees.
- Correct compliance, legal, fiscal/purchasing, and ethical Issues cited in above findings.

## Purchasing

### Observations / Findings

Interviews with district and college staff suggest that there is not a clear understanding of the purchasing process at Peralta. The reliance on paper systems that require multiple signatures and the walking of documents to and from departments adds to the frustration of day to day operations.

Purchasing staff have previously been operating within the operations departments and isolated from key business functions of the district.

Policies and Procedures that require bidding and set dollar thresholds have not been clearly understood or followed through the submission of purchasing requests. This has caused further delay of procurement and paying vendors in a timely manner.

### Recommendations

- Place purchasing processes and oversight under the Vice President of Administrative Services.
- Review current policies and procedures to comply consistently with public contract code and board policies.
- Automation and integrate financial and student information systems to assure accurate and timely processing of purchasing requests and payments to vendors.
- Change purchasing functions of the district to create effective communication and collaboration between the business office and purchasing staff of the district.

## Facilities and Maintenance

### Observations / Findings

Facilities throughout the District are not well maintained due to inadequate distribution of staffing and the lack of resources to prioritize scheduled maintenance. Position vacancies have exacerbated this situation. The age and condition of buildings, and the equipment to support buildings, contribute to the frequent failures of systems that interrupt the day-to-day operations of the colleges. This has also affected the classroom environment and caused the

cancellation of classes at times. The condition of the facilities has impacted overall productivity in the District, and overall student enrollment.

Productivity of the staff charged with maintaining the facilities is low due to the constant state of crisis management, responding to system failures and emergency conditions such as electrical failures, and other critical failures of the District infrastructure.

Facility staff positions have been moved from the District to colleges and vacancies at the District have created an imbalance of staffing throughout the District. Staff have not had consistent leadership and lack direction for prioritizing and addressing projects and needs district wide.

Staff interviews revealed low morale due primarily to the lack of leadership in the past, and the planning needed to prioritize projects throughout the District. College staff often approach District administrative services staff with requests that have not received prioritization and oversight at the executive level. When staff were asked their thoughts about any needed changes in facilities, the number one comment was, "We need leadership... and representation at the executive level..." Staff expressed universal frustration when talking about the ambiguous nature of their jobs and what was expected of them.

Bond measures have been passed to address the many facility needs in the District. Some facility planning has occurred in the District and each college, but an overall Facilities Master Plan with integrated district-wide planning and prioritization for new projects, renovations, and deferred maintenance could not be found. Additionally, planning has not been designed in an integrated fashion with Educational Master Plan(s) in the District to support the Student Life Cycle, classroom experiences, and student success. It is not clear if the current capital projects planned at the colleges are redundant or have been appropriately coordinated for efficiency throughout the District.

The maintenance and operations functions for the district operate at varying efficiencies at each college. Positions have been left vacant and the shift from centralized project management to college specific has created competition for resources at the colleges and crisis management as a norm throughout the district.

### **Recommendations**

- Provide leadership to the Facilities Unit and staffing of the District and its colleges; establish priorities; analyze and clarify centralized vs. decentralized services.
- Analyze facility staffing needs district-wide to provide appropriate response time and complete scheduled work throughout the District in a timely fashion.
- Review the current work order system and how it is used to prioritize and coordinate scheduled maintenance and repairs.
- Provide professional development for all facilities staff to better utilize work order system and collaborate with staff at all colleges and the District office.

- Review the current District and colleges' Educational Master Plans; develop and/or update the PCCD Facilities Master Plan, and individual college facility plans accordingly; confirm / revise bond project list and schedule as needed.
- Coordinate maintenance and operations for the District and the colleges through centralized leadership to better prioritize schedule maintenance and capital improvement throughout the District.

## 4. Organizational Structure and Staffing

### Organizational Structure

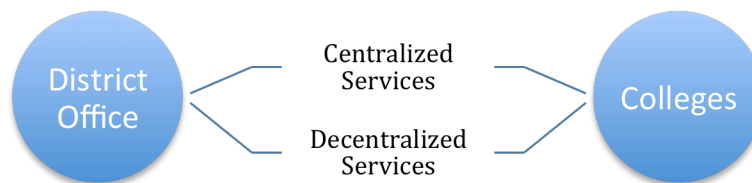
#### Observations / Findings:

District Office staffing has grown over time. Some can be attributed to the centralization of services during the recession, while others have been due to increases in regulations and efforts to correct fiscal and other challenges in the District. Some positions, it appears, have been added and/or titled to attract more highly qualified candidates at higher pay levels and with more senior titles due to the high cost of living and competition in the surrounding area for such professionals. Over time, the structure has grown and been reshaped largely by external forces and, as in any organization, requires a thoughtful review and planned approach to redesign.

The “sprawl” approach needs to be replaced with a “planned community” approach for more effective and efficient District operations, responsive to contemporary times. Also, vacancies have been used to balance the budget and address the structural deficit rather than examining positions from a critical core of key functions, to those of lesser importance that could be held vacant for a cycle. This has led to heightened fiscal risk, lack of supervision and accountability, lack of achievement of outcomes, inconsistent operations, and poor public relations with some community members and organizations.

Staffing at the college level has also been affected by fiscal challenges in the District and external forces. Staffing patterns have developed over time in an isolated manner at each college in response to initiatives, and with a patchwork of centralized vs. decentralized approaches to services (e.g. research, information technology, marketing, Financial Aid, DSPS, technical specialists, etc.) (See Area 3.)

The organizational structure and staffing of the District Office warrants a thorough review. Any redesign of a multi-college District Office should take into account the desired mix of



#### **Review and Alignment**

##### Governance Structure

- Committees; Roles; Constituents

##### Systems and Processes

- Roles; Responsibilities; Accountabilities

centralized and decentralized services. Once this has been completed, a review of the organizational structure and staffing of the colleges is also warranted, accompanied by a redesign of the participatory governance structures of the District (i.e. the PBIM, BAM, and other committee structures.) This provides for effective decision making, and lays the foundation for efficient systems and processes, where roles, responsibilities, and accountabilities can be delineated. The process is depicted below.

Communication and coordination among District and college staff in many areas is lacking. This has led to distrust and the colleges wanting more decentralized services, which becomes less cost-effective. Additionally, in administrative and general services areas (such as business, personnel, research, IT, and maintenance services in particular), decentralization can lead to inconsistencies and redundancy unless strong operating procedures with accountability are in place.

Centralization vs. decentralization of staff and services needs further study. Determining the best mix for PCCD must take into account the following:

- Proximity of the District office and four colleges
- Budgetary constraints
- Ability to maintain consistency in District operations
- Responsiveness to college staff and student needs
- Frequency of staff vacancies and turnover, and the difficulty of finding skilled technicians
- PCCD culture

**For centralized staffing and services:**

- College staff and student needs must be addressed in a timely fashion to support core operations and mission-critical teaching and learning activities
- Access pathways to department staff and services must be clearly defined
- Communication pathways must be clear, with defined response times
- Equitable services and local compliance to protocols are vital

**For decentralized staffing and services:**

- Detailed policies and procedures must be in place, consistently applied and adhered to, and staff evaluated accordingly
- Structures and processes must be established for coordination among and across colleges and the District to ensure seamless and consistent use of enterprise systems, operations and applications
- Consistency of staffing support structures at the four colleges is desirable

- Protocol for staff turnover and vacancies must be established to ensure uninterrupted, ongoing technical services support
- Assessment of site-based employees' technical skills must be conducted by knowledgeable District Management professionals and shared with site supervisors

### **Recommendations:**

- Consider reorganizing the District office, streamlining the vice chancellor structure, and analyzing all positions as first tier (core-critical), second tier, or third tier; use analyses to ensure positions that are mission-critical and/or support core administrative functions are a priority; adhere to fiscal and legal staffing requirements; ensure internal controls are intact; avoid reliance solely on vacancies for personnel budget savings.
- Conduct an in-depth review of the organizational structure of administrative and support services at the District and the colleges; determine the mix of centralized vs. decentralized staffing and services (based on the criteria cited under observations/findings above); clarify these in writing; align staffing as appropriate.
- Consider a classification study in those areas where it would be beneficial (e.g. IT). Update job descriptions and employ sound personnel practices (see Area 1.)
- Conduct, as a second step, an in-depth review of organizational structure at the four colleges for alignment with centralization decisions. Identify "core staffing" for a Peralta college based on decisions made about centralized and decentralized functions (e.g. Financial Aid Director, DSPS Director/Coordinator, registrar, researcher, IT and maintenance staffing, etc.)
- Re-examine, analyze, realign, and clarify governance structures (e.g. PBIM, BAM, etc.) with decisions on centralization and decentralization.

## **Staffing**

### **Observations / Findings**

Executive turnover in the Peralta District has been high. No data was available to CBT for analysis of this phenomenon because exit interviews and/or surveys are not conducted.

The District currently has over \$4M in frozen vacant positions to address just the current year budget deficit. Many of these positions are key positions that reside in the administrative and student support services areas and support vital operational functions.

The "50% Law" requires that a minimum of 50% of unrestricted funds must be spent on classroom instruction. The District currently meets this requirement, but only at the level of 50.07%. Since most current vacancies are in non-instructional areas, filling these positions could cause the District to drop below the 50% threshold. In examining District staffing patterns, it was found that many faculty hired as instructional faculty have been given non-instructional assignments, thereby removing that portion of their pay from the instructional calculation for the 50% requirement. Additionally, the District has exceeded its full-time Faculty Obligation Number (FON) over the past few years, but with decreasing classroom



productivity (FTES per FTEF.) Increasing this productivity to the funded appropriate productivity level of 17.5 is one of the necessary priorities for fiscal stability. However, to maintain the 50% Law threshold, and as another important priority for fiscal stability, concurrent enrollment growth must be a priority.

An in-depth review of faculty staffing and assignments is needed in addressing the fiscal status and long-term stability of the District. In requesting information from the District on “reassigned time” for full-time faculty, CBT was provided with a report showing that 67% of full-time faculty are on the “Reassigned Time” list. The report shows some of these faculty as “reassigned” to restricted funds, and others assigned appropriately to instructional leadership capacities (such as Academic Senate, Curriculum Committee, Program Director duties required in licensure programs, etc.) However, the report also shows many faculty assigned to management responsibilities commonly performed by Deans and Directors, and whose assignments lack job descriptions, authority, and accountability for such assignments. According to the report, over 30 FTEF of reassigned time is devoted to Department Chair responsibilities, however it is unclear as to the accuracy and interpretation of the report, which provides no narrative or explanation of calculations.

To its credit, the District is currently studying the report for its accuracy, interpretation, and underlying assumptions. Once validated, an in-depth review of faculty reassigned time is warranted, especially in light of the 50% Law, FON, low productivity of FTES to FTEF in the District, and lack of accountability for management responsibilities since faculty members do not have supervisory authority over their peers. These findings should in no way be interpreted that CBT found a lack of quality within reassigned time being performed. However, at a time when the expertise of highly qualified faculty is needed to support student success, progression, and completion (rather than management work), it is recommended that a full review and reassessment be conducted so that management duties can be restored to management staff, and faculty expertise appropriately centered on teaching and student success.

The colleges do not all have financial aid directors and there is a district registrar rather than a registrar at each college, causing students to be sent at times to the District office to complete paperwork. These position gaps create hardships for students and could deter them from enrolling.

Unless and until staffing and service needs are analyzed, and enterprise systems and applications are fully implemented, it is unclear as to whether the funding and staffing levels of IT across PCCD are adequate; these should also be analyzed based on the District’s decision on a centralized vs. decentralized approach to IT; additionally, future demands as bond dollars are expended on renovated and/or expanded facilities may result in either increased or decreased staffing and resource needs.

Individuals in “senior” classified positions in some District offices (e.g. IT) are not functioning at senior levels of performance due to misaligned job descriptions, lack of ability, or lack of management oversight; IT position descriptions may need to be revised/updated, and a classification study may prove useful.

IT staffing levels district-wide may not be adequate to support IT functions of the district today and for the future, especially with high turnover and vacancy rates. Additionally, IT staffing applicant pools are very weak; vacancies in the department are common, as is staff turnover; and there is a need for cross-training and a plan for service coverage during vacancies.

### **Recommendations**

- Conduct exit interviews and/or surveys of key personnel, especially at the executive and administrative levels of the District and implement strategies for reducing the turnover rate.
- Develop a comprehensive staffing plan that aligns with the decisions made regarding centralization and decentralization of services (see above).
- Fill vacancies as appropriate to meet core functions and address mission-critical systems for student success.
- Conduct an in-depth review of faculty staffing and assignments to help address the fiscal status and long-term stability of the District.
- Clarify roles among centralized and decentralized staff in IT and maintenance and operations to address IT projects, scheduled maintenance and repairs, and work orders in a prioritized fashion with acceptable response times; provide user training where needed.
- Consider hiring financial aid directors and registrars for each campus.
- Build a strong Human Resources framework of roles, responsibilities, and accountability; update job descriptions; implement a system of performance review with integrity and accountability; implement the PeopleSoft Human Resources module and strengthen personnel practices.
- College site-based staffing needs to be examined for skill sets, supervision, performance, and adherence to district policies and procedures.
- Consider a classification study for IT district-wide; update job descriptions, assess incumbent qualifications and skill sets, conduct performance reviews, set expectations and accountability, and provide written improvement plans for all IT staff; provide managers with project management training, and other staff training as needed.

## **Onboarding, Training, and Development**

### **Observations / Findings**

Other important issues related to structure and staffing pertain to skill sets and development needs of staff in multiple areas of the District and colleges. Some employees lack the skill sets to perform job functions; others have been hired lacking initial skill sets, and have not been provided training, or been required to attain such training; yet others refuse to do assigned work and/or have excessive absences impeding progress of daily operations. Additionally, onboarding of new employees, training, and development are lacking.

- There is no Office of Staff Development, nor a Director of Staff Development, nor any other Staff Development position in the District; a rotating faculty coordinator position with reassigned time to conduct flex activities for faculty is in place.
- A comprehensive onboarding program for new employees at all levels of the organization is needed; a comprehensive onboarding program for new students at the four colleges is also needed for such areas as technology usage, services available, etc.
- Training and development in some departments is critical for the ongoing functioning of the institution. IT skills, knowledge, and abilities are lacking in many of the IT positions:
- IT Directors lack project management skills, causing projects to be managed poorly, including lack of adherence to timelines, budget over-runs, and not meeting expected deliverables; additionally, PCCD decisions are being inappropriately made by outside contractors without District oversight.
- Two of the three District software developers still do not have PeopleSoft development skills after multiple courses, and several years of PeopleSoft software being the core software of the District.
- Many staff holding IT positions do not have the skill sets needed for the positions they occupy; IT staff as a whole lack the skill sets necessary to meet current, let alone future District and college IT needs.
- All the District IT staff agree that the District does not have the skill or capacity among the current IT staff to do the analysis and upgrade work necessary to keep PeopleSoft reasonably current with new releases as they occur.

### **Recommendations**

- Establish and staff a professional development office in the District office to address the above findings and support training and development needs of all employees; coordinate the work of the faculty flex coordinator with this office.
- Incorporate orientation to District and College infrastructure (e.g. use of email, Canvas, etc.) into new student onboarding procedures.
- Provide training and development for managers and classified staff in addition to flex activities for faculty, especially in high priority, core functions such as IT and the business office.

## **5. Fiscal Stability**

### **Observations / Findings:**

The overall fiscal health of the District is at risk due to multiple factors including a structural deficit that is exacerbated by previous lack of development and oversight of budgets, declining enrollment/revenue, a growing Other Post-Employment Benefits (OPEB) liability that relies heavily on a revocable trust funded through debt of the District, and audit findings that cite a

lack of internal control. The current structural deficit is being addressed primarily through the freezing of multiple key positions and reduction to an operating budget that does not adequately address scheduled maintenance.

The new Student-Centered Funding Formula (SCFF) includes hold harmless funding in the near term while the District regains its FTES. While PCCD anticipates favorable fiscal projections under the new formula, it is uncertain at this time whether the SCFF will be capped and/or fully funded, and the enrollment gap remains a challenge for the District, as FTES targets are yet to be met. The gap between actual and projected funding continues to be potentially much greater than the current District projection model suggests without sufficient enrollment growth – a key factor still required in the SCFF. Additionally, District budget projections do not clearly show the continued reliance on the parcel tax, and the potential deficit “cliff” the district faces in the next few years in the absence of realized, and funded, enrollment growth. These are all extremely critical factors in considering fiscal risk of the District. Even without these future threats, the District has a current structural deficit that is only temporarily addressed by freezing over \$4M in vacant positions, some of which are mission-critical and/or essential to meet core functions of the District.

Executive turnover and management vacancies have created a culture of mistrust, and employees are often placed in situations without supervision or the appropriate leadership for priority setting and decision making. The current vice chancellor structure appears unwieldy, and creates silos in the District, especially in such areas as (a) business and information technology services, and (b) leadership for implementation of educational initiatives that involve both instruction and student services. Also, vacant management positions, lack of supervisory skill sets, and lack of technical skill sets required in professional technical positions have all contributed to errors, fiscal risk, and ineffective controls and monitoring. The lack of integrated and automated business processes and role confusion over centralized vs. decentralized services impact overall productivity and further increase risk.

**Recommendations:**

- Consider reorganizing the vice chancellor and District business offices structure.
- Establish realistic revenue projections based on reasonable enrollment targets allowing for any reduction in revenue related to the hold harmless period of SCFF; provide detailed footnotes of budget assumptions in budget projection models; engage in multi-year planning to mitigate anticipated loss of ongoing revenue.
- Review the current OPEB planning as referenced in the Five-Year Plan; explore feasibility of establishing an irrevocable trust as it relates to any limitations under the current debt repayments.
- Address the integrity of fiscal procedures and Internal controls through staff training, filling key vacancies with qualified people, automating business processes, and clarifying centralized vs. decentralized services.
- Strengthen purchasing and contract oversight and review to eliminate timely processes performed manually and often resulting in delayed payment of vendors and errors.

- Provide professional development and engage managers in addressing difficult work environments, redundant processes and inefficiencies; re-engineer processes and staffing patterns as necessary.
- Review, revise, and automate business processes; integrate financial, human resources, and student information systems appropriately.
- Examine centralized and decentralized services to streamline, encourage collaboration, and eliminate duplication; align organizational structure and staffing with District and college priorities.

## 6. Public Image and Marketing

### Observations / Findings:

CBT conducted one internal and two external surveys during the project as described earlier in this report. In addition to providing information on Enrollment Management in Area 2 above, these surveys were also used to ascertain the public's image of the Peralta District and its colleges and determine direction for marketing.

#### Internal Survey

The internal survey included 831 responses from faculty, classified staff and administrators. The results of the survey can be seen in Appendix A.

Feedback from the internal survey was mixed. Faculty and staff would generally not recommend Peralta to friends and family as a place to work, but they would recommend it as a place to attend college.

#### External Survey

CBT commissioned a research firm, Penn Schoen Berland, to poll northern Alameda County residents aged 18 and older to learn:

- How familiar local residents are with the Peralta District and the Colleges
- How likely they are to attend a college in the Peralta CCD
- What potential students are looking for, and what marketing themes will resonate
- How aware they are of news affecting Peralta CCD, and how knowing the news stories affects their favorability.

The main external survey was completed by 379 residents of Alameda County. The survey results, weighted to be representative of the District service area, are available in [Appendix B](#).

A supplementary external survey was conducted for English Speakers of Other Languages. It was conducted in 15 languages and had early feedback from 47 respondents. Results of these two external surveys can be seen in the Appendix C.

*"I went to Peralta – I got a good education there. No, I don't know anything about their financial problems."*

Community Member

93% of northern Alameda County adults are familiar with *at least one* of the Peralta colleges. More are familiar with Laney (64%) than with Merritt (56%), BCC (53%), and CoA (50%).

Of those who are familiar with a College, three-fourths are favorable towards that College. Potential students who are familiar with Berkeley City College are mostly likely to say they are likely to enroll there.

Almost 60% of Northern Alameda residents aged 18+ who are in the market for higher education and training would “consider” attending Cal Berkeley. About 30% would consider attending one of the Peralta colleges, and 25% would consider Chabot College. Only 14% would consider a for-profit college.

### Net Promoter Scores

We used the community survey data to calculate Net Promoter Scores (NPS) for each college serving northern Alameda County. UC Berkeley had the highest NPS, at 36. The for-profit colleges and Arizona State had negative NPS, with U of Phoenix the lowest at -40. All of the Peralta Colleges had slightly negative NPS, with Berkeley City College the highest and Merritt the lowest. While a negative NPS is cause for concern, NPS measurements are more meaningful when tracked over time and compared to benchmarks.

Figure 13: College net promoter score

College	Net Promoter Score
UC Berkeley	36
UCSF	15
UC Extension	13
SF State	3
Cal State Hayward	2
College of Alameda	-7
Berkeley City College	-7
Merritt College	-11
Laney College	-12
Western Governors U	-19
Arizona State U	-21
Coursera	-24
Southern New Hampshire U	-26
Grand Canyon U	-31
U of Phoenix	-40

### Net promoter score

NPS is a common customer satisfaction measure, calculated by taking the percentage of users who are “very likely” to recommend a product (rating 9 or 10 on a 0–10 scale) and subtracting those who are less likely (rating 0–6). Brands like Costco and Starbucks have NPS over 70; Bank of America’s NPS is -24.

