Academic Affairs Report:
Our Horizon

Robert Holcomb, Ph.D.
Vice President of Academic Affairs/Assistant Superintendent
Spring 2026

Introduction

This report provides an overview of salient and timely priorities within Academic Affairs that require thoughtful attention, collaboration, and enactment. It is not an exhaustive list of all important themes presently impacting higher education or our College community, but rather a select reflection of the horizon we face and proposed courses of action for navigating it together.

Budgetary Alignment

In April of 2025, a Budgetary Alignment Report was shared with the College community, providing progress-to-date regarding the $1.4 million budgetary reduction target for Academic Affairs that was presented in Fall 2022, and steps for reducing the target to a remaining balance of $225,000 by 2025/26.

Specifically, the Budgetary Alignment Report analyzes the feasibility of making budgetary reductions in each of the following areas: operational budgets, faculty reassigned time, the schedule of classes, organizational alignment, and vacant positions.

Through collective feedback and collaboration, the target reduction was achieved, and slightly exceeded, leaving a remaining balance of $180,260 in 2025/26.

In Spring 2026, there is an opportunity to apply an additional reduction that fully resolves the target reduction in Academic Affairs, as illustrated below.

Year	Starting Deficit	Net Reduction	Notes
2022/2023	$1.4 million	$632,695	Reductions achieved
2023/2024	$767,305	$312,527	
2024/2025	$454,778	$265,518	
2025/2026	$180,260	$180,260 (proposed)	Resolves full target reduction

The proposed step for resolving the full target reduction involves not replacing an anticