



2019

FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES



RANCHO SANTIAGO
Community College District

The Rancho Santiago Community College District has identified five critically important federal legislative priorities to focus advocacy efforts on for 2019. Each priority has been carefully chosen to focus on results that will support the District's student population, faculty, and staff as well as promote long-term sustainability and quality educational opportunities.

Engage in the Reauthorization of the Higher Education Act

Reauthorization of the Higher Education Act (HEA) is important to the District as it governs federal financial aid programs. The HEA expired in 2013 and has been temporarily extended by Congress while debates over the reauthorization take place. Anticipated changes will likely include policy focused on accreditation, regulation reform, risk-sharing, student loans, and additional transparency. It is important during reauthorization of the HEA that any changes to law reflect the diverse student population and interests of our students.

Legislative Actions:

- Ensure that the reauthorization of the HEA supports community colleges and the specific needs of the “nontraditional” student population.
- Ensure all requirements and mandates in any risk-sharing legislation align with community colleges’ ability to comply and not adversely affect the student population.
- Ensure all requirements and mandates included in changes to Title IX enhance student safety and align with community colleges’ ability to comply and support the community college student population.

Support Increased Funding for Federal Student Financial Aid

Federal financial aid consists of student loans and need-based financial aid, such as the Pell Grant, Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants (SEOG), and Federal Work-Study. Additional funding is available for institutional programs to support students needing assistance. These programs include Strengthening Institutions, Hispanic Serving Institutions, Tribally Controlled Colleges, TRIO, GEAR UP, Predominantly Black Institutions, Historically Black Colleges and Universities, and others.

Legislative Actions:

- Support the American Association of Community College’s (AACCC) efforts to prioritize funding for Pell Grants and other need-based financial aid.
- Support policy that allows funding to provide for two years of free community college tuition for students.
- Support increased funding for higher education student aid and Institutional aid programs.

Support Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) and The Dream Act

RSCCD is committed to serving all students who can benefit from post-secondary education, without regard to race, ethnicity, religion, national origin, immigration status, age, gender, language, socio-economic status, gender identity or expression, medical condition or disability. California's diversity is a great source of innovation and industry, making California one of the largest economies in the world, and an economic engine for the United States.

With over 220,000 young people in California that have received DACA status since 2012 and approximately 60,000 of those young people enrolled at community colleges, RSCCD supports the continuation of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program. California and the United States are both stronger due to the contributions made by "Dreamers" to our economy and to our communities.

Legislative Actions:

- Preserve the DACA program.
- Support legislation that establishes a path to citizenship for undocumented students who are long-time U.S. residents.
- Make Dreamers eligible for federal student financial assistance.

Support funding for the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education (CTE) Act are critical sources of funding for the District.

The WIOA Title II funding provides English language and literacy skills acquisition programs to the most vulnerable populations, including immigrants seeking citizenship and low-income adults.

Perkins is a principal source of federal funding to states and discretionary grantees for the improvement of secondary and postsecondary career and technical education programs. This funding is necessary to sustain career and technical education programs offered to RSCCD students.

Legislative Actions:

- Advocate for increased funding for WIOA Title II grants in the Fiscal Year 2020 Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations bill.
- Advocate for increased funding for CTE state grants in the FY 2020 Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations bill.

Protect Students' Civil Rights

The students of RSCCD deserve a federal government that protects them and guarantees the safety of our campus learning environments without compromising fundamental civil rights, human rights, and civil liberties. All individuals should be treated with respect regardless of race, ethnicity, religion, national origin, immigration status, age, gender, language, socio-economic status, gender identity or expression, medical condition or disability. RSCCD will support legislation and funding priorities that advance everyone's right to live free of discrimination and to be successful in an inclusive educational environment.

Legislative Actions:

- Support legislation that fully protects the rights of all people as a statement of United States principles.
- Support H.R. 2282 the bipartisan Equality Act that would provide consistent and explicit non-discrimination protections for LGBTQ people across key areas of life, including employment, housing, credit, education, public spaces and services, federally-funded programs, and jury service.

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