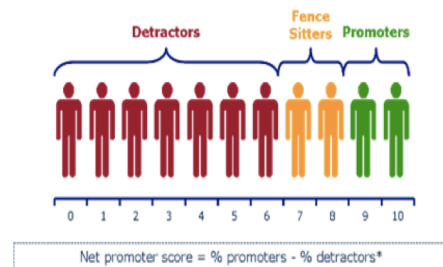
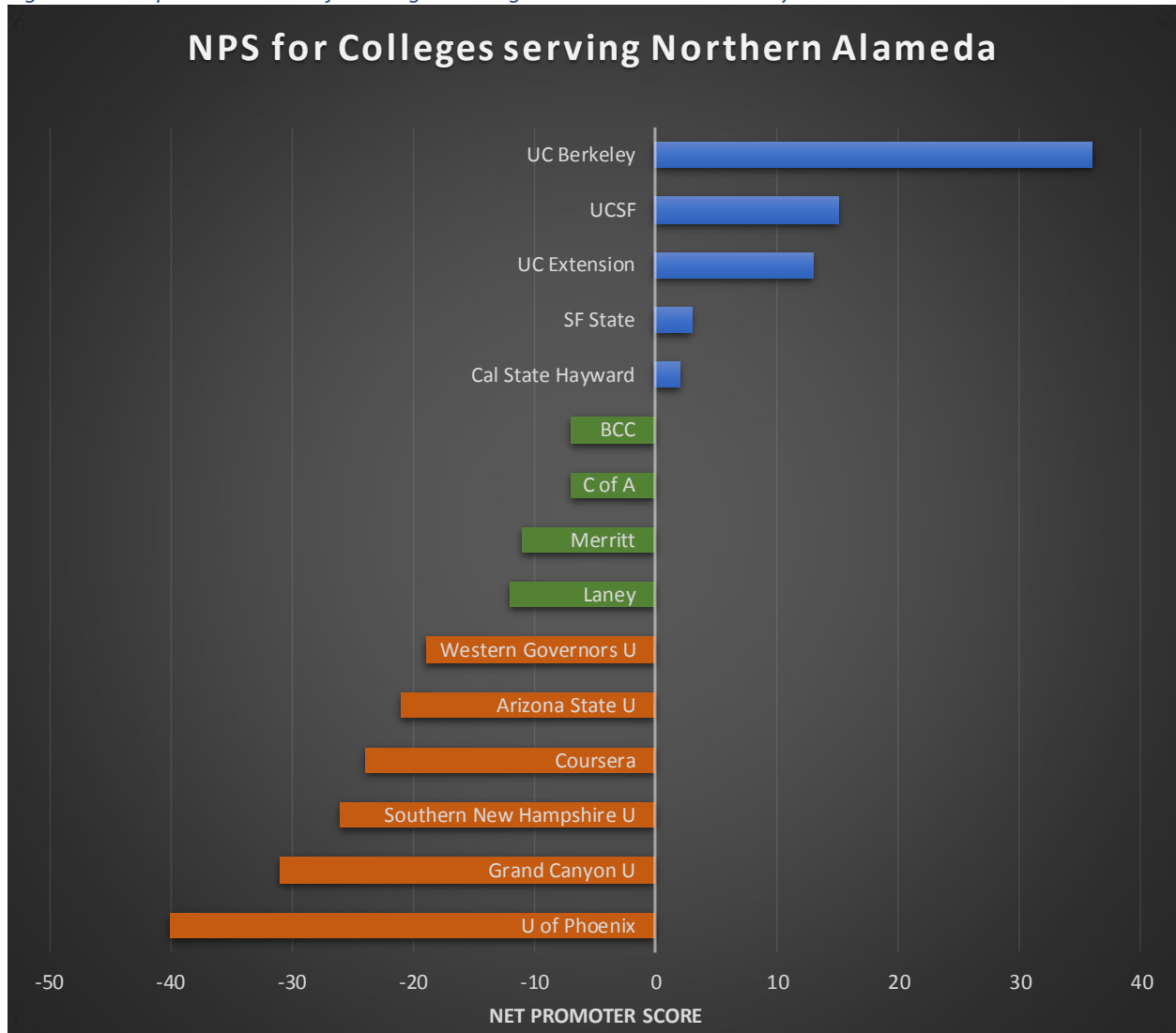


Figure 14: Net promoter scores for colleges serving Northern Alameda County



In addition to the Northern Alameda external community survey, CBT worked with the Laney College ESOL Department to survey current and potential ESOL students in 15 languages. About two thirds of respondents say they know “only a little” about Laney College.

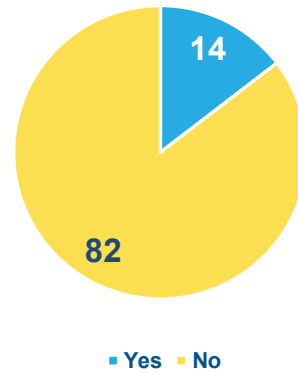
**Public Opinions about the Peralta District**

Given recent publicity about the Peralta District, CBT sought to understand what local residents know about the District, and how they feel about it. The external community survey asked Northern Alameda residents a series of questions about their awareness of news coverage Peralta’s issues, and how that affects their opinion of the District. The questionnaire first asked about “unaided recall”: what respondents knew about coverage of Peralta. Next, respondents read a very short digest of recent news coverage and were asked a set of questions about their “aided recall” of news about Peralta.





*In February 2019, Peralta Community College District accepted the early retirement of Chancellor Jowel Laguerre. The move follows votes of no confidence by faculty at two of the colleges this month and a unanimous decision by the state's Fair Political Practices Commission to fine Peralta \$2,000 for spending nearly \$39,000 of taxpayer money to mail 392,118 Christmas cards in 2017. This was a violation of the state law against sending mass mailings at public expense.*



*In fall, 2018, the accreditation agency that oversees Peralta ordered enhanced fiscal monitoring of the district because of its poor fiscal management. The Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges cited five years of declining fund balances, \$31 million of "negative cash" in its treasury, plunging enrolment and failure to fix past problems identified by the accreditor, among other headaches.*

The survey then asked respondents what they would do when they heard about the District's financial and management challenges. The popular responses were to read news articles and to discuss with family and friends. Very few local residents said they would visit a Peralta website.

Most respondents said that knowing information about the District made them concerned, and less favorable.

Respondents' views of Laney College were most affected by negative news about the District. A third of respondents said that Chabot College was affected by problems in the Peralta District, which implies that there's considerable room to educate local residents about what the Peralta District is, and which colleges it includes.

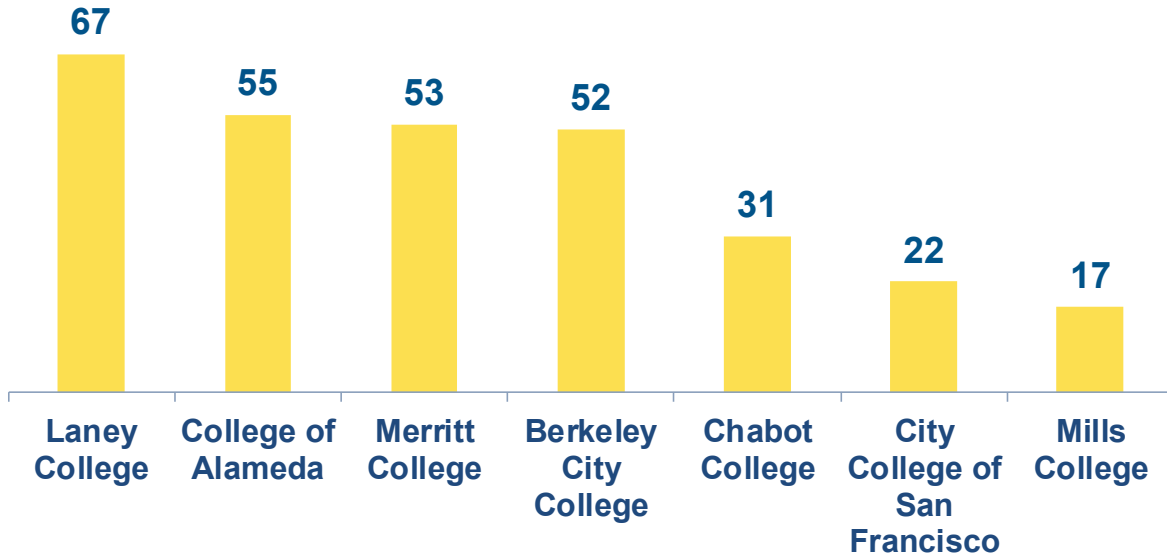
Q. To what extent are you concerned by this? How does this information make you feel towards this Peralta Community College District?

**61%**  
are concerned by this

**53%**  
are less favorable

Figure 15: Which colleges local residents think are affected by Peralta District issues

Q. Which colleges/institutions do you think are affected by this?



Reading about the Peralta District’s problems does **not** appear to deter those local residents who are already likely to enroll in one of the colleges.

Reading about the Peralta District’s problems does **not** appear to deter those local residents who are already likely to enroll in one of the colleges.

How likely are you to enroll in an educational or training course or program at {college} in the next six months?					
	Before reading about Peralta District’s problems				After reading about Peralta District’s problems
	How likely are you to enroll in an educational or training course or program at {college} in the next six months?				Considering [what you have now learned about the Peralta District], how likely are you to enroll in an educational or training course or program in the next six months at ...
	Laney	Merritt	C of A	BCC	Laney, Merritt, Alameda, or Berkeley City College
Very likely	13%	13%	14%	13%	12%

### **Marketing themes**

CBT commissioned Penn Schoen Berland to poll adults in Northern Alameda County who were interested and open to further education and training. We posed questions about what motivates adults to enroll in education and training programs, and what factors are important to potential students when they are deciding where to apply. The results suggest which themes should be the highest priority for marketing messages.

#### **Motivating adults to seek further education and training**

Given the strong job market, working adults in Northern Alameda face significant opportunity costs in time and/or money that may deter them from seeking continuing education and training. When Peralta markets to the local community, the first task is to help persuade working adults that it's worth their time, and potential lost income, to enroll in an education or training program.

The survey asked respondents, "If you were to continue your education and training, what would be your primary reasons for doing so?" and gave them a list of options that have tested well in other studies. For adults who are already in an education or training program, we asked "What were the primary reasons you decided to continue your education or training?"

Almost half of respondents said that a primary reason for continuing education and training is "to improve my earning potential". The tagline "Learn More to Earn More" tested well, with 42% selecting it as a reason to continuing education or training.

A third of respondents said that curiosity about a topic was their main motivator. One in 5 respondents said that a primary reason for enrolling was to start a business or become their own boss. Only 5% of respondents were displaced workers choosing to enter education or training programs because they are unable to get a job.

70% of respondents think that when they complete a course of study, they will see an impact on their job prospects in less than a year.

#### **Choosing a college**

The survey asked potential students an open-ended question about choosing a college, and asked respondents to rate 25 different choice factors. When choosing an education provider, adults in Northern Alameda said that the most important considerations are the cost, location, quality and reputation.



## Recommendations

Customize marketing approaches by delivery modes/options (e.g. evening, weekend, short courses, online, etc.)

### For the District

- Develop and contract for a communication plan to fill the information gap regarding District financial and governance issues.
- Create consistent, positive messaging for both the Peralta District and its colleges.
- Create web, social media, and **mobile** platform marketing experiences for area residents
- Hire a marketing/public Information expert and develop a cohesive marketing plan including social media, mobile applications, web sites as well as traditional media outlets.
- Develop a template for websites so there is a sense of common purpose among the colleges and District.

### For the Colleges

- Track net promoter scores (NPS) for each College and compare to District and external benchmarks.
- Develop contingency communication plans to deal with potential bad news from the District.
- Design and implement a comprehensive marketing strategy to attract adult students to existing certificate programs.
- To help persuade adults to seek further education and training, emphasize flexibility, return on investment, and the need to prepare for technological change.
- Customize marketing approaches to post-high school populations by industry sector (e.g. business, health care, etc.
- Expand both outreach and in-reach marketing of college programs.
- To help persuade potential students to choose an individual college, emphasize **jobs**, **location**, and **cost**.
- Partner with community-based organizations serving immigrant communities to market non-credit courses. Keep the Laney College ESOL surveys in multiple languages up permanently, and link to College websites.

## Summary and Next Steps

The Collaborative Brain Trust (CBT) *Fiscal Improvement Plan Services Project* is well underway. Phase I (Discovery Phase) was conducted February to May 2019. Observations, findings, and recommendations have been provided in this Final Report, accompanied by supporting data and evidence from Discovery activities and surveys. Phase II (Operational Plan) is planned for 2019-2020, and a short “interphase” project, focused in Information Technology, has been proposed for Summer 2019.

The direction for Phase II of the project is to develop an Operational Plan based on Phase I recommendations, along with those from FCMAT and ACCJC. It is recommended that PCCD’s evolving Five Year Integrated Financial Plan, Educational Master Plans, Strategic Enrollment Plans, Facilities Master Plan, and other planning efforts of the District and its colleges be updated concurrently with Phase II for consistency, and that a Technology Master Plan be developed as well. Alignment with the state Vision for Success; refinement of Peralta’s own mission, vision, and goals; and preparation for the Fall 2020 ACCJC site visit should also be considered during Phase II for a truly integrated approach to planning.

CBT commends the dedicated trustees, administrators, faculty, and staff for their ongoing leadership and efforts toward the success of students in the Peralta District. This has been an extremely important project and CBT looks forward to providing support services to the District in Phase II.

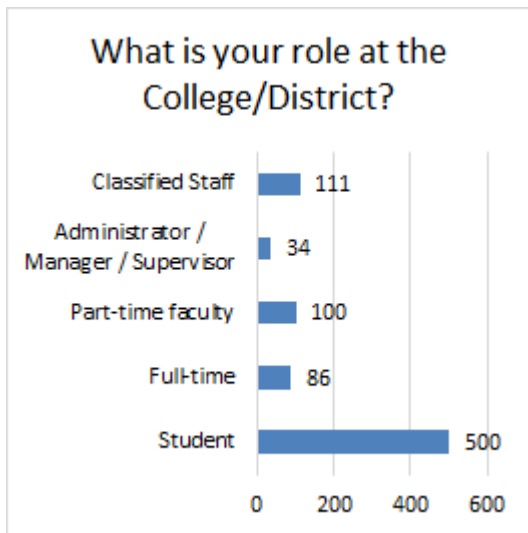
## Appendices

### Appendix A - Internal Survey Results

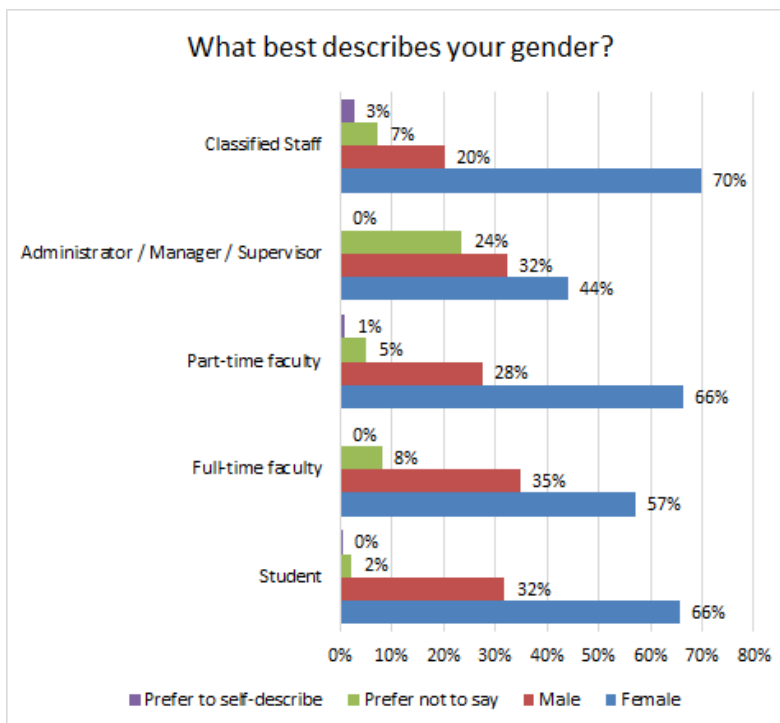
A survey was conducted to get input from as many District stakeholders as possible. They were asked questions about the District’s fiscal challenges, the climate at the colleges and ideas for improvements.

#### Respondent Profile

There were 831 respondents to the survey.



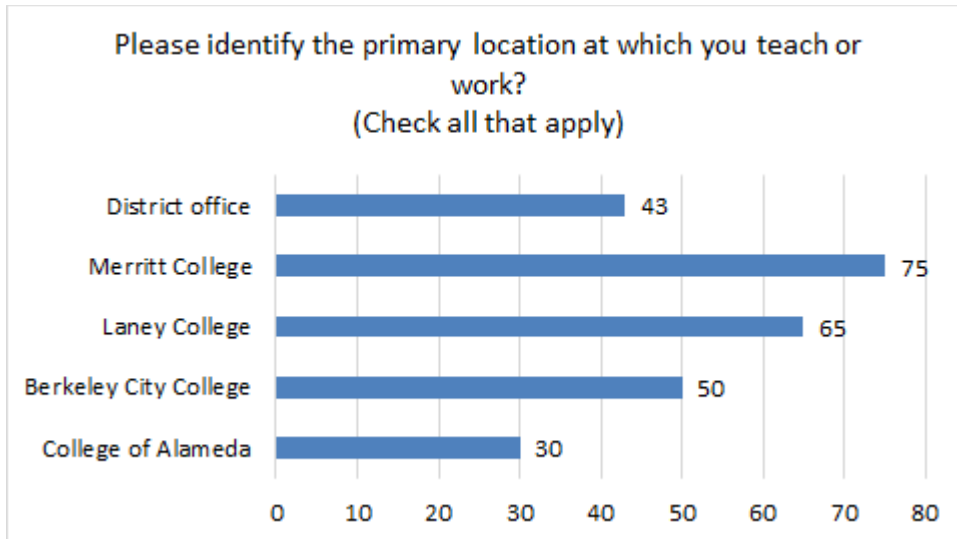
A significant majority of respondents were women.



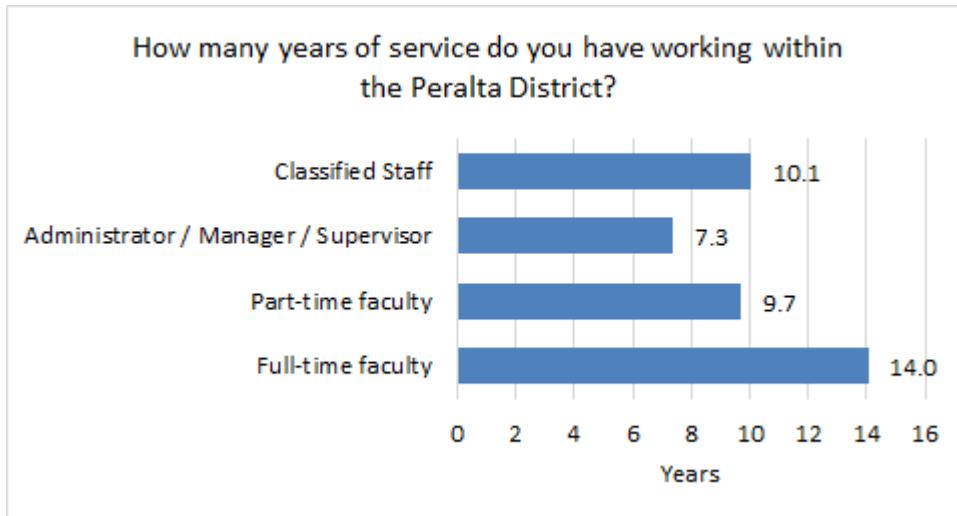


**Responses from Faculty, Staff and Administrators**

The following questions were asked of all respondents who identified themselves as faculty, classified staff or administrators. The following chart shows their primary work location.

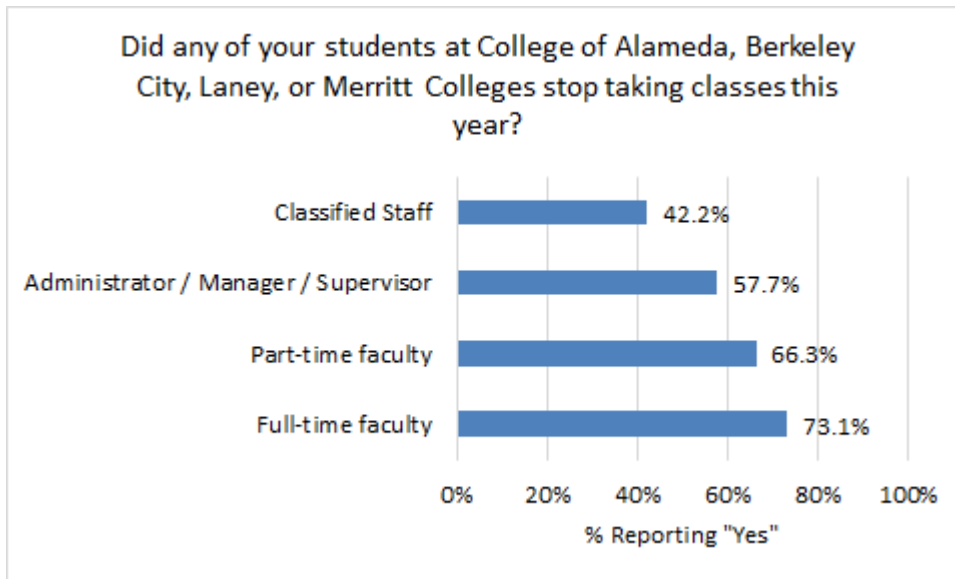


The next chart shows the average number of years of service to the District.

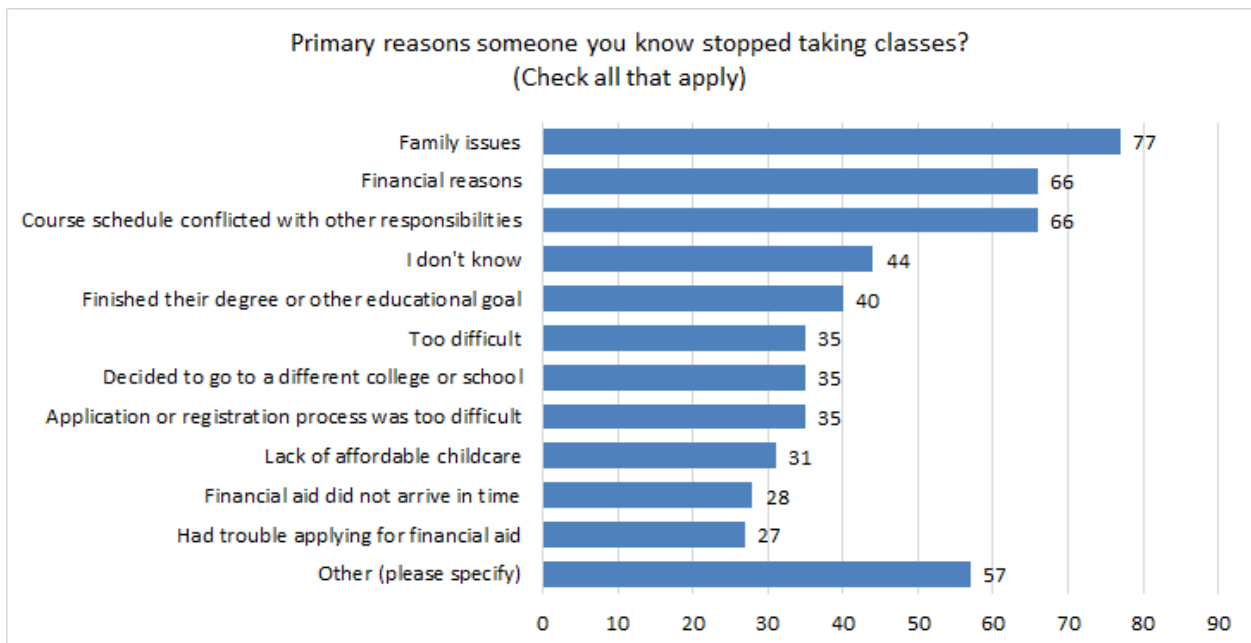


### Students stopping their studies

Significant percentages of staff, administrators and faculty know students who stopped taking classes this year.

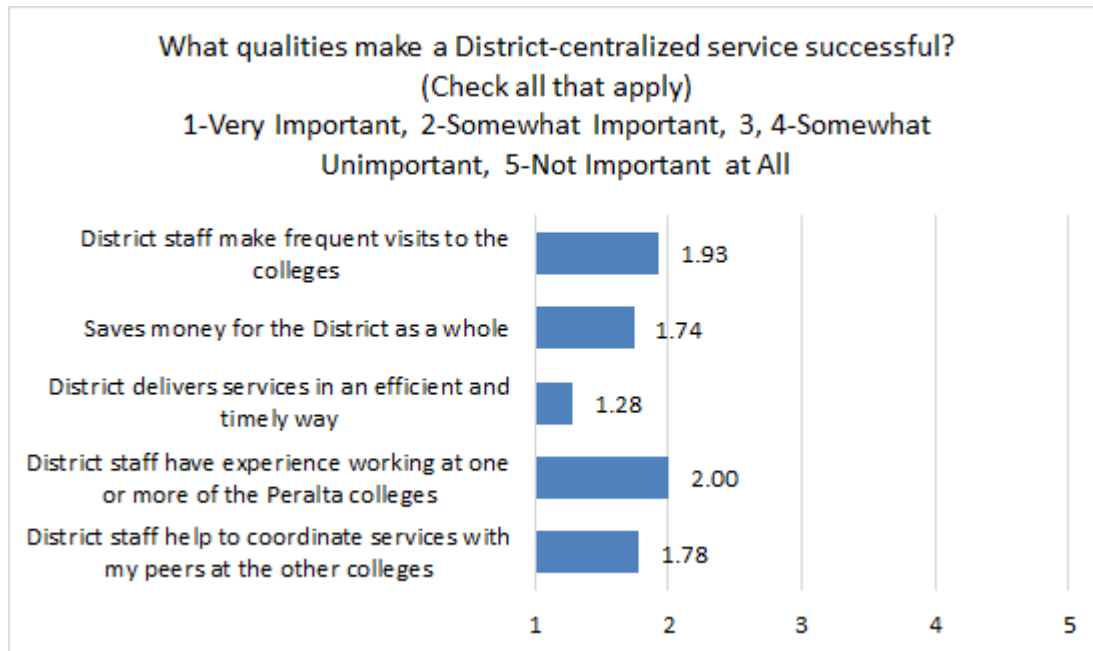


The main reasons for students stopping their studies are shown below. Family and financial reasons topped the list. Course schedule conflicts was the next most commonly cited reason.



### Centralized services

Respondents were asked what would make a District-centralized service successful. The lower numbers indicate greater importance. The most important quality is that services be delivered in an efficient and timely way. Employees of the District or the colleges felt that saving money for the District and that the District staff coordinate with college staff are important as well. Making frequent visits to the colleges and that District staff have experience working at the colleges were only somewhat important.



### Scheduling of classes

The following questions concern scheduling of classes. It is interesting that classified staff strongly agreed (and the other groups agreed) that the four colleges' course schedules should be developed in a coordinated manner. There was similar agreement that students could better complete their educational goals if the four colleges coordinated their schedules.

*"I don't know what classes I need to take to finish my degree and it takes three weeks to get an appointment with someone."*

*Student*

**Recommendation:** The survey did not go into detail about how to coordinate them. This is an area for further investigation and possible action by the colleges and the District.

Indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statements			
Question	Role	Weighted Average	Sentiment
If students wish to take 15 units, they can take the courses they need in a convenient schedule	Full-time faculty	2.5	Agree
	Part-time faculty	2.6	Neither agree nor disagree
	Administrator / Manager / Supervisor	2.4	Agree
	Classified Staff	2.3	Agree
The four Colleges' course schedules often conflict with one another	Full-time faculty	2.3	Agree
	Part-time faculty	2.5	Neither agree nor disagree
	Administrator / Manager / Supervisor	2.0	Agree
	Classified Staff	2.1	Agree
The four Colleges' course schedules should be developed in a coordinated manner	Full-time faculty	2.0	Agree
	Part-time faculty	2.0	Agree
	Administrator / Manager / Supervisor	1.7	Agree
	Classified Staff	1.4	Strongly Agree
Students could complete their educational goals more quickly if the four Colleges coordinated their course schedules	Full-time faculty	2.0	Agree
	Part-time faculty	2.2	Agree
	Administrator / Manager / Supervisor	2.0	Agree
	Classified Staff	1.4	Strongly Agree

### Overall feelings about the District and Colleges

The following questions measure employee’s overall feelings about the District and the Colleges. Generally, employees were lukewarm or somewhat negative about recommending that a friend or colleague come to work at the District or one of the colleges. Interestingly, they were fairly positive about recommending that a friend or colleague attend classes at one of the Peralta colleges.

<b>How likely is it that you would recommend to a friend or colleague...</b>		
<b>...to work at the District or at a Peralta College?</b>		
	Full-time faculty	Neither likely nor unlikely
	Part-time faculty	Neither likely nor unlikely
	Administrator / Manager / Supervisor	Somewhat unlikely
	Classified Staff	Somewhat unlikely
<b>...to attend classes at a Peralta College?</b>		
	Full-time faculty	Likely
	Part-time faculty	somewhat likely
	Administrator / Manager / Supervisor	Likely
	Classified Staff	somewhat likely

### Reduction in administrator turnover

The following Questions relate to the high turnover among college and District administrators. Respondents were asked for their suggestions to reduce this high rate of turnover. The top suggestion was to hire the best candidates with relevant experience. The next most common suggestion was to improve onboarding, professional development and to have clear job descriptions. Many respondents mentioned the need to leave behind the “Peralta way” and develop sound, clear, positive, procedures and working relationships.

Do you have any suggestions to reduce the high rate of turnover among College and District administrators?(Please keep your response short and concise)	
Hire best candidates with relevant experience / Better background checks	57
Professional Development / mentorships / Onboarding / Time to learn job / Job descriptions	32
Hire from within / opportunities for advancement	23
Longer commitment, contract / commitment to local community / Fewer interims	21
Improve working conditions / don't overwork people / communications / cohesiveness / reasonable workload / Improve systems / Don't punish people for speaking up	20
Let certain people go / performance reviews with accountability / reduce district staff	19
Provide adequate, well-paid support staff	14
Better pay / treat staff better / stand behind managers' decisions	14
Transparent/ timely hiring process / Improve HR Department	9

### Opportunities to strengthen fiscal health

Respondents were asked for the single greatest opportunity to strengthen the fiscal health of the District. The most common suggestion was to shrink the District office and make it more efficient and to reduce the dependence on consultants. The next most commonly mentioned suggestion was to improve leadership generally and as it relates to fiscal management. Respondents mentioned the need for increased transparency, education of stakeholders. Many respondents also mentioned the need for increased focus on students. They mentioned student success, retention, completion, outreach and on developing class schedules that work for students.

What is the single greatest opportunity to strengthen the long-term fiscal health of the Peralta District and its Colleges?	
Reduce district admins / streamline district operations / Reduce use of consultants / More college autonomy (decentralize)	57
Improve fiscal mgmt and leadership / hire experienced fiscal people / make more transparent / Educate all employees	50
Focus on student success, retention, completion / grow enrollments / coordinate campus svcs and schedule / More noncredit / local community / Outreach	42
Eliminate unnecessary positions / reduce overall admins / reduce stipends and release time / more classified / remove ineffective staff / accountability	26
Improve student ctrs / facilities / equipment / academic pgms	11
Streamline WRITTEN fiscal policies and purchasing / improvements to IT	11
Professional Development / managers must be responsible for budgets	10
Improve working environment and communication / more admin-faculty collaboration	7
Increase Pay for faculty and classified / more support for classified staff	6
Centralize some services at the District level / avoid duplicated efforts / improve trust between colleges and District / reduce duplication by campuses	4

### Risks to fiscal stability

When asked about the greatest risk to the District’s long-term fiscal stability, the most commonly cited risk was mismanagement, hiring under qualified people and poor planning. They also cited the District office and Trustees as well as an excess of administrators and outside consultants.

In your opinion, what is the greatest risk to the Peralta College's long-term fiscal stability? (Please keep your response short and concise)	
Mismanagement / poor planning / Incompetent hires	51
District Office & Trustees	33
Too many admins & consultants	32
Not Student focused / financial aid / Enroll mgmt	20
Poor financial management	19
Enrollment Decline	11
Admin / Staff Turnover	10
Facilities / infrastructure	10
Wasted Resources / inefficiencies	8
Internal Competition	7
Failing systems / Poor technology infra	7
Accountability	6
Infighting / lack of working together	2

### Climate Questions

The following questions paint a stark picture of the working climate at the District and the colleges. Generally, respondents (except full-time faculty) do not feel safe expressing their point of view. There is a sense among all groups that colleagues are not open to giving and receiving honest feedback. Employees do not feel that the District and colleges are places where they can try new things, make improvements, nor do they look across and outside the organization for new ideas. They do not see examples of collaboration and they do not trust



communications from the District. They do not feel that they get constructive or positive feedback from their manager.

Question	Role	Weighted Average	Sentiment
I feel it's safe to speak up and express my point of view	Full-time faculty	2.50	Agree
	Part-time faculty	3.26	Neither agree nor disagree
	Admin / Manager / Supervisor	3.23	Neither agree nor disagree
	Classified Staff	3.52	Disagree
The people I work with are open to giving and receiving honest feedback	Full-time faculty	2.77	Neither agree nor disagree
	Part-time faculty	2.96	
	Admin / Manager / Supervisor	3.14	
	Classified Staff	3.20	
My college is a place where I can try new things and make improvements to the way we work	Full-time faculty	2.70	Neither agree nor disagree
	Part-time faculty	3.12	
	Admin / Manager / Supervisor	2.94	
	Classified Staff	3.29	
At my college, we look across and outside the organization to generate new ideas and solutions	Full-time faculty	2.90	Neither agree nor disagree
	Part-time faculty	3.23	Neither agree nor disagree
	Admin / Manager / Supervisor	2.89	Neither agree nor disagree
	Classified Staff	3.49	Disagree
I often see good examples of collaboration across teams at my college	Full-time faculty	2.57	Neither agree nor disagree
	Part-time faculty	2.99	
	Admin / Manager / Supervisor	2.53	
	Classified Staff	3.45	
I feel I can trust communications from the District	Full-time faculty	3.71	Disagree
	Part-time faculty	3.70	Disagree
	Admin / Manager / Supervisor	3.14	Neither agree nor disagree
	Classified Staff	3.86	Disagree
My manager gives regular and constructive feedback that helps me improve my performance	Full-time faculty	3.24	Neither agree nor disagree
	Part-time faculty	3.01	
	Admin / Manager / Supervisor	2.67	
	Classified Staff	2.93	
I receive recognition when I do a good job	Full-time faculty	3.23	Neither agree nor disagree
	Part-time faculty	3.22	
	Admin / Manager / Supervisor	2.86	
	Classified Staff	3.04	

Respondents do not feel that they hear about changes that affect them in a timely manner. They do not feel that their manager is responsive to suggestions for change. On the positive side, all groups indicated that their work gives them a feeling of personal accomplishment. Employees feel that the District/colleges do not provide sufficient staff nor adequate systems and tools to do their job effectively. They do not feel that the organization cares about their well-being. They are generally skeptical as to whether this survey data will be used to make improvements.

Question	Role	Weighted Average	Sentiment
I hear about changes that affect me in a timely and professional manner	Full-time faculty	3.70	Disagree
	Part-time faculty	3.43	Neither agree nor disagree
	Admin / Manager / Supervisor	3.27	Neither agree nor disagree
	Classified Staff	3.94	Disagree
My manager is responsive to suggestions for change	Full-time faculty	2.89	Neither agree nor disagree
	Part-time faculty	2.78	
	Admin / Manager / Supervisor	2.86	
	Classified Staff	2.66	
My work gives me a feeling of personal accomplishment	Full-time faculty	1.75	Agree
	Part-time faculty	2.03	
	Admin / Manager / Supervisor	2.23	
	Classified Staff	2.20	
My college (or the District) has the systems and tools I need to do my job effectively	Full-time faculty	3.96	Disagree
	Part-time faculty	3.43	Neither agree nor disagree
	Admin / Manager / Supervisor	3.95	Disagree
	Classified Staff	3.90	Disagree
I can trust the people I work with to deliver on their promises	Full-time faculty	3.17	Neither agree nor disagree
	Part-time faculty	3.09	
	Admin / Manager / Supervisor	2.91	
	Classified Staff	3.41	
This organization cares about my health and well-being	Full-time faculty	3.56	Disagree
	Part-time faculty	3.75	Disagree
	Admin / Manager / Supervisor	3.32	Neither agree nor disagree
	Classified Staff	3.96	Disagree

Question	Role	Weighted Average	Sentiment
There are enough people to do the work in our area	Full-time faculty	3.81	Disagree
	Part-time faculty	3.67	
	Admin / Manager / Supervisor	4.23	
	Classified Staff	4.10	
I believe feedback from this survey will be used to make improvements	Full-time faculty	3.36	Neither agree nor disagree
	Part-time faculty	3.12	
	Admin / Manager / Supervisor	2.82	
	Classified Staff	3.20	

**Leadership, planning, and goal setting**

The following questions pertain to leadership at the District and the colleges. Employees generally feel that faculty and staff take more pride in their work than administrators. There is a feeling that the leadership does not have a very clear sense of purpose. The District and colleges get good marks on accepting and respecting diversity. Only full-time faculty feel that there are adequate opportunities to get involved in campus planning and goal setting. The safety and security of campus and satellite facilities are generally regarded as average or needing improvement.

Please indicate how well your college and the District does on college planning & goal setting			
Question	Role	Weighted Average	Sentiment
Administrators take pride in their work	Full-time faculty	2.52	Average
	Part-time faculty	2.81	Average
	Administrator / Manager / Supervisor	2.24	Fairly well
	Classified Staff	3.27	Average
Faculty take pride in their work	Full-time faculty	2.09	Fairly well
	Part-time faculty	2.24	Fairly well
	Administrator / Manager / Supervisor	2.45	Fairly well
	Classified Staff	2.57	Average

Please indicate how well your college and the District does on college planning & goal setting			
Staff take pride in their work	Full-time faculty	2.49	Fairly well
	Part-time faculty	2.39	Fairly well
	Administrator / Manager / Supervisor	2.77	Average
	Classified Staff	2.49	Fairly well
The leadership of the College has a clear sense of purpose	Full-time faculty	2.83	Average
	Part-time faculty	2.98	Average
	Administrator / Manager / Supervisor	2.80	Average
	Classified Staff	3.61	Needs improvement
The College values, accepts and respects diversity	Full-time faculty	2.17	Fairly well
	Part-time faculty	2.38	Fairly well
	Administrator / Manager / Supervisor	2.30	Fairly well
	Classified Staff	2.81	Average
There are adequate opportunities to get involved in campus planning and goal setting	Full-time faculty	2.06	Fairly well
	Part-time faculty	2.59	Average
	Administrator / Manager / Supervisor	2.55	Average
	Classified Staff	3.08	Average
The College is well-respected in the community	Full-time faculty	2.40	Fairly well
	Part-time faculty	2.68	Average
	Administrator / Manager / Supervisor	2.42	Fairly well
	Classified Staff	3.14	Average
The campus and satellite facilities are safe and secure	Full-time faculty	3.43	Average
	Part-time faculty	3.05	Average
	Administrator / Manager / Supervisor	3.14	Average
	Classified Staff	3.89	Needs improvement

### Other Questions

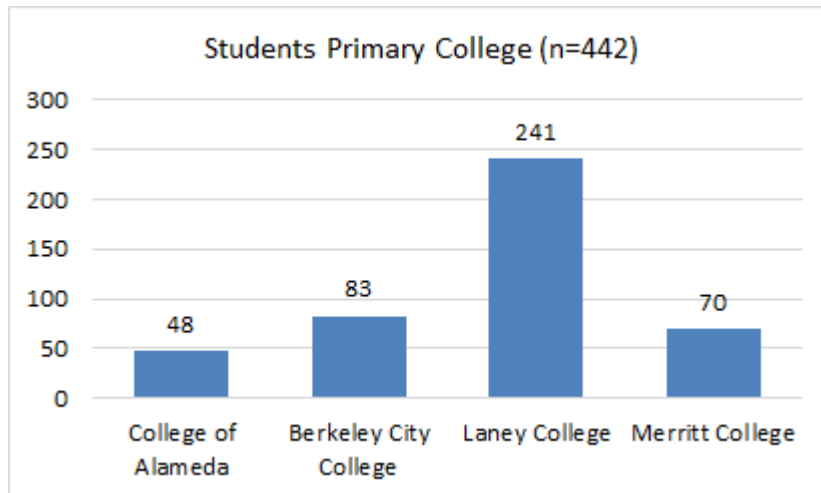
In this series of questions, respondents generally gave ratings of average or needs improvement. There seems to be consensus that there is room for improvement on planning, facilities, work environment, program reviews and the District office.

Please indicate how well your college and the District do on the following			
Question	Role	Weighted Average	Sentiment
The College does a good job meeting the needs of students	Full-time faculty	3.10	Average
	Part-time faculty	3.13	
	Administrator / Manager / Supervisor	3.00	
	Classified Staff	3.28	
Results of college goals are regularly shared with all campus constituencies	Full-time faculty	3.00	Average
	Part-time faculty	3.15	Average
	Administrator / Manager / Supervisor	3.05	Average
	Classified Staff	3.67	Needs improvement
There are adequate facilities and compensations for persons with disabilities on campus	Full-time faculty	3.63	Needs improvement
	Part-time faculty	3.12	Average
	Administrator / Manager / Supervisor	3.53	Needs improvement
	Classified Staff	3.62	Needs improvement
There is a spirit of teamwork and cooperation	Full-time faculty	3.06	Average
	Part-time faculty	3.16	Average
	Administrator / Manager / Supervisor	3.05	Average
	Classified Staff	3.56	Needs improvement
The Program Review/APU process helps promote positive change on our campus	Full-time faculty	3.68	Needs improvement
	Part-time faculty	3.34	Average
	Administrator / Manager / Supervisor	3.32	Average
	Classified Staff	4.00	Needs improvement
Campus facilities are well maintained	Full-time faculty	4.08	Needs improvement
	Part-time faculty	3.47	Average
	Administrator / Manager / Supervisor	3.86	Needs improvement
	Classified Staff	4.19	Needs improvement
There is good communication between faculty, staff and	Full-time faculty	3.23	Average
	Part-time faculty	3.59	Needs improvement
	Administrator / Manager /	3.00	Average

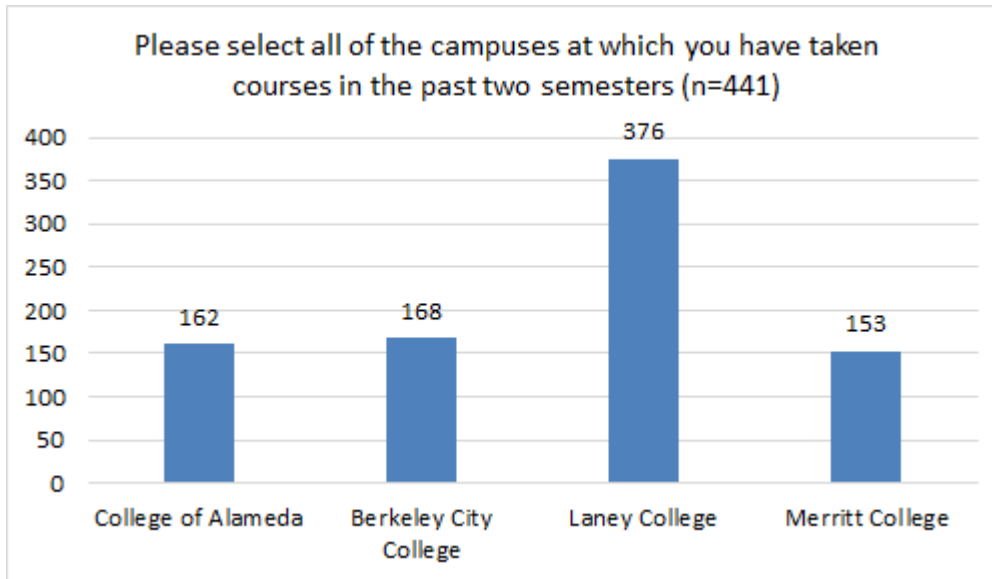
Please indicate how well your college and the District do on the following			
administrators	Supervisor		
	Classified Staff	4.00	Needs improvement
There are sufficient staff resources to achieve important objectives	Full-time faculty	4.00	Needs improvement
	Part-time faculty	3.87	
	Administrator / Manager / Supervisor	3.95	
	Classified Staff	4.23	
District Office provides necessary services that support the Colleges' missions	Full-time faculty	4.28	Needs improvement
	Part-time faculty	3.98	Needs improvement
	Administrator / Manager / Supervisor	3.43	Average
	Classified Staff	3.79	Needs improvement
District Office acts in a manner consistent with Board policies, statutes, and regulations	Full-time faculty	3.81	Needs improvement
	Part-time faculty	3.60	Needs improvement
	Administrator / Manager / Supervisor	3.29	Average
	Classified Staff	3.81	Needs improvement

### Responses from Students

Students were asked a series of questions. There were 500 students who responded. The following charts show information about these students.



Many of the students who responded to the survey have attended multiple Peralta colleges in the past two semesters.

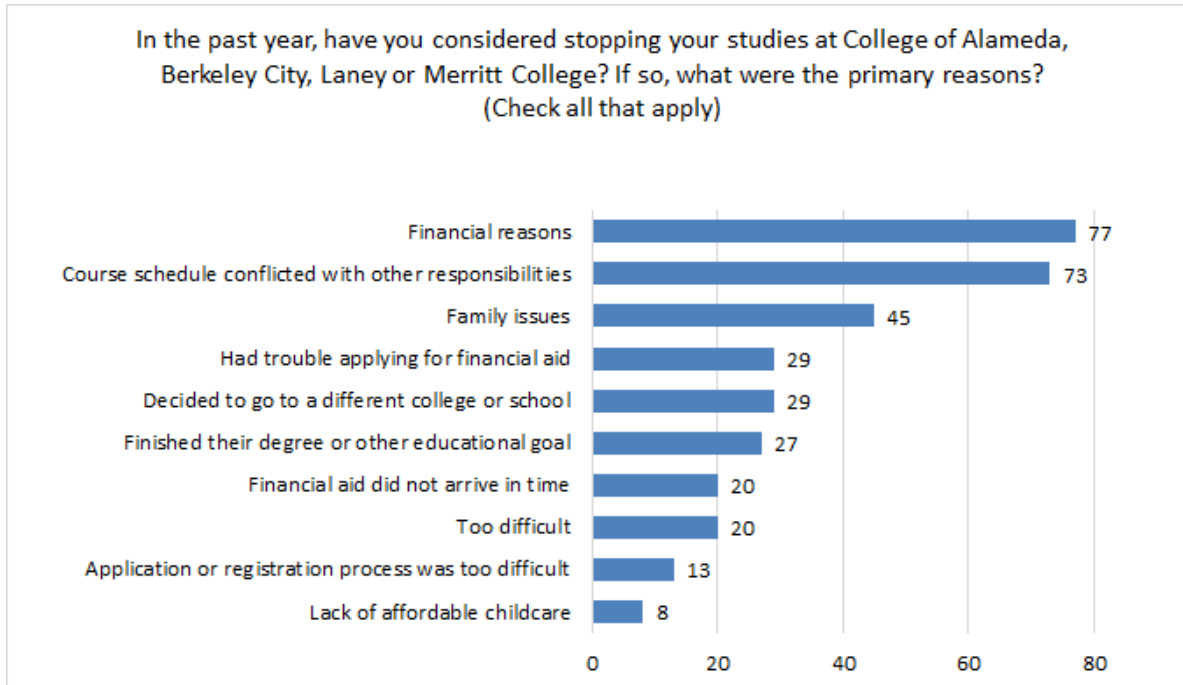


There were 61 respondents who indicated that they had taken classes at another college in the past two semesters.

In the past two semesters, have you taken classes at any other community colleges? Please list one per line. N=61	
College/University	Students
City College of San Francisco	10
U.C. Berkeley	10
Chabot College	9
Diablo Valley College	8
Samuel Merritt University	4
CSU East Bay	2
Mills College	2
Ohlone	2
San Francisco State University	2
Berkeley Jazz School	1
Chico State University	1
Coastline Community College	1
Contra Costa College	1
Denison University, in Ohio	1
Holy Names University	1
Las Positas	1
Lincoln University	1
Northwestern Polytechnic University	1
San Bernardino Valley College	1
Santa Barbara Community College	1
UC Berkeley Extension	1



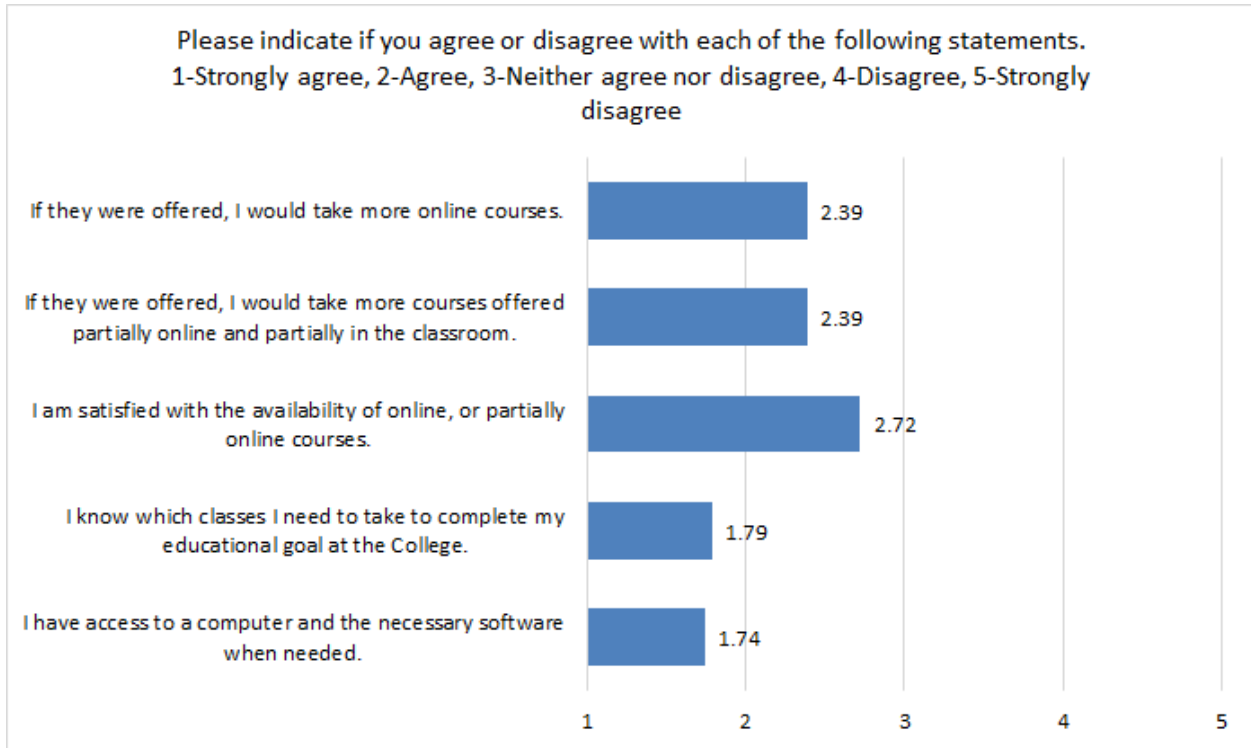
Many students indicated that they had considered stopping their studies in the past year. They cited the following reasons. The top reasons were financial, course schedules that conflicted with other responsibilities and family issues.



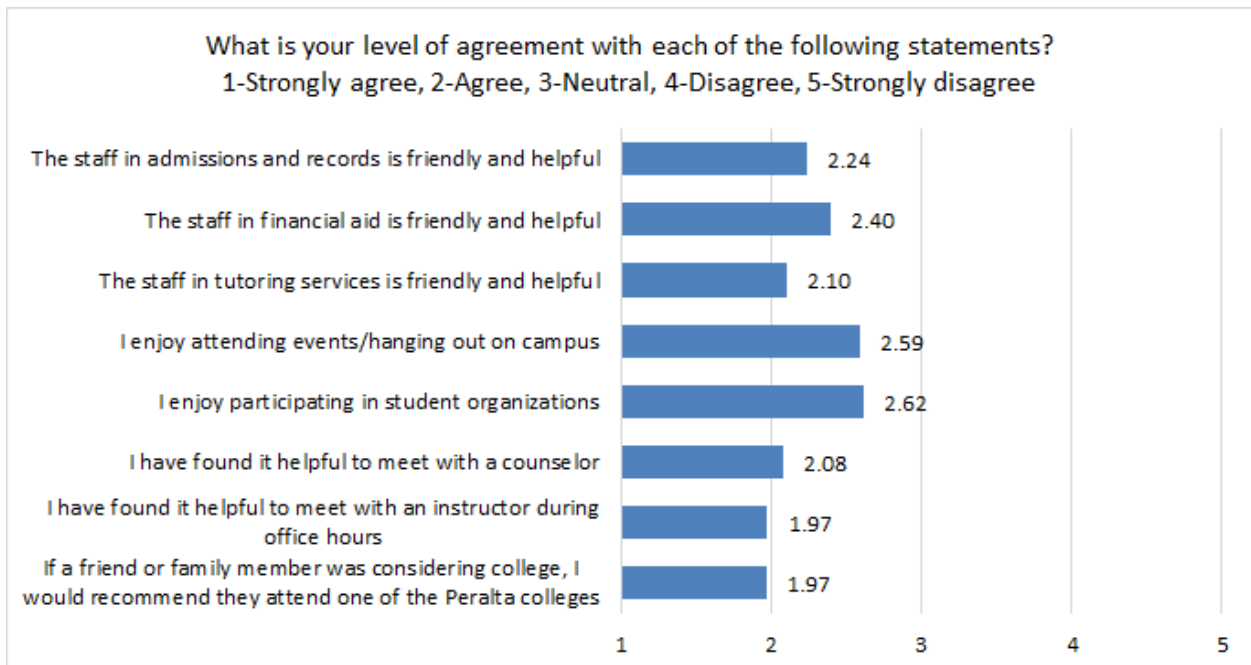
Students indicated that they would take more classes if they were online or offered at various times of the day.

<b>If they were offered, I would take more classes scheduled at the following times                      (Select all that apply)                      411 Total Responses</b>	
Online	196
Morning classes (before noon)	165
Hybrid - Partially online and partially in the classroom	143
Afternoon classes (between 2 and 5PM)	136
Evening classes (after 5pm)	131
Weekend classes	130
<b>Total</b>	<b>411</b>

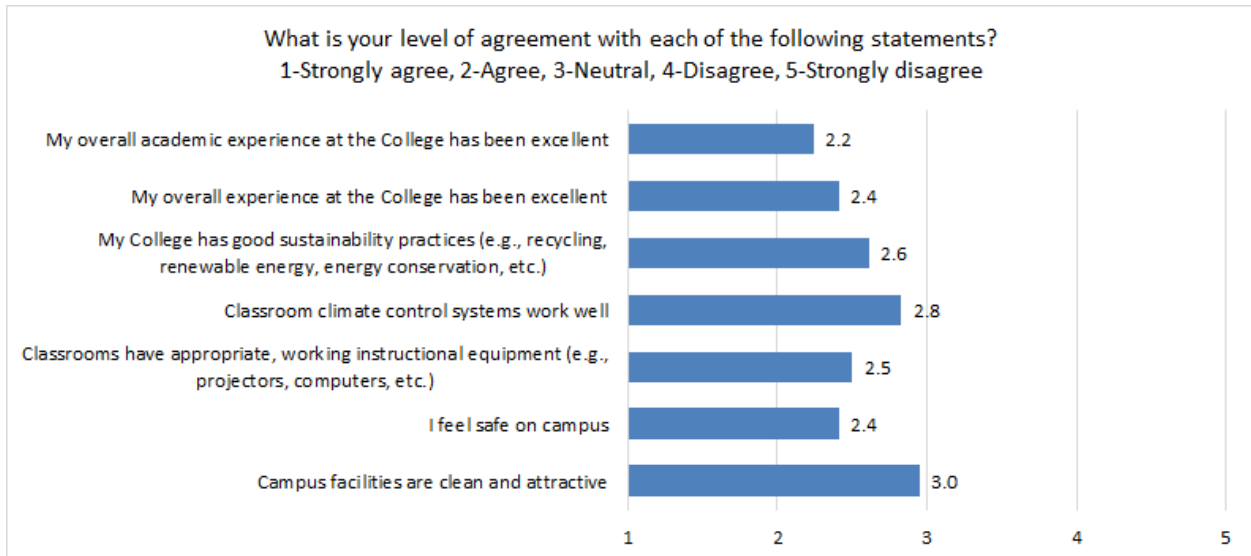
Students agreed to varying degrees with the following statements.



Students have a positive feeling about the staff in A&R, financial aid and tutoring. They also indicated that they found it helpful to meet with a counselor and with an instructor during office hours. Student respondents agreed that if a friend or family member was considering college, they would recommend that they attend one of the Peralta colleges.



Students rated their academic and overall experiences positively. They were lukewarm about sustainability practices and less satisfied with the cleanliness of the facilities.



## Appendix B: External Survey Results

### About the Survey

This study was undertaken to help the Peralta Community College District:

- Increase the recruitment and retention of adults into its programs
- Understand and better forecast demand for its college programs
- Identify the motivations and barriers to enrollment for potential students

PSB conducted 379 interviews among adults aged 18–55 from Alameda County via an online poll fielded between 18th April and 22nd May. Interviewees were either current Northern Alameda County residents or had lived there in the past two years and now reside in a neighboring county.

All interviewees have not ruled out enrolling in a continued education program in the next six months.

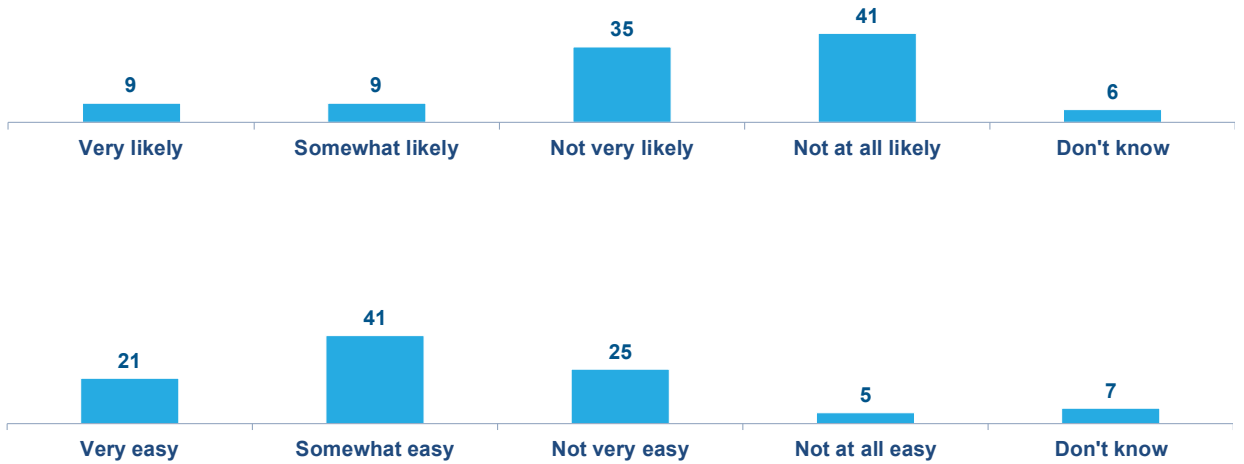
Results are weighted by age and race using Peralta District data from the California Adult Education Program to achieve broad representation of District demographics.

#### Main findings

- Section 1. Current employment and education context
- Section 2. Interest in enrolling in education and training programs
- Section 3. Motivations for enrolling
- Section 4. Choosing a college

### Section 1. Current Employment and Education Context

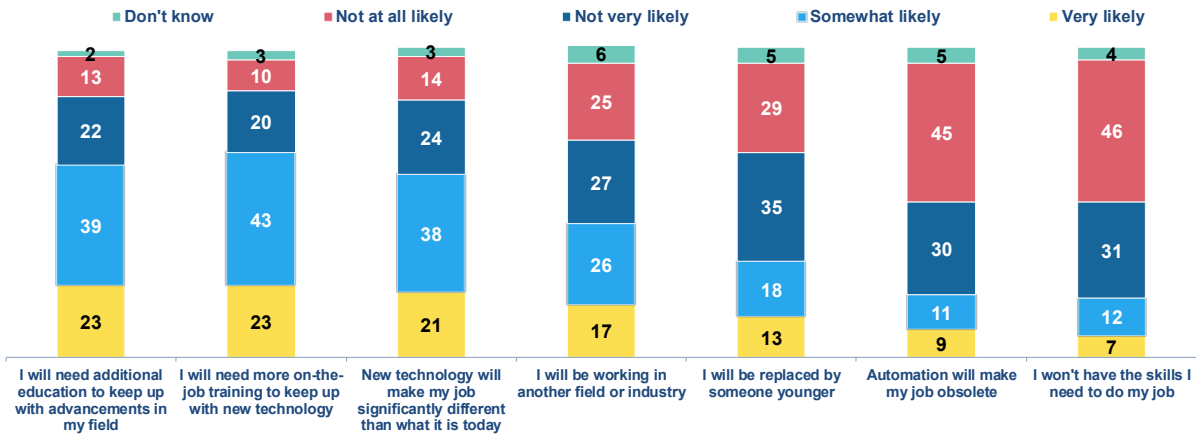
One in 5 workers express concerns about job security in the next 12 months, and 1 in 3 don't think it will be easy to find a new job with similar benefits and pay.



Base: All employed (278)

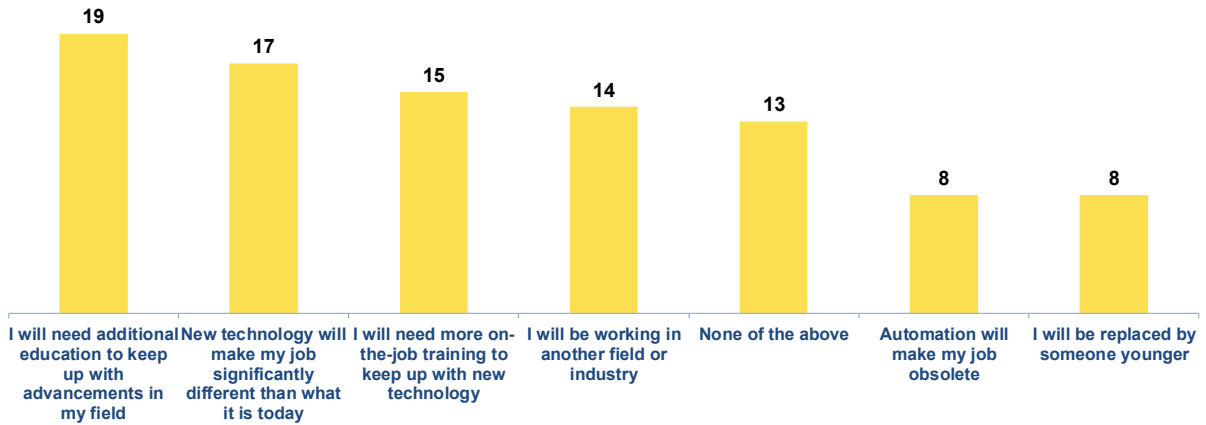
Most community members who are working believe they are not ready for technological changes in the next 5 years. Almost one in four say it is “very likely” that they “will need additional education to keep up with advancements in my field”.

Q. Thinking about the next five years, how likely do you think it is that you will be affected by the following scenarios:



Base: All working (305)

Q. Which one of the following scenarios is most likely to impact your job in the next five years?

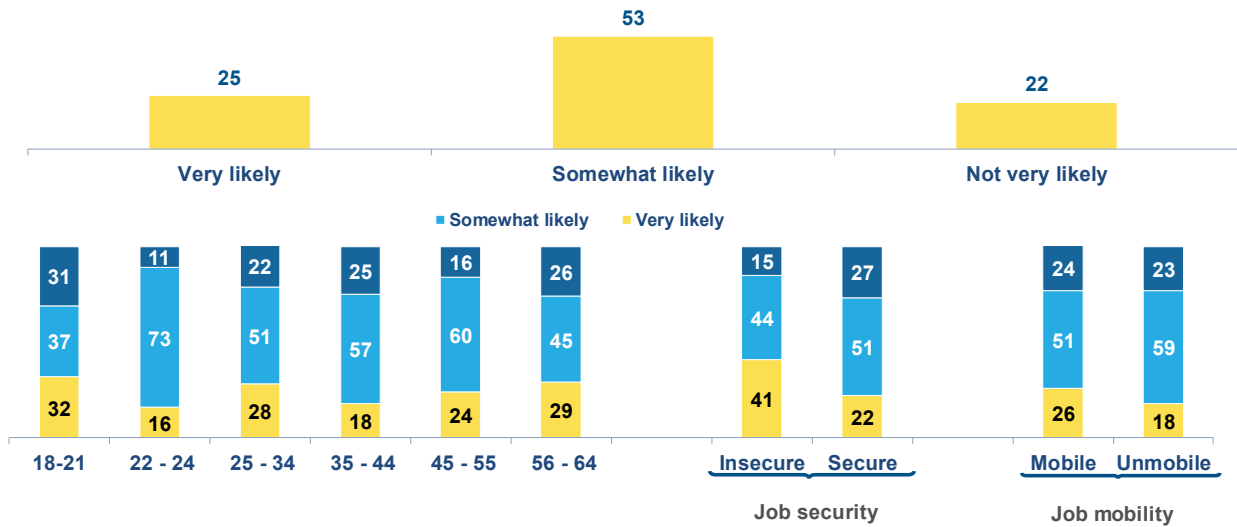


Base: All working (305)

## Section 2. Interest in enrolling in education and training programs

One in four local adults say they are “very likely” to enroll in an education or training course in the next six months. Those who feel insecure about their jobs are almost twice as likely to enroll.

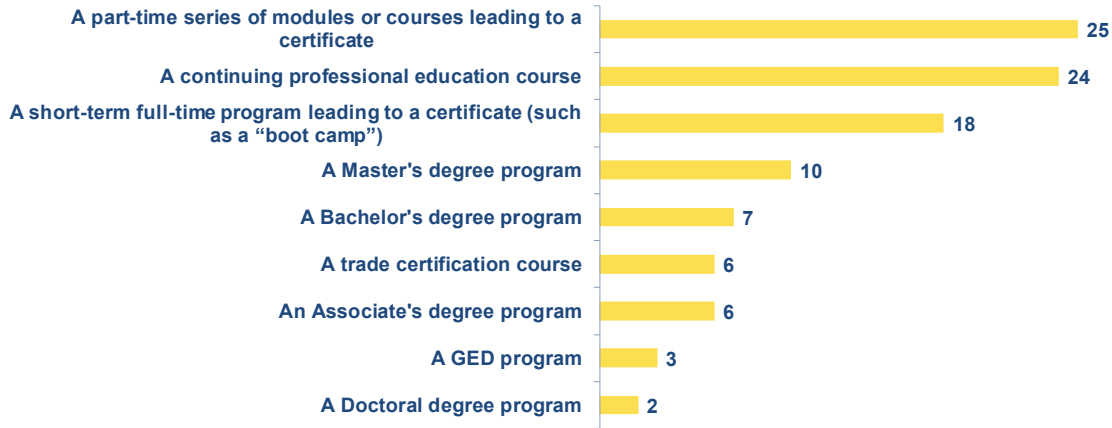
Q. How likely are you to enroll in an educational or training course or program in the next six months?



Base: All not currently studying (323)

Professional education courses are of greatest interest to those who are likely to enroll.

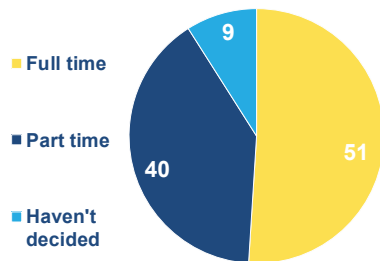
Q. Which of the following best describes the program or course that you plan to enrol/would consider enrolling in in the next six months? If you are planning on enrolling in more than one, please select the course or program that takes the most time.



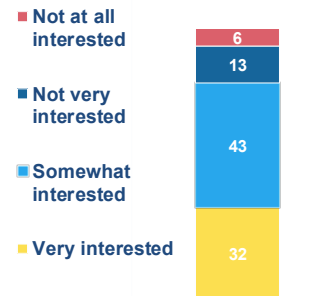
Base: All not currently studying (323)

Full time programs are more popular than part time, although there is much interest in an intensive "boot-camp" option.

Q. Thinking about the program you are enrolled in, or planning to enroll in, are you or will you be studying...



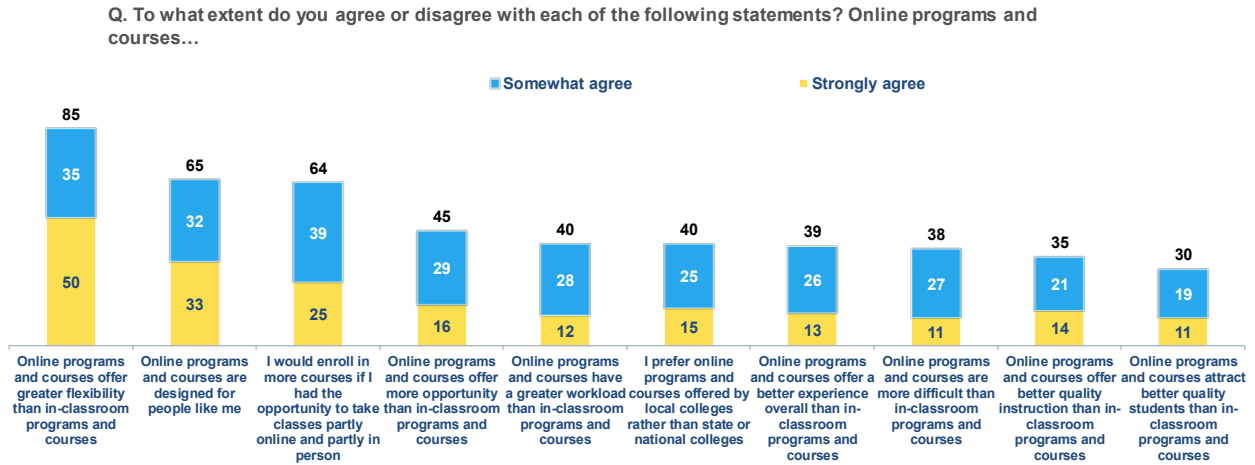
Q. How interested would you be in completing an education or training program through an intensive or short-term full-time option, like a six-week 'boot camp'?



Base: All currently studying or very likely to study (129)  
 Base: All likely to enroll (323)

Online programs are very attractive to potential adult students.

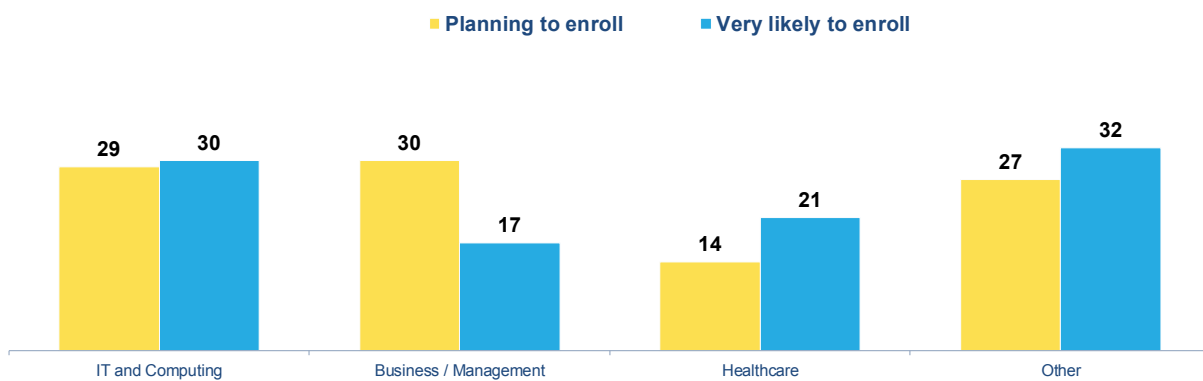
- One in four strongly agree that “I would enroll in more courses if I had the opportunity to take classes partly online and partly in person”
- One in three strongly agree that online programs and courses “are designed for people like me”.
- One in two strongly agree that online programs and courses “Online programs and courses offer greater flexibility than in-classroom programs and courses”



Base: All respondents (379)

IT / Computing is the most popular subject area among those who are very likely to enroll in the next six months

Q. What is the subject of the program you are considering?

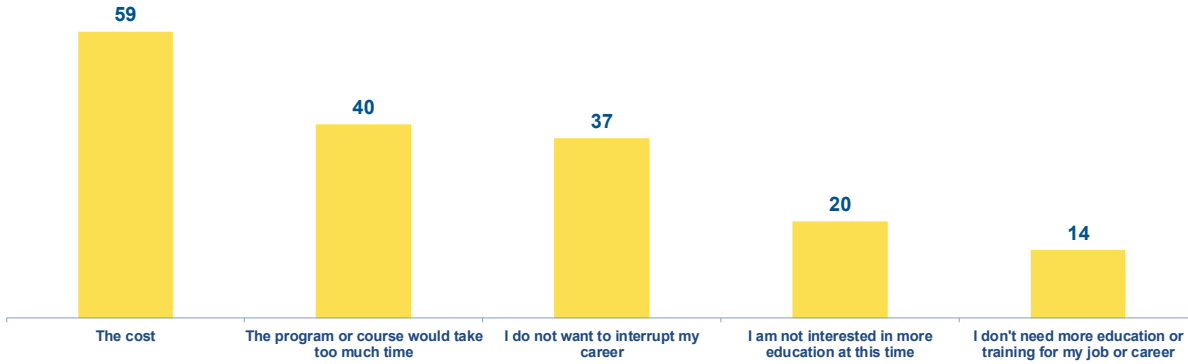


Base: All potentially planning to enroll (323); Very likely to enroll (73)



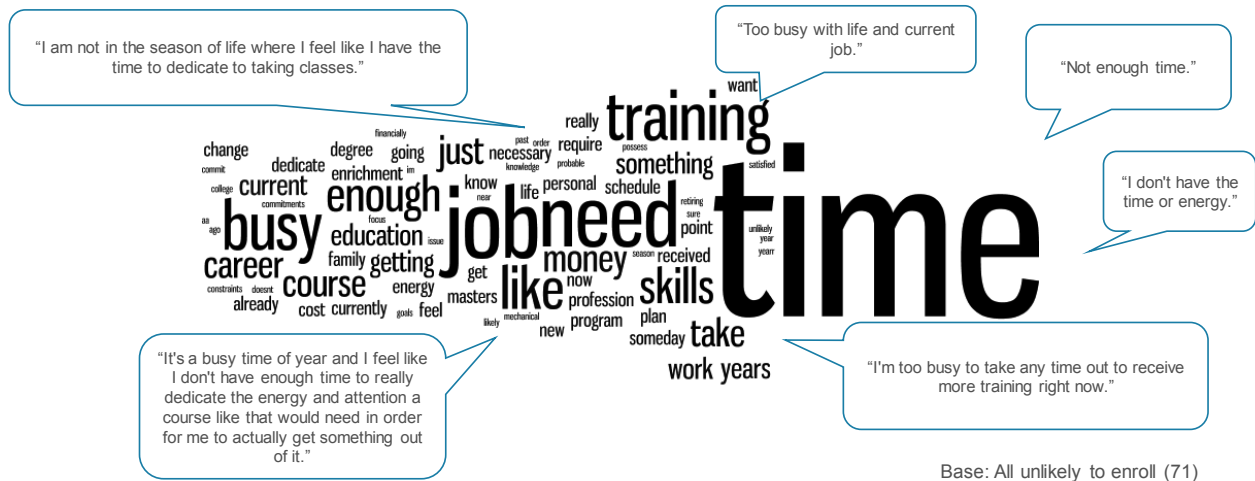
Adults who say they are **unlikely** to enroll in an education or training program mostly cite a **cost and lack of time**.

Q. What are the barriers for you to continue your education. *Please select up to 3*



Base: Not very likely to enroll (75)

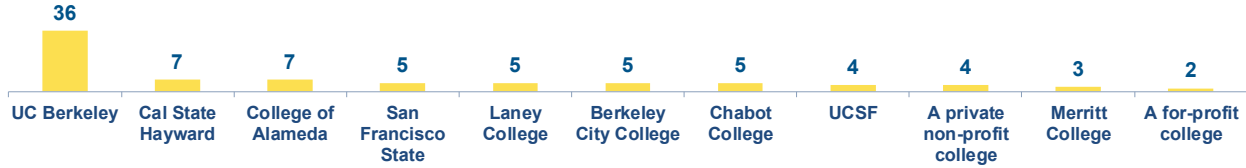
Q. Why are you unlikely to enroll in an educational or training course or program in the next six months?



Base: All unlikely to enroll (71)

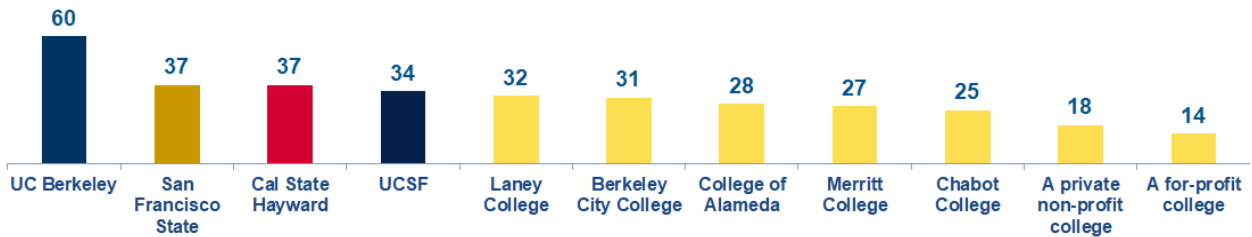
While Northern Alameda adults aspire to UC Berkeley, about 30% would consider attending one of the colleges in the Peralta District.

Q. Which of the following would be your preferred college?



Base: All potentially planning to enroll (323)

Q. Which of the following colleges would you consider?



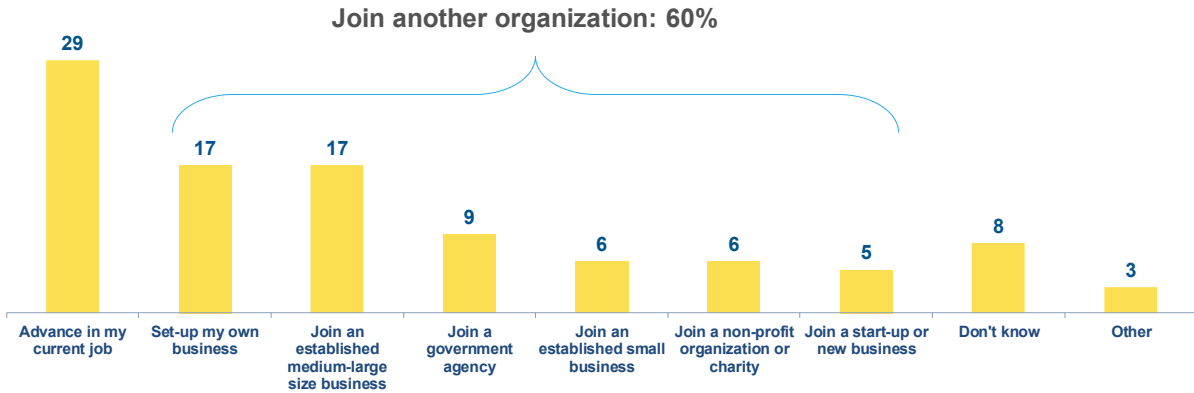
Base: All potentially planning to enroll (288)

The slight difference between Laney and Merritt probably correlates with the fact that more northern Alameda residents are familiar with Laney College than with Merritt.

### Section 3. Motivations for Enrolling

Most adult learners aspire to get a new job, rather than advance in their current one.

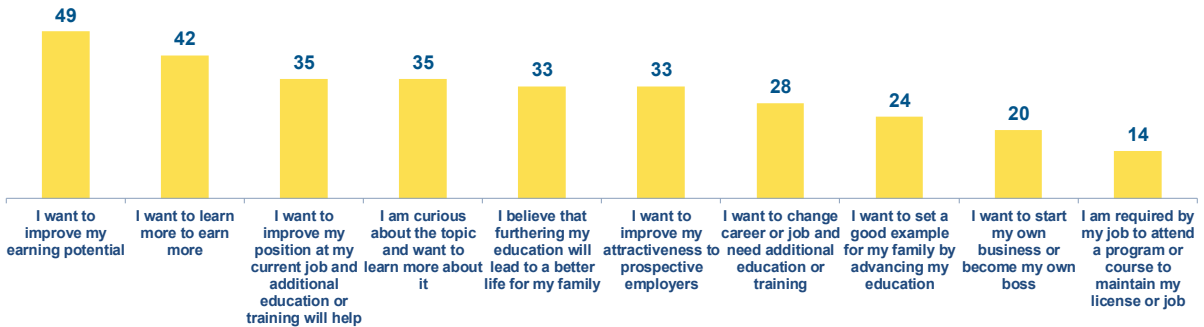
Q. Which of the following is closest to the type of job or career you hope to get?



Base: All (379)

**Money is the main motivator to seek education and training and switch jobs.**

Q. What were the primary reasons you decided to continue your education or training? Please select all that apply / If you were to continue your education and training, what would be your primary reasons for doing so? Please select all that apply



Base: All (379)

Reason for continuing education or training	% of respondents
I want to improve my earning potential	48%
I want to learn more to earn more	42%
I want to improve my position at my current job and additional education, or training will help	36%
I am curious about the topic and want to learn more about it	35%
I want to improve my attractiveness to prospective employers	34%

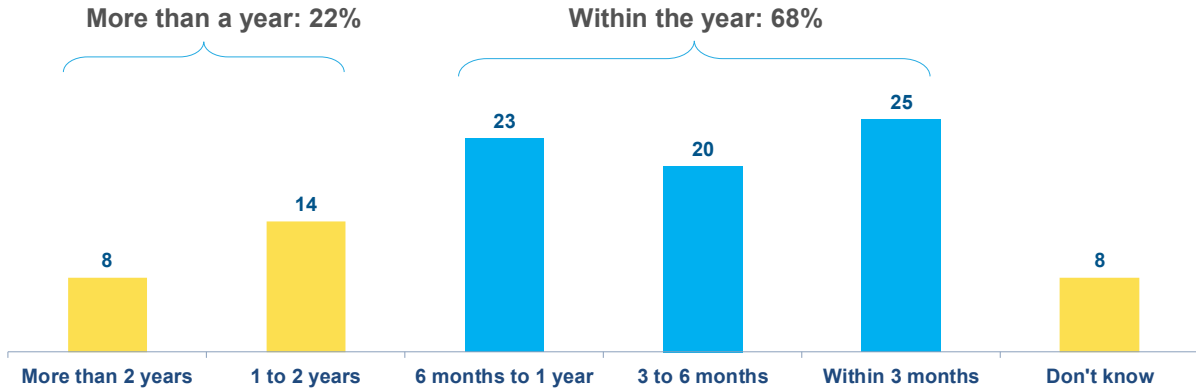
I believe that furthering my education will lead to a better life for my family	33%
I want to change career or job and need additional education or training	27%
I want to set a good example for my family by advancing my education	24%
I want to start my own business or become my own boss	21%
I am required by my job to attend a program or course to maintain my license or job	15%
I am not able to get a job now so decided to go back to school instead	5%

Q. Thinking about your reasons for going back to school or continuing your education, how soon after you finish the program do you think it will make an impact on your job prospects?



Almost 70% think that if they complete an education and training program, they expect that will impact their job prospects in less than a year.

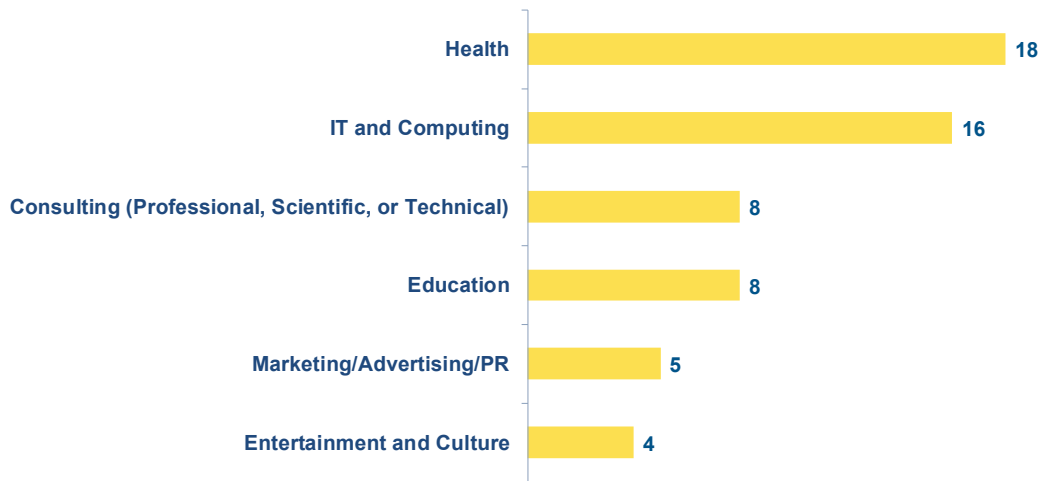
Q. Thinking about your reasons for going back to school or continuing your education, how soon after you finish the program do you think it will make an impact on your job prospects?



Base: All (379)

After completing an education or training program, most local residents would like to work in Health Care, IT/Computing, Consulting, or Education.

Q. Which of the following best represents the field or industry that you would like to be employed in (Showing top 7 overall)?



Base: All (379)

### Section 4: Choosing a College

When choosing an education provider, the most important considerations are the cost, location, quality and reputation.

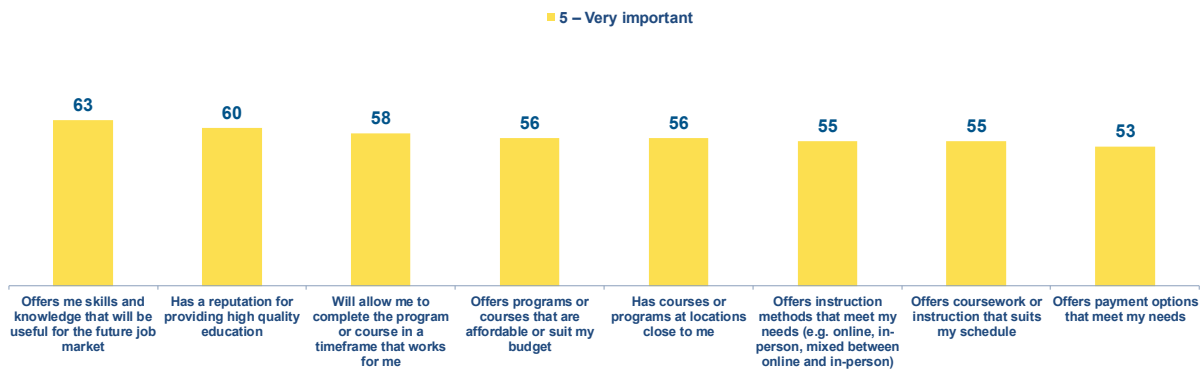
Q. When choosing a college, university, or other education provider for going back to school or continuing your education, what are the most important things that you consider?



Base: All respondents (379)

The most important decision factor is whether a college program “Offers me skills and knowledge that will be useful for the future job market”.

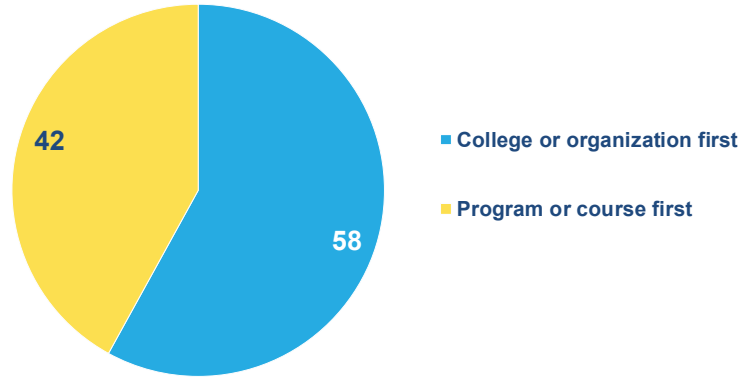
Q. How important are each of the following when selecting an education provider for going back to school or continuing your education? (Showing % saying “Very important”)



Base: All (379)

Most current students say they picked their college first, then the program.

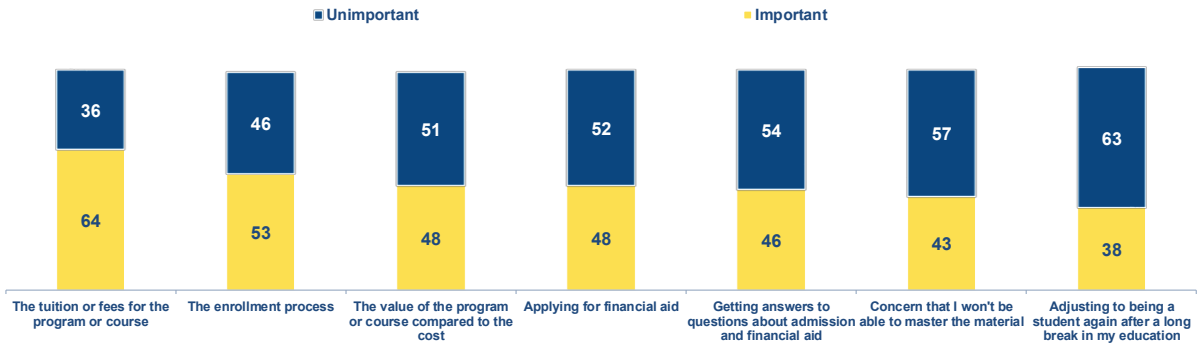
Q. Which of the following is closer to your opinion? I selected the...



Base: All currently enrolled (56)

Most said that the tuition, and cost relative to value, were the main barriers to entry.

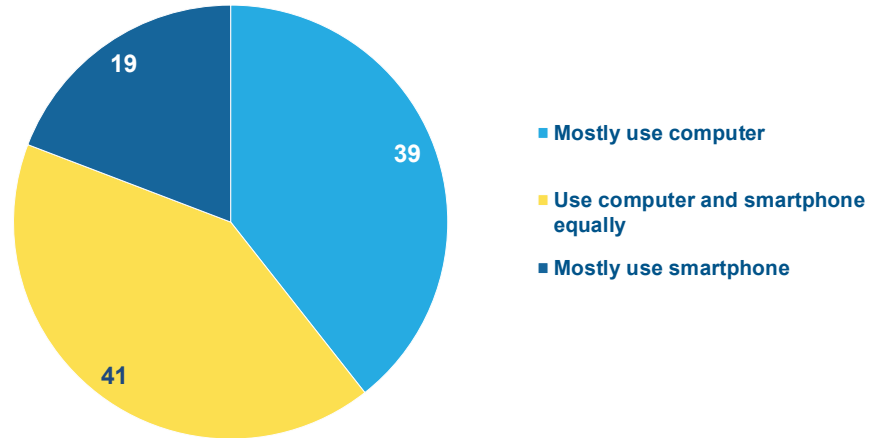
Q. Thinking about the program or course you are currently enrolled in, how important a barrier or obstacle was each of the following in entering your program? (Showing Important as top 2 box on a 5 point scale, and Unimportant as bottom 3 box on a 5 point scale)



Base: All currently enrolled (56)

Most adults, especially young adults, use their smartphones to look for information about education programs and courses.

Q. If you search for online information about education programs and courses, which device would you use most?



Base: All (379)

## Comments supporting Net Promoter Score ratings

### Laney

#### Positive

Laney College is a great place for students who need a flexible schedule or who are not yet ready for a four-year degree program. I have heard favorable things from friends about the quality of the courses there. They seem to offer useful courses, such as courses in computer science, and you don't need to be a degree-seeking student to enroll. Also, and most importantly, I know that in California it is not too difficult to get into a 4-year program at an elite school if you do well at a community college such as Laney.

all the classes that I have taken there have been extremely good and the teachers have been thoughtful even if the classes or the teacher or not equally good at delivering contents I feel like they were open to feedback.

I love the Peralta Colleges. I grew up around them and attended them. All of them are wonderful in their own ways. I have recommended them to many people throughout my life.

Good practical community college in good locations with several offerings for either an associate's degree or education in specific special courses.

Laney is a great school that offers flexible classes and has great faculty members that will help you with every step of your learning.

The interconnectedness of the Peralta district makes all the colleges in the district a great learning environment for my field.



I love the professors and the course options. I have had an extremely amazing experience there and would love to go back.
It's a lovely local school with solid options, flexible scheduling, excellent professors, and involved students.
I have attended Laney College and have experienced the quality of education there along with the affordability
Laney College is a wonderful college. They offer a vast amount of courses. It is conveniently located to me.
Laney college offers a wider variety of programs in a very accessible location and with flexible schedule.
They are solid with the basic courses needed to transfer to another university after the first 2 years.
I have visited the campus and found the administrative staff to be very competent, honest, and nice.
Laney college is small not that big and looks like a business structure or really a college feel.
Affordable and close. I have friends that have gone there and liked it. Lots of tech programs.
I have family members that have worked at Laney College and I've had a great experience there.
I've known people who have gone there and gotten a good education in the field they sought out
I had a pleasant experience but only spent a little time there so I can't fully back it up.
I have only heard great things about Laney Collage that is why I gave it the highest score.
I haven't taken classes there, but it is part if the Peralta college system which is decent.
Convenience of registration, quality of the instructors, affordability, proximity to home.
From what I know and what I've heard they have a merry high reputation as a good school
I feel as if it's a good school with excellent course to achieve your goals in career
I heard it has a great reputation for working with diverse students learning problems
The environment was good, and the classes i took there were enjoyable and accessible
It's a really awesome college i heard some really great things about this school
Offers certificate program relevant to my field in partnership with my employer
I've taken classes at Laney. I think they offered a great value for the price.
I attended this school and had a positive experience and great teachers.
Its local, it provides a good solid education, its not too accelerated
I've heard good things about it but don't know enough to rate higher
Nearby and have had nice people when i stopped in at the main office
They have great study programs, it's diverse and it's close to home.
I have family members who have had great experiences working there.
Their tuition fees are affordable. They have good teachers.
It has a good reputation and is in a convenient location.
I've taken classes there, and they've been very helpful.
Took classes there. Classes were enjoyable, nice campus.

It is a good transfer college and in a great location.
It's local, affordable, and has a variety of programs.
Because I visited that campus and thought it was nice
I have heard good things but don't know any details
I went to school there and know it's a good school.
Great instructors, easy to transfer to UC system
I taught there—liked my colleagues and students.
kids took classes there and had good experience
I have heard decent things about the college
Affordable and well known in bay area
They have a good cosmetology program
I have heard it's a good school.
It has an awesome online program
because that reputation is good
Laney college is a good College
All schools are good to attend
Heard they offer great classes
I heard it's a great college
helps you to set your goals
I like community colleges
They offer many programs
Attended classes there.
because it is very good
emerging as a contender
Good value in community
it's for people like me
Their courses are good
because is very good
nice place to study
its a great school
Great vibes
I like it
its good

### Mixed

Because it a pretty good community college so far as material but, the availability of classes to help fit an individual schedule is not so great and could improve so that it makes it flexible to attend classes while juggling a job.
They only offered a few programs for the students, and they actually do not have much of a good reputation. However, they still provide a decent education for those who still wants to be in school and get more education.
I did a class in high school as part of my college course credit for graduation and it wasn't so bad.
I know lots of people who have had success there, but I also know a lot of shady people go there
Familiar and cheap college, but have heard a mix of opinions about the education offered.
They don't offer a lot of classes in the evening, but they're convenient to BART
it is a good local college. but it is not as good as several others
Heard good things about the campus. Locations not great though
It is a well established school, but could use some upgrades
it seems to me that he teaches an acceptable education
I think it does an OK job just in a low income area
It's not that good but it's also not that bad
I think it is an average community college.
Laney is cool but there are better options
convenient, lots of big classes though
I think they are an ok school
Its okay but its not the best
It is just an okay college
classes are only ok
it is an ok college
It's okay...
it seems ok
They are ok
Decent

### Negative

It's reputation I have gathered is a 'last chance branch'. Peers who have left employment there were frustrated with heavy politics, disorder, not striving to meet mission.
The classes at Laney and all the Peralta college schools can be difficult to enroll into and their website is terrible to navigate.
I just would not be prepared to recommend Laney to anyone because I just have the feeling it is not up to the publicity.
I've heard of Laney college but don't have a sense that they offer high quality or respected course offerings

I took a class there for a couple weeks, I hated the campus and I wasn't impressed with my teacher.
Long lines, many, many students sign up for classes they do not finish and do not take seriously.
I've taken classes at Laney and found them to be sub-par. The campus design is poorly laid out.
There is a flea market next door. I think it brings people that will break into cars.
It is local community college which unlikely hired experience engineering instructor
I don't like Laney College for the simple fact they don't offer flexible courses.
The school is run down, reminds me of a high school that is underfunded.
too liberal, don't think the educational focus is in the right direction
For people who likes quiet, sometimes, it's gets crazy loud.
My experience with professors at Laney was unfavorable
Instruction and student body not to calibre I expect
Poor experience with a professor there; ugly campus
I have heard negative comments about this college
The environment is more social than educational
It doesn't offer courses to further my career.
I attended laney college and did not like it
The classes offered are not very challenging
I heard something about embezzlement
I taught there—it's a troubled place
Feel more like high school setting
Bad demographic and neighborhood
Not good crowd as I heard of
Community college low level
Not reputable college
poor impression of it
Not a welcome campus
Lack of structure.
Not going back.
It's expensive
poor academics

**Merritt**

**Positive**

I don't know very much about Merritt College, which is why I wouldn't be very likely to recommend it, but I have heard someone speak highly of their Landscape Architecture program, so I might recommend that to someone if it came up.
The interconnectedness of the Peralta district makes all the colleges in the district a great learning environment for my field. Additionally the faculty on the Chemistry department are amazing.
Merrit, just like Laney, is a very good school as their campus is a peaceful one on the hill, and the students there are very cool and relaxed. The teachers there are great too.

I love the Peralta Colleges. I grew up around them and attended them. All of them are wonderful in their own ways. I have recommended them to many people throughout my life.
It's such a beautiful college located in the Oakland Hills which is very convenient for me because it's very close to my house.
I know 2 people who teach there and think they are great, but don't know much else about their programs so hard to recommend
Their nursing program is very valuable for the community and makes the program affordable to many students
Merritt college offers a vast amount of classes. It is convenient lay located. It is a wonderful school.
It's within the Alameda community college system, which seems like a good one from what I have heard.
Their tuition fees are affordable. They have a good reputation and good career placement services.
I have attended Merritt College and have experienced the quality of education and affordability
I've known people who have gone there and gotten a good education in the field they sought out
I also taught here. School is woefully under-resourced but some brilliant students and staff.
I have friends who recommended Merritt College, but I have no first-hand experience with it.
It is well known for its medical training to prepare students for further medical education
The campus is beautiful. The administrative staff is helpful. The offerings are reasonable.
Convenience of registration, quality of the instructors, affordability, proximity to home.
Have heard favorable things about Merritt from people I respect, but no direct experience.
Not very familiar with the college, but the small amount that I know about it I like.
It's an overall great school. They offer great courses and electives to choose from.
its another really awesome school i heard some really good things about this school
Would recommend it but I wouldn't want people to go there because it'll get packed.
It is a beautiful campus and I have taken classes there and found them to be good.
Its my local community college. I attend Merritt and love going to school there.
I have heard good things about this college from friends that have gone there.
I know some people from this school and they seem to have enjoyed it.
The location and committee college and availability of course
i had some contacts with them and they seemed a good college
It has a small base of students and offers good programming
it is a good local college. but not well know nation wide
I don't know much about it but have heard positive things.
Beautiful campus, amazing science and pre health program
I graduated from this school and had excellent teachers.
I know of people that have had great experiences there.
I took culinary arts there and enjoyed the experience.
It has a good reputation and has a beautiful campus.
My cousin goes there and talks about how good it is
I have a friend she studied there she recommended
Its reputation gets Merritt College a 10 from me.
Close to my location has good reputation locally

I have a friend that goes there and likes it
I have heard good things about the campus
its local, good programs, not accelerated
solid basic requirements can be met here
Have taken classes solid environment
I'm somewhat likely to recommend it.
I've heard it has a good reputation
I've heard great things about them
Heard they have great professors
Good variety of classes offered
All schools are good to attend
easy to transfer to UC system
Heard much positive about it.
Much less expensive education
A great reputation and local
better program to work with.
Sound good but don't know it
Sounds like a decent college
Heard it was a good college
Great horticulture program
I like community colleges.
good community reputation
because it is excellent
Has a very good courses
most popular university
The campus is stunning.
a great school as well
I've heard good things
Nice campus and nearby
it meets all my needs
It's name says it all
good place for study
I like comm colleges
consistent teachers
It has good choices
It's a great school
Beautiful location
Great institution
Heard cool things
Heard good things
yes it works good
Good reputation
getting better
capable staff
good quality
Easy to go
i liked it
improving
Very good

Very good
its good
love it
Great
Good

**Mixed**

I don't know if they offer the classes I would need/want. If they did, I don't know if they would offer them as evening classes.
It is a well established school but needs more modern courses, and facilities
I have heard both good and bad things about the college
it seems to me that he teaches an acceptable education
Their courses are good but don't meet all expectations
Good school but not as popular as some in the area
Same as laney not to good but also not that bad
What's again I thought they do an OK job just
good college, not as many programs as laney
I see it as an average community college.
went there for a course, okay experience
I think they are an ok school
Good programs. Bad location
Its okay but not the best
it seems ok
they are ok
ok college
It's ok

**Negative**

The classes at Merrit and all the Peralta college schools can be difficult to enroll into and their website is terrible to navigate.
Reputation on the street is - not accredited and a 'wanna be' accredited institution not going in that direction
I took a class there in high school. It wasn't bad but I'm not crazy about the alameda college system.
I know of Merritt College but I've heard that the educational experience there isnt always the best.
Long lines, many, many students sign up for classes they do not finish and do not take seriously.
Friends/ family had unfavorable experiences with campus location and students
It's such a narrowly focused organization, I could not recommend i to anyone.
I gave a rating of 0 because I had my own experiences at Merritt College.
Relatively unknown college whose name lacks any weight in conversation
Again something about Peralta colleges embezzling from the state

Instruction and student body not the caliber I expect.
hard to get to, not a good reputation
Have not heard anything good
Community college low level
No good cosmology program
Not reputable college
I'm not going there
I don't like it
poor impression
poor academics
low quality
I hate it

**College of Alameda**

**Positive**

I love the location, and the staff there is very welcoming and helpful. I felt very well taken care of, and the professors were clear in what was expected from students throughout the classes. Really great learning environment
College of Alameda is in the one of the two main parts of Alameda, and is near many nice places. The classes their and the staff there will actively try to help you succeed.
I love the Peralta Colleges. I grew up around them and attended them. All of them are wonderful in their own ways. I have recommended them to many people throughout my life.
I have taken quite a few courses here and found all of the classes to be excellent. The professors are challenging yet approachable. Great facilities. Online options.
I've used facilities on the campus but haven't enrolled in classes. I like the course offerings, but they haven't worked with my schedule.
The college of Alameda is very conveniently located. They offer superb classes. It is relevant to today's workplace. It's a great school.
I've known people who have gone there and gotten a good education in the field they sought out and I've known people who taught there
Campus is located in a very pleasant area of a nice City with a wide variety of programs being offered with schedule flexibility.
The interconnectedness of the Peralta district makes all the colleges in the district a great learning environment for my field.
It's okay for getting transferable units. I already have three advanced degrees; two from UC Berkeley. I don't need CC classes
My kids have taken classes there and have had good experiences. It us convenient and the classes are of good quality.
It's within the Alameda community college system, which seems like a good one from what I have heard.
It is a really good school but some of the instructors Nin better understanding of the students.
They have great professors and great job placement services. Their tuition fees are reasonable.
Good solid community college that's a good option for an associates degree or specific classes



this one its another really awesome school i heard some really good things about this school
Convenience of registration, quality of the instructors, affordability, proximity to home.
I have visited the campus and the administrative staff was friendly and knowledgable.
I know of some people who work there that enjoy it but im not very sure of it myself.
I love CoA so much. They offer amazing courses that fit my schedule perfectly.
I only attended there for a short while however, it was good when I was there.
I have relatives that have attended they speak highly of Collage of Alameda.
Heard favorable things from people I respect, but no direct experience.
It has a good reputation for helping students move on to UC Berkeley
Good instructors, adult learners who are committed to coursework.
It is close to my home and I have heard positive things about it.
Don't know much about it but it's affordable and somewhat local.
I know of people that have had great experiences there.
Have heard very positive things about the education.
Word of mouth says that they have a good reputation
I like the location, and have heard good things.
Good two year College with quality teachers
friends I know graduated from there A plus
its local, good programs, not accelerated
Has a great teacher and student support
easy to transfer to UC system, local
Have taken classes solid environment
It's really nice and not as packed.
I think the environment is nice.
It is making strides to upgrade
All schools are good to attend
Good history of high academics
Good location and reputation
Heard great recomndations
Good classes, nice campus
Good price and programs
Their courses are great
because it is trusted
I heard good reviews.
Location and program
i like that college
It's a great school
Location and price
Heard good things
improved programs
good reputation
More Comfortable
small class size
Very reasonable

great campus
Great campus
I like this
expanding
I like it
I like it
Very good
very good
its cool
Good
Good
good

**Mixed**

Seems like small, but good college. Better options available based on feedback I've heard.
I heard that counselors will advise you to take some unnecessary classes for your degree
I think they are an ok school
heard mixed reviews about it
I rank it as average.
it seems ok
ok college
Average
It's ok

**Negative**

The classes at Alameda and all the Peralta college schools can be difficult to enroll into and their website is terrible to navigate.
They offered about the same amount of programs like Laney college, and their reputation is not as good as well.
I took classes there. My car got broken into and half the time the teachers didn't show up.
The office staff is completely unhelpful and the teachers are unreasonable
I took a summer class once and it just felt unsafe and very boring.
Small and credits are not transferable
Community college low level
poor impression/unfamiliar
Not reputable college
Poor education lesson
I just don't like it
not really too great
poor academics
Poor level
not likie

### Berkeley City College

#### Positive

I have known several people who attended Berkeley City College and then went on to attend UC Berkeley. I'm impressed with the quality of the transfer program and the fact that underprivileged/underrepresented students can get a shot at a world-class education if they do well there.
berkeley city college is not university of california berkeley but it's located in berkeley and is a smaller college, I don't know much about it but I think it maybe suitable for people who wants more education and training, so I give it an 8
The interconnectedness of the Peralta district makes all the colleges in the district a great learning environment for my field. The chair of the science program have setup a program better than anything I have seen at larger universities.
Berkeley City College is right near UC Berkeley, a great school for advanced learning. You get to meet teachers who are close to the UC Berkeley institution and get quality learning.
I love the Peralta Colleges. I grew up around them and attended them. All of them are wonderful in their own ways. I have recommended them to many people throughout my life.
I have a friend who goes there and told me that they had positive experiences and that the professors were very professional. It also has a nice building.
The Berkeley City College offers great classes. They are very relevant to today's work force. It's a great feeder school to UC Berkeley.
The campus is kept up nicely, which leads me to believe they have enough money for quality technology and education in their programs.
It is extremely conveniently located in downtown Berkely with reasonable tuition and unique program choices.
its another really awesome school i heard some really good things about this school its one to consider
The campus is really Central and easy to get to and the classes I have taken there has been very good.
I've known people who have gone there and gotten a good education in the field they sought out
Convenience of registration, quality of the instructors, affordability, proximity to home.
Good quality community college that offers a great variety of classes and associate degree
I've had a wonderful interaction with the staff and they seem very helpful
I took a class there and really liked it. Close and cheap. Good professor.
Berkeley City Collage is very near and has a great rep among the locals.
Friends of mine from grad school teach there and are doing great work.
My coworker has take classes there and speaks highly of the program.
I went there and appreciated the location and classes they offered
Good instructors, adult learners who are committed to coursework.
I've heard it's a pretty good school with high transfer rates.
Love the campus and the professors are attentive and helpful
Know people from BCC and know people transfer to UC Berkeley
I've heard good things about BCC, but I haven't been there.
I know of some people who have had great experiences there.
I know of people that have had great experiences there.
I have seen ads and heard good things from classmates
I like the diversity and their certification program
Hear nothing but good things and live in Berkeley.

They have great professors and low tuition costs.
easy to transfer to UC system, great instructors
Partner had a good experience there for a class.
Top notch education strategy and availability.
Has very good course and transferring credits
I have heard they have a good Richreputation
Good school in Berkeley but not the top tier
Have a wide range of program to chose from.
Had a good experience taking a class there.
Have taken classes there solid environment
Heard good things but not seen for myself
Nice campus in heart of downtown Berkeley
its local, good programs, not accelerated
I heard good reviews, nice area as well.
know someone who went to yale afterwards
Variety of programs and enrollment dates
Its a lively town to go to college in
I've heard it has a good reputation
It's really nice and not as packed.
It's a good feeder school for Cal.
There classes are good and helpful
I have heard good things about it.
excellent courses and professors
Very interesting student body.
All schools are good to attend
Berkeley sounds good on resume
Heard much positive about it.
Good location and reputation
I heard it's a great college
Has the word Berkeley in it
It is a really good school.
Great school and location
I've visited and its nice
Is one of the best in CA
I went there it was nice
Their courses are great
It's a Berkeley College
has a quality education
Heard very good things
Famous reputable place
Good graduation rates
Better, more choices
Its a good school.
reliable institution
Heard decent things.
because is the best
sufficient programs
It's a great school
heard good things

It's a better CC
Good counselors
good reputation
Good reputation
great services
Location cost
It's berkeley
good choices
Good classes
Good college
Good live-in
Great school
impressive
its for me
Very good.
i like it
very well
Beautiful
Very good
good rep
its nice
prestige
Amazing
popular
Great
Clean
Elite
good
nice

### Mixed

Transportation is very accessible. My program there is very good, the teachers are great and the student environment is good. Lovely sense of community, and better support for lgbt, poc, and disabled students than i've seen at some other schools. My only complaint is that getting financial aid there can be an incredibly painstaking and degrading process, and is really demotivating at times
They offer good programs and flexibility but I am not sure about the quality and connections you can make.
good college, not as convenient due to lack of parking
I think they are an ok school
Good classes, poor parking
It is average.
mixed reviews
It's alright
it seems ok
its just ok
They are ok
ok college
Average
it's ok

### Negative

The classes at BCC and all the Peralta college schools can be difficult to enroll into and their website is terrible to navigate.
This college has turned into a left wing cesspool of post modern marxist ideology
The campus is not nice looking and the online website is hard to navigate
Not very familiar with it but have heard some negative things
I heard they are broken and instructors are not good
Reputation is a glorified high school
Community college low level
Bad demographic
poor academics
Don't like it
Horrible
It's bad

## Appendix C: English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) Survey

### Introduction

Laney College, a public community college in Oakland, has commissioned this survey to hear your voice. The survey will be used to make decisions regarding the future direction of the College.

This survey is being administered by the Collaborative Brain Trust, a community college consulting firm. Your responses will be anonymous. The consulting team will report summarized data to the College.

The survey should take less than 4 minutes to complete.

Español

简体中文 (Simplified Chinese)

繁體中文 (Traditional Chinese)

□□□ (Korean)

Tiếng việt

Tagalog

ภาษาไทย (Thai)

Français

Português

فارسی (Farsi)

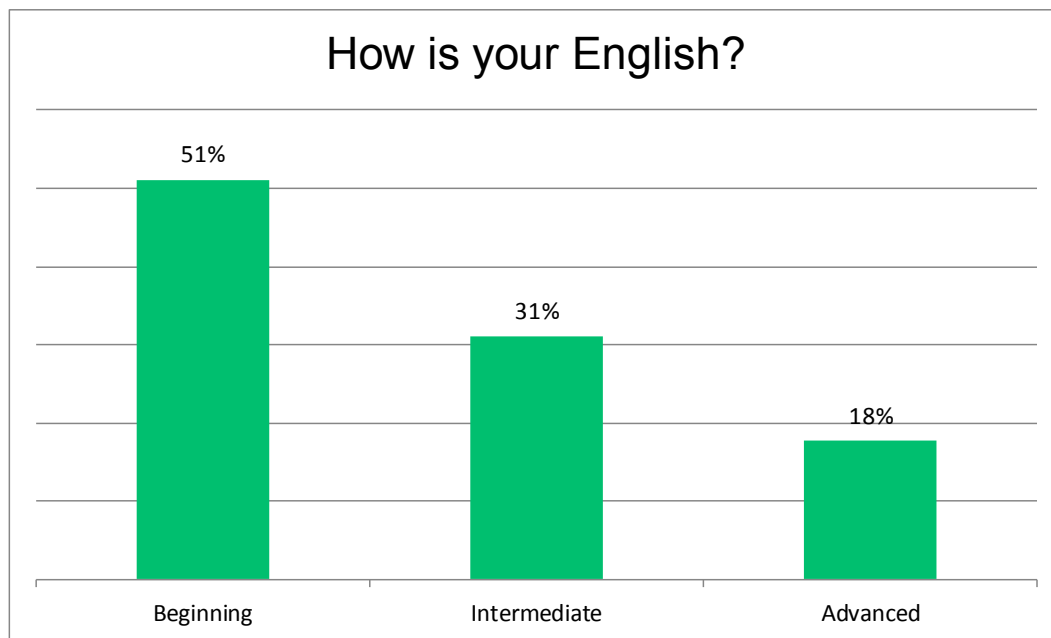
پښتو (Pashto)

नेपाली (Nepali)

አማርኛ (Amharic)

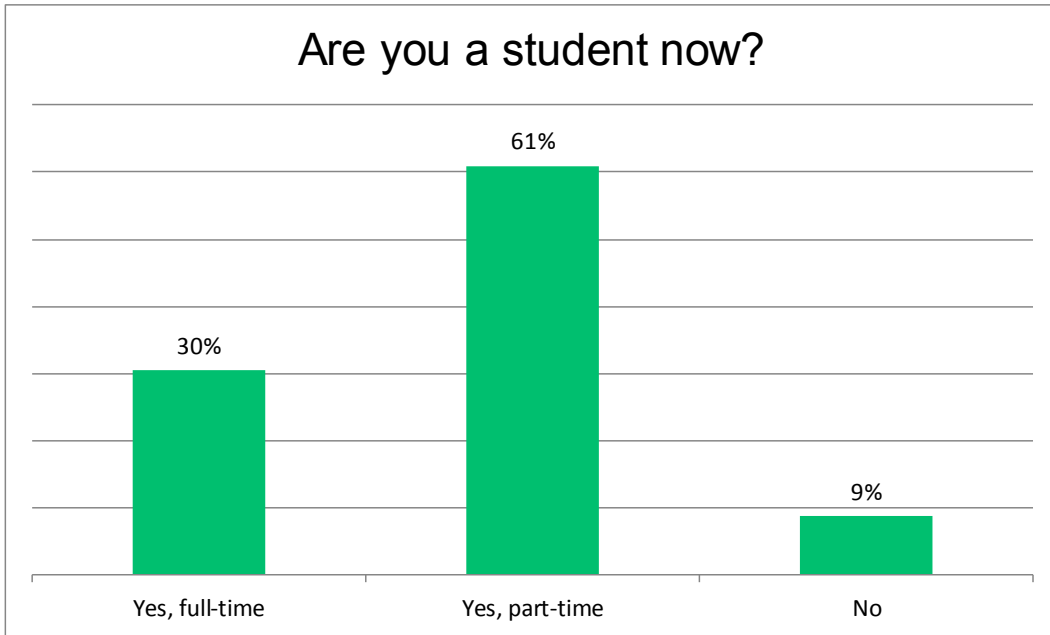
العربية (Arabic)

### Q1. How is your English?

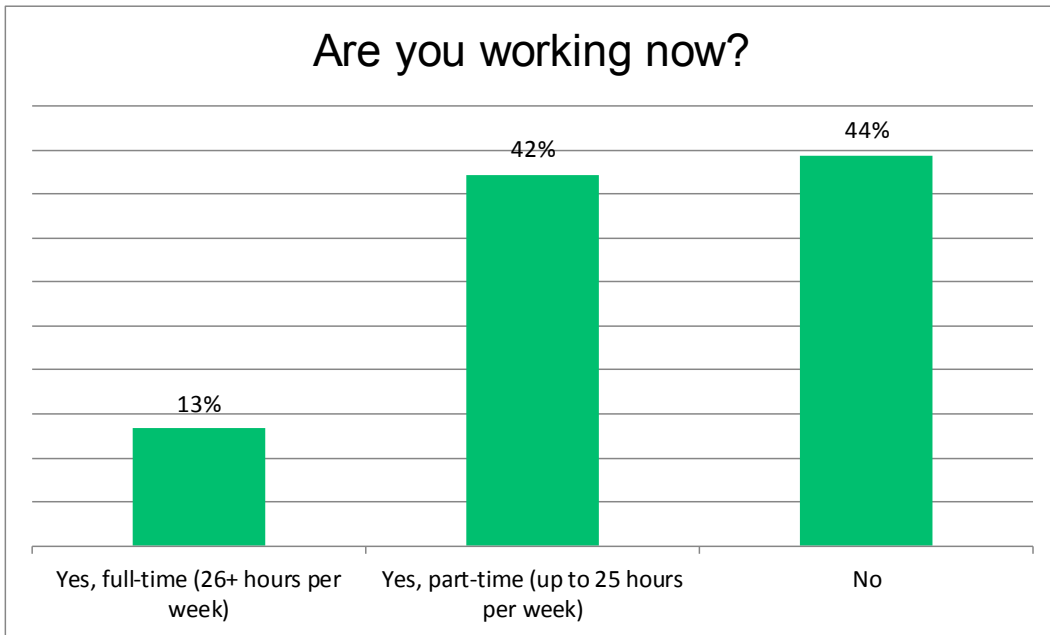


### Q2. What is the Zip code of the place where you live?

**Q3. Are you a student now?**

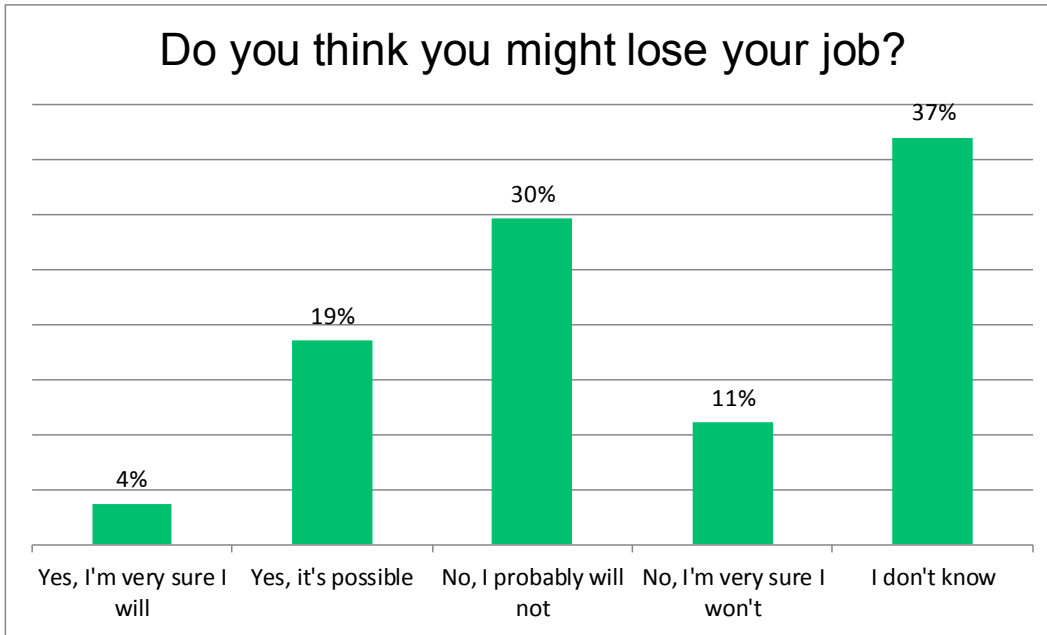


**Q4. Are you working now?**





**Q5. Do you think you might lose your job?**



**Q6. In the next 6 months, do you think you will take classes or trainings?**

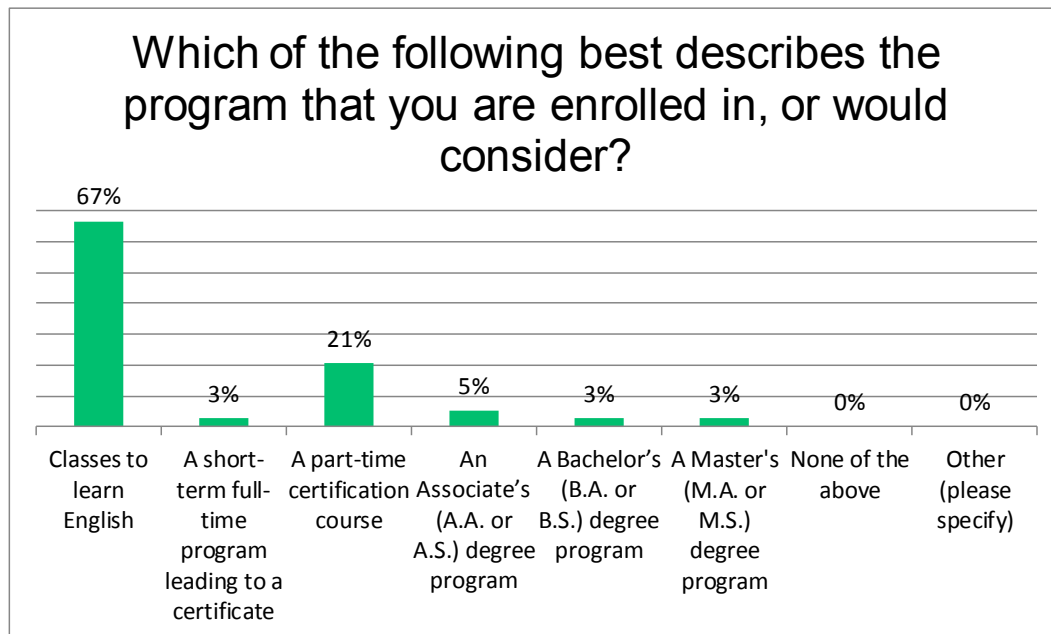


**Q7. Why are you unlikely to enroll in classes or trainings in the next six months? Please check all that apply.**

**Answer Choices**

- 🍏 I do not have enough time
- 🍏 Classes are too expensive
- 🍏 Classes are not available at the right times for me
- 🍏 I have family responsibilities
- 🍏 I'm too old to take classes
- 🍏 I do not need classes at this time
- 🍏 Other (please specify)

**Q8. Which of the following best describes the program that you are enrolled in, or would consider?**

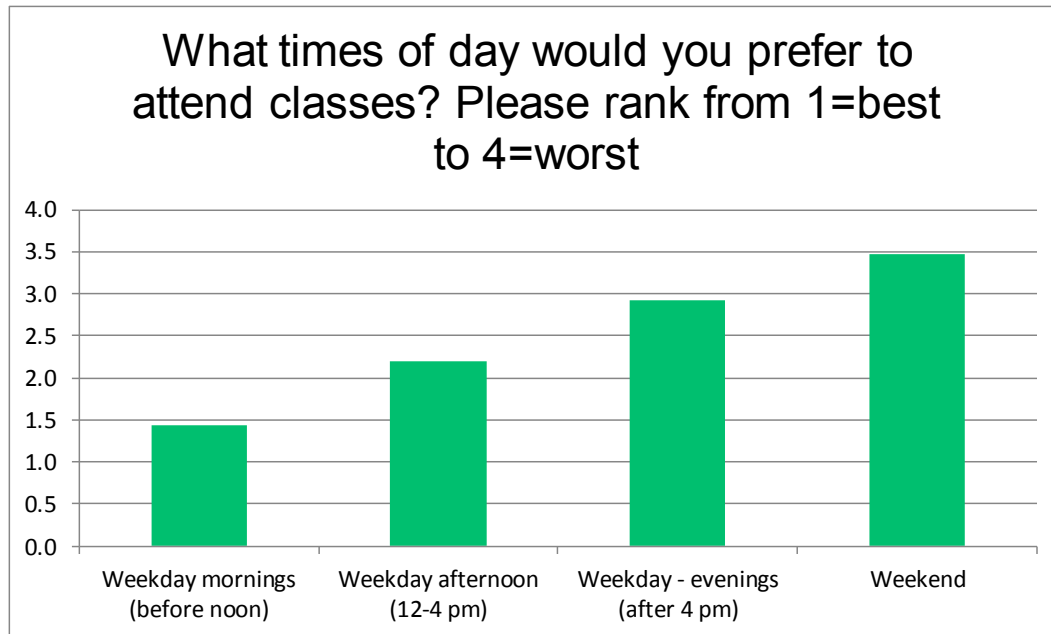


**Q9. What is the subject of the program you are enrolled in, or would consider?**

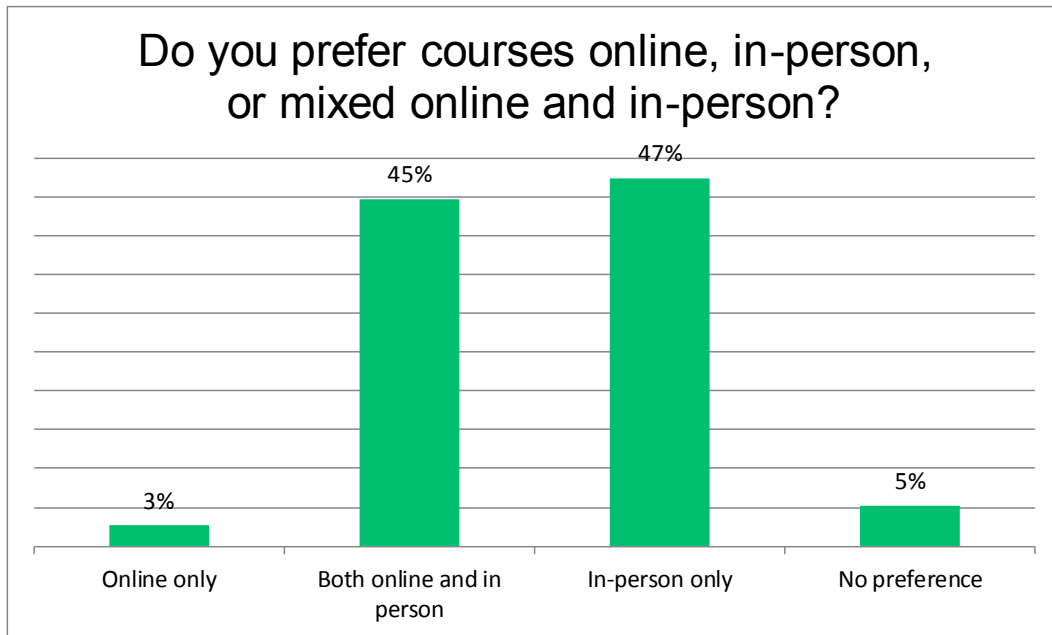
**Answer Choices**

- 🍏 IT and Computing
- 🍏 Business / Management
- 🍏 Translation / Interpretation
- 🍏 Health care
- 🍏 Hospitality
- 🍏 Automotive
- 🍏 Construction
- 🍏 Cosmetology
- 🍏 Culinary (cooking)
- 🍏 None of the above
- 🍏 Other (please specify)

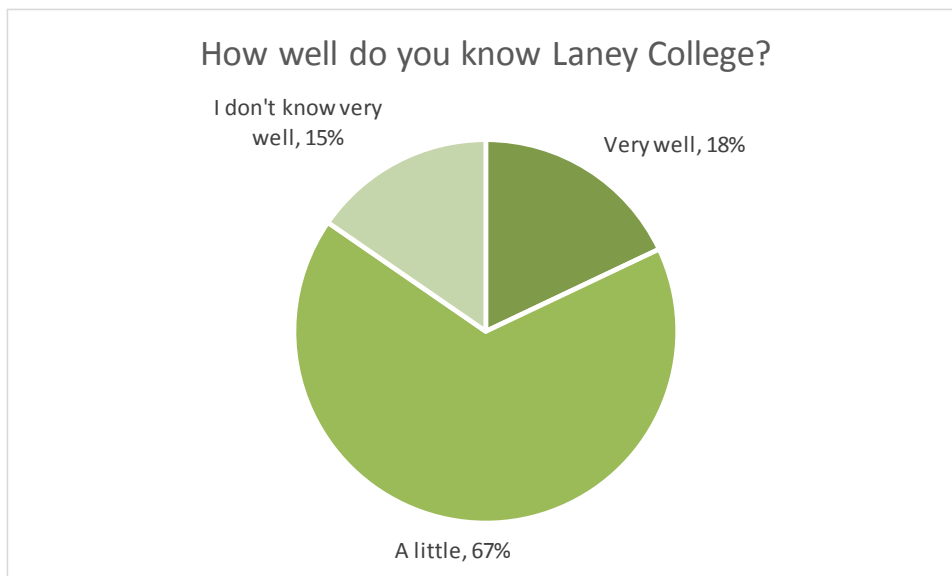
**Q10. What times of day would you prefer to attend classes? Please rank from 1=best to 4=worst**



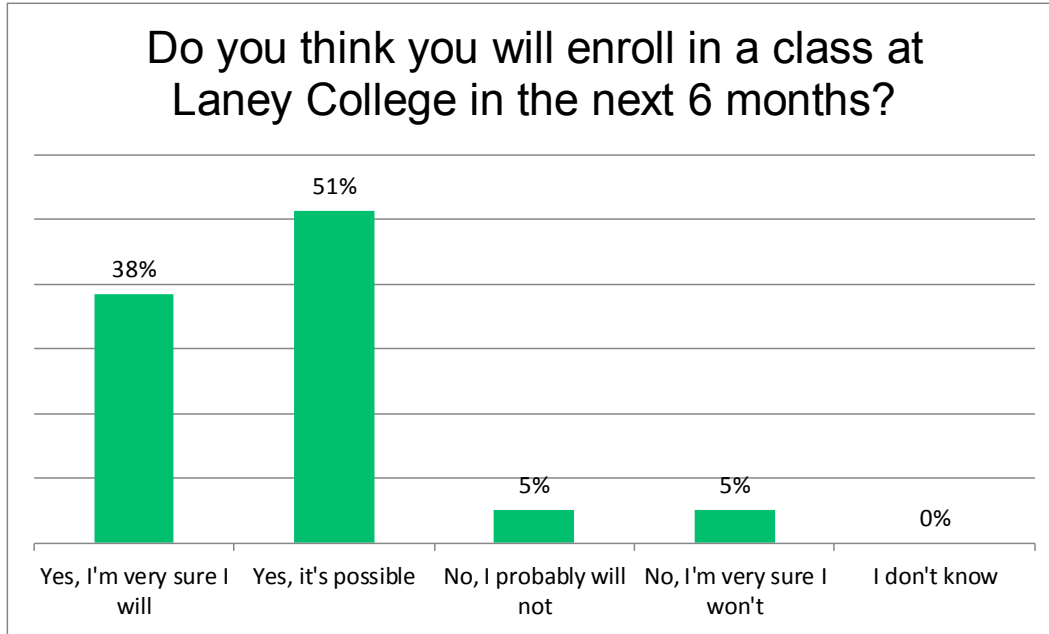
**Q11. Do you prefer courses online, in-person, or mixed online and in-person?**



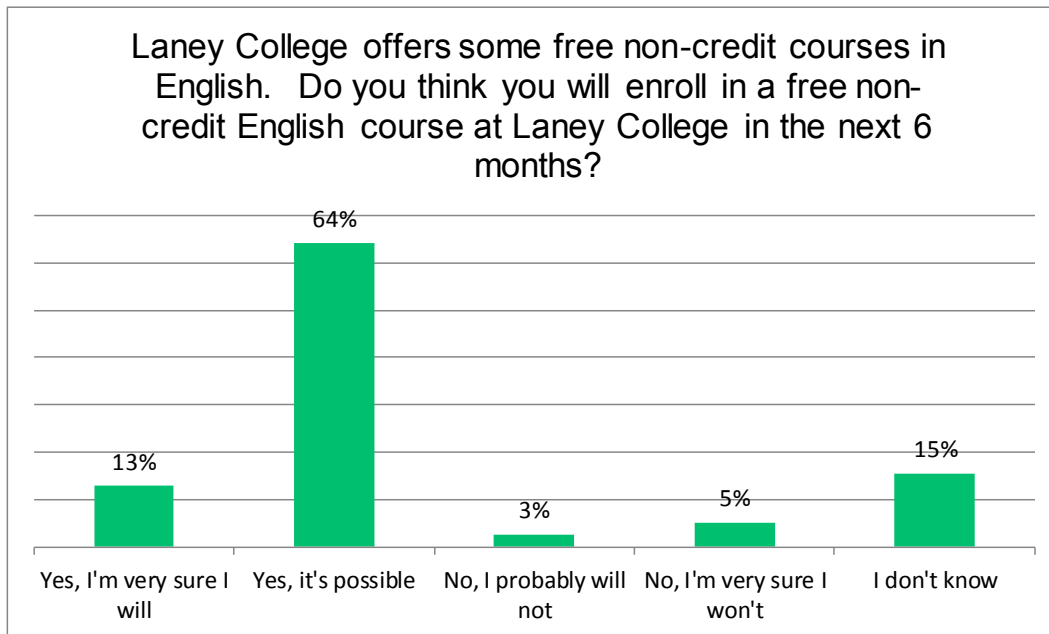
**Q12. How well do you know Laney College?**



***Q13. Do you think you will enroll in a class at Laney College in the next 6 months?***

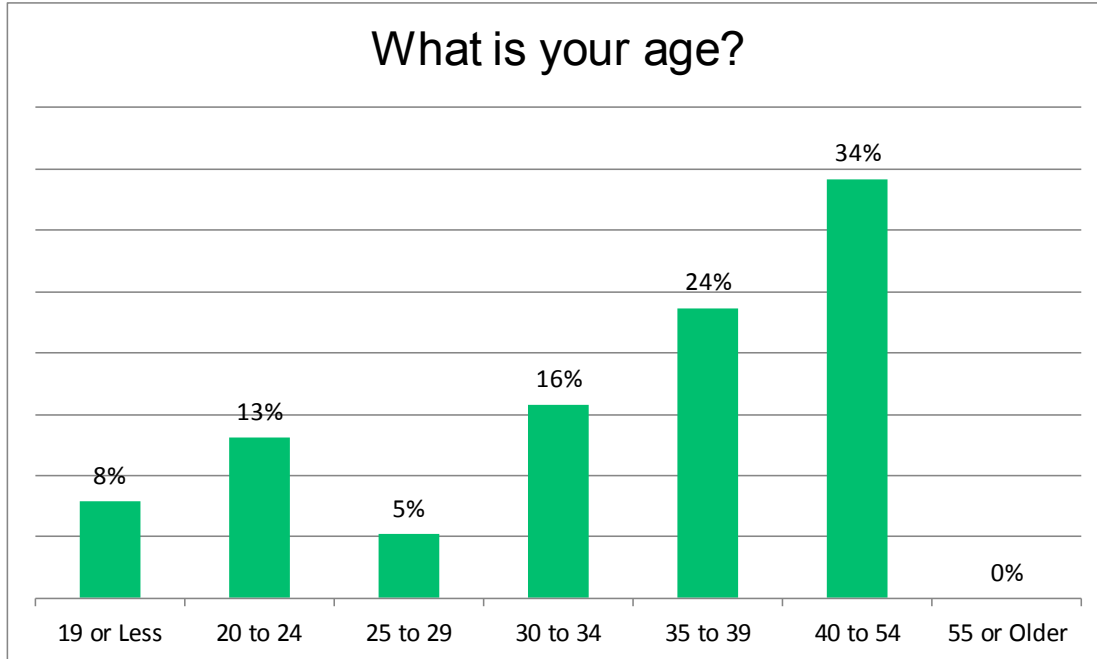


***Q14. Laney College offers some free non-credit courses in English. Do you think you will enroll in a free non-credit English course at Laney College in the next 6 months?***

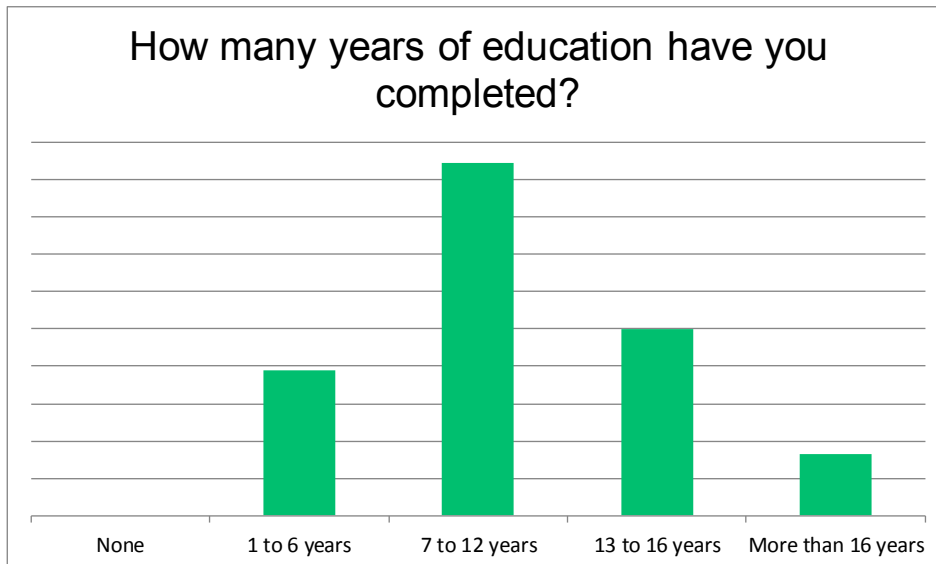


## **Demographic questions**

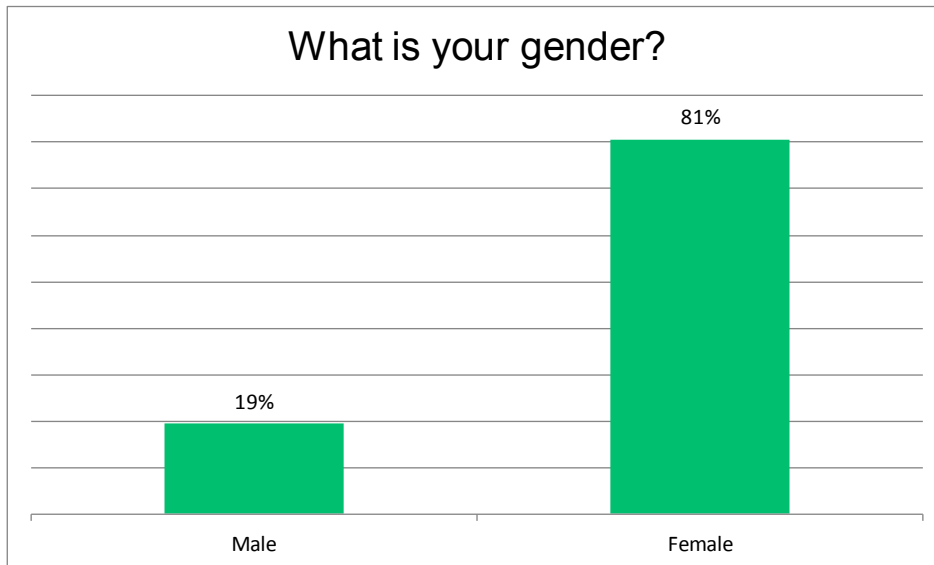
### **Q15. What is your age?**



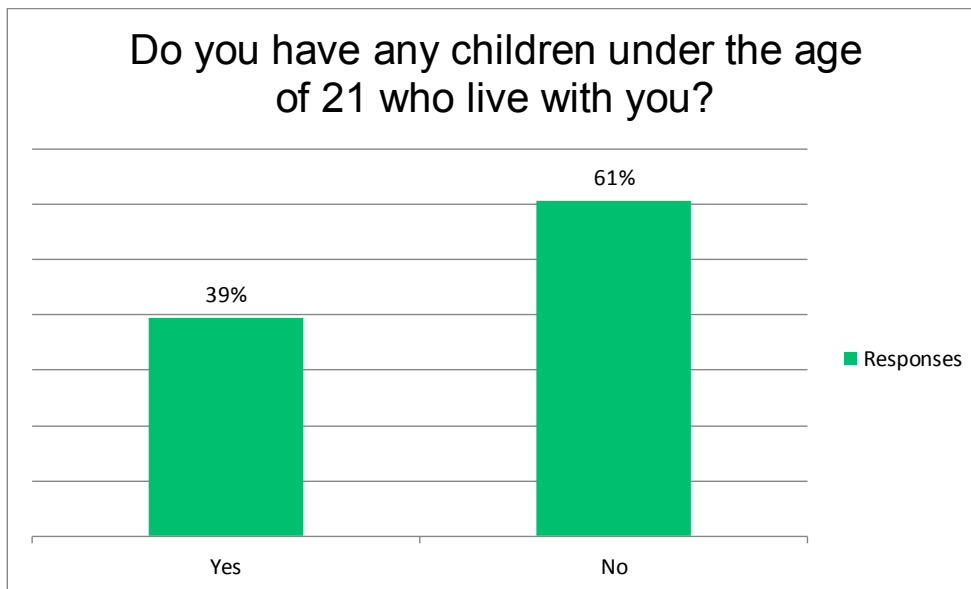
### **Q16. How many years of education have you completed?**



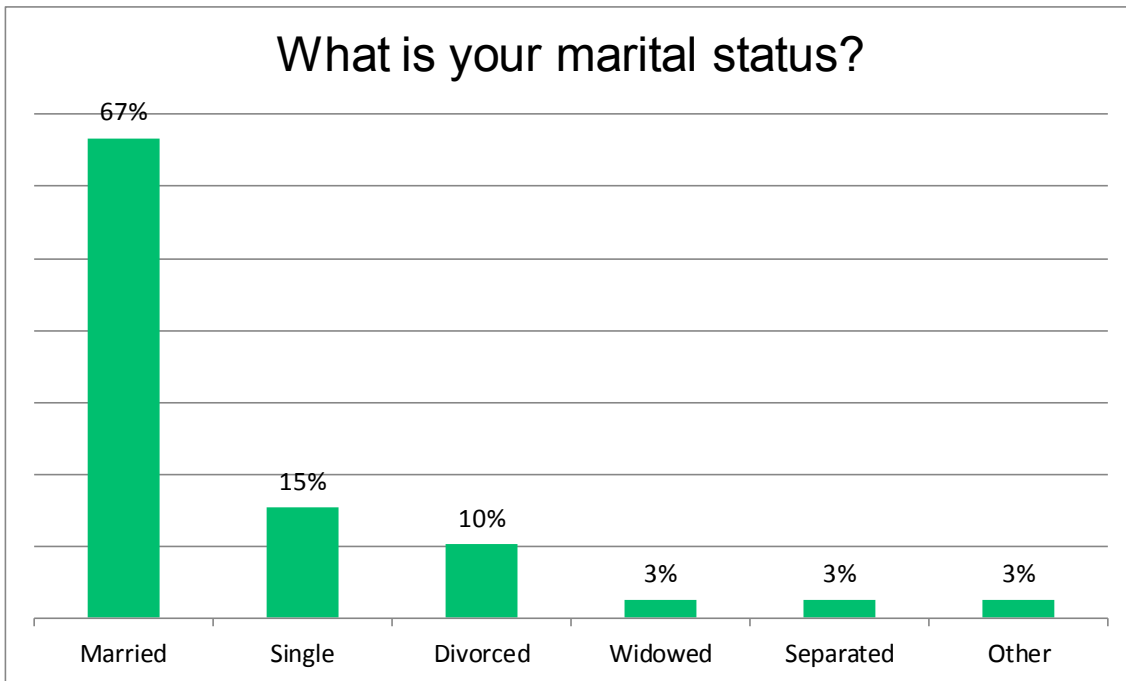
**Q17. What is your gender?**



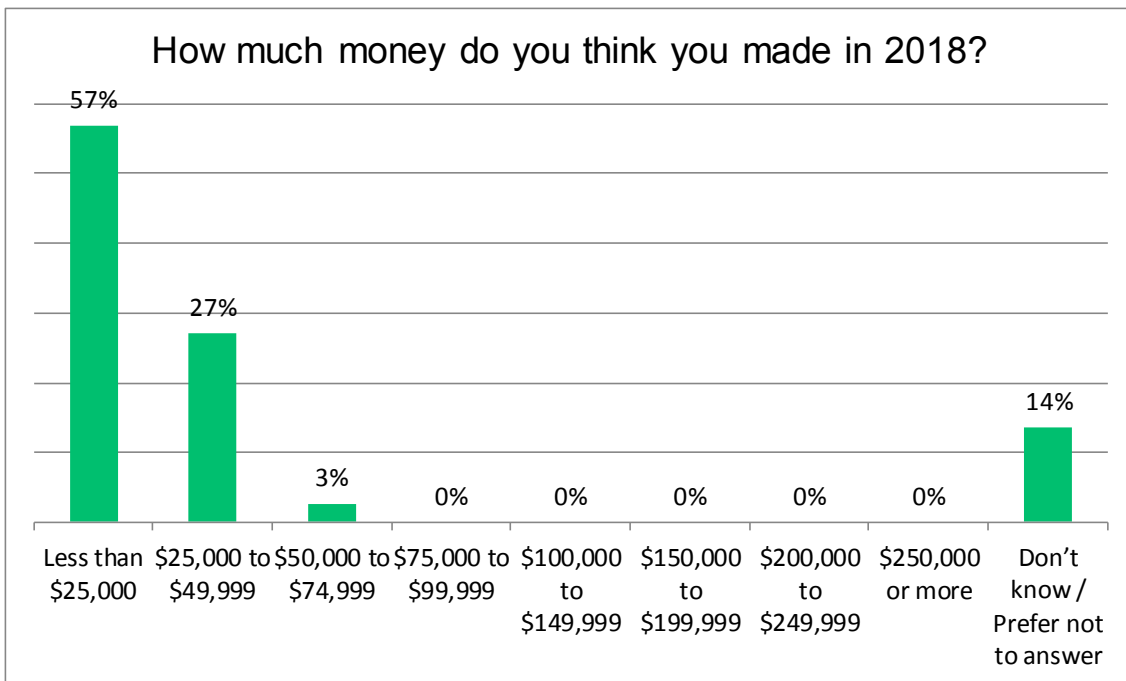
**Q18. Do you have any children under the age of 21 who live with you?**



**Q19. What is your marital status?**



**Q20. How much money do you think you made in 2018?**





## Appendix D: Quotes from Listening Sessions and Interviews

A selection of quotes received during interviews and listening sessions are listed below as they relate to the six thematic areas of recommendations. While not a summary of all quotes, they are very representative of what was received.

### Area 1: Leadership and Accountability

- District cabinet member: *"We haven't had any leadership or direction, and we don't have a common set of priorities."*
- District cabinet member: *"We all agree to something in the meeting and then one person will do their own thing against what we all agreed to do."*
- College administrator: *"My assistant refuses to do that..."*
- Faculty member: *"We talk about what we're going to do in [a shared governance committee], but then no one follows up on it if it ever gets done."*
- Faculty member: *"Yes I'm the department chair, but we're peers in the same union – I can't tell her what to do. That's the dean's job."*
- Faculty member: *"We need to put the needs of the students above college autonomy."*
- Board member: *"Vice chancellors aren't valued as they should be."*
- Dean: *"Deans have become very disheartened."*
- Faculty member: *"Real change is needed in this District."*
- Faculty member: *"We have too much competition among colleges and not enough efficiency within the District."*
- Administrator: *"Meetings at the District level often take place without an agenda or careful plan and often seem a waste of time."*
- Administrator: *"The District's Budget Allocation Model is not fair to my college."*
- Faculty: *"The district doesn't care about the colleges."*
- Faculty: *"The district gets too big a share of the pie."*
- Faculty: *"No one tells us anything until it's too late to do anything about it."*
- Faculty: *"I think 'they' (management) encourage competition."*

### Area 2: Enrollment Management

- Student: *"I'm a DSPS student attending [one of the Peralta Colleges], but I needed a class over at [a second Peralta College]. I had to apply all over again and provide some additional paperwork. By the time I was approved it was too late to take the class."*

- Faculty member at one college: *"I don't even have enough students to fill my section, and then I hear [faculty member at another college] is adding another section of what I teach there."*
- Student: *"I don't know what classes I need to take to finish my degree and it takes three weeks to get an appointment with someone."*
- College administrator: *"We have to send students to the District office to get help with their financial aid because we don't have a Director at the college. Its hard for students - they shouldn't have to go to the District office for services we should have here at the college."*
- Student: *"The classes at ...all the Peralta College schools can be difficult to enroll into and their website is terrible to navigate."*
- Student: *"It's a pretty good community college so far as material, but the availability of classes to help fit an individual schedule is not so great and could improve so that it makes it flexible to attend classes while juggling a job."*
- Administrator: *"Right now many things are not coordinated across the District, with different late-start schedules and different college hours, among many issues."*
- Faculty member: *"We haven't taken advantage of growth opportunities."*
- Administrator: *"Our district-wide dual enrollment strategy needs to be more coherent and unified."*
- Dean: *"If we only had a current and reliable degree audit system we could create class schedules more in keeping with student needs."*
- Faculty: *"My program is unique and what I do is none of the other colleges' business."*
- Manager: *"There are no check points when students fall off."*
- Staff member: *"We send out information that its time to turn in class rosters and over half the faculty just don't do it."*
- Manager: *"Collecting roster information from faculty 'impossible'; in April there were still 61 rosters uncollected from Fall 2018."*

### **Area 3: District-wide Systems and Processes**

- Classified staff member: *"It takes forever to get someone approved for work, and then they don't have access to email because they aren't entered into the system yet"*
- Classified staff member: *"Can you do anything to get [a particular vendor] paid? The purchase order isn't in the system, so they won't pay the invoice."*
- District office staff member: *"She [district office staff member] says the college is supposed to do it, but he [college staff member] says the District is supposed to do it."*

- Student: *"The [Laney Campus]...is run down, reminds me of a high school that is underfunded."*
- Faculty member: *"Our tech systems don't talk to each other."*
- Administrator: *"Even when I carefully follow District rules and procedures, I can't get any results."*
- Administrator: *"So many things are done with paperwork and lots of it. We need to use technology to save time and effort."*
- Student: *"Some students are concerned about their safety and the safety of the buildings they're in."*
- Administrator: *"We couldn't purchase office supplies we needed because the vendor said the District was way behind in paying its bills."*
- Manager: *"Hiring takes forever, sometimes as long as a year!"*
- Manager: *"I was hired in January but didn't get access to my budget until March."*
- Manager: *"Job descriptions are so old they have no relevance."*
- Manager: *"We live in a culture of 'NO'."*
- Department Chair: *"I cannot get access to data because the district hasn't paid for enough access licenses."*
- Department Chair: *"Data for program review comes at the last minute but the deadline is kept. Also, the format keeps changing adding to the workload."*
- Faculty: *"Processes have moving targets."*
- Faculty: *"Our facilities are a disgrace."*

#### **Area 4: Organizational Structure and Staffing**

- District office staff member: *"I can't get any work done with all these requests coming in 'cause all the college people are coming to me wanting things and I don't have a supervisor to set priorities or tell me what should be done or not."*
- College Supervisor: *"It's hard to get the job done when she only shows up maybe one day a week."*
- Administrator: *"We need to improve training and staff development from onboarding to out-boarding."*
- Manager: *"There's been a war between SEIU and HR."*

#### **Area 5: Fiscal Stability**

- Administrator: *"You can take out the whole district office and it's only a drop in the bucket of the kind of cuts we need for the fiscal cliff we're approaching."*

- Trustee: *“Maybe it’s time to think about whether we really need four colleges.”*
- Faculty member: *“It’s more cost effective to centralize some of our services, but then those services have to be provided to the colleges when they’re needed. When they can’t get services that’s when they want ‘their own staff’ to do the work needed.”*
- Faculty member: *“We can’t trust communications about finances.”*
- Board member: *“We are headed off a cliff.”*
- Manager: *“Do we have too many colleges?”*
- Manager: *“Grant Funds have been sent back because of mismanagement.”*

### **Area 6: Public Image, Marketing, and External Partnerships**

- Private sector vendor: *“Can you do anything to get me paid? It’s been six months since I’ve been paid.”*
- Community College Colleague: *“Oh, Peralta? Yeah, they’ve been struggling for a long time.”*
- Community member: *“I went to Peralta – I got a good education there. No, I don’t know anything about their financial problems.”*
- Community member: *“It’s reputation I have gathered is a ‘last chance branch.’ Peers who have left employment there were frustrated with heavy politics, disorder, not striving to meet mission.”*
- Administrator: *“Nothing happened in marketing and public relations from September to May.”*

### **Selected Community Comments**

Selected comments from the external survey where northern Alameda County residents explain their ratings for each Peralta College are outlined below.

#### **Laney:**

*“All the classes I have taken there have been extremely good and the teachers have been thoughtful even if the classes or the teachers are not equally good at delivering content, I feel like they were open to feedback.”*

*“It’s a pretty good community college so far as material, but the availability of classes to help fit an individual schedule is not so great and could improve so that it makes it flexible to attend classes while juggling a job.”*

*“It’s reputation I have gathered is a ‘last chance branch.’ Peers who have left employment there were frustrated with heavy politics, disorder, not striving to meet mission.”*

“The school is run down, reminds me of a high school that is underfunded.”

**Merritt:**

“The classes at Merritt and all the Peralta College schools can be difficult to enroll into and their website is terrible to navigate.”

**College of Alameda:**

“I have taken quite a few courses here and found all of the classes to be excellent. The professors are challenging yet approachable. Great facilities and online options.”

“My kids have taken classes there and have had good experiences. It is convenient and the classes are of good quality.”

**Berkeley City College:**

“The campus is kept up nicely, which leads me to believe they have enough money for quality technology and education in their programs.”

“The Berkeley City College offers great classes. They are very relevant to today’s work force. It’s a great feeder school to UC Berkeley.”

“I have known several people who attended Berkeley City College and then went on to attend UC Berkeley. I’m impressed with the quality of the transfer program and the fact that underprivileged/underrepresented students can get a shot at a world-class education if they do well there.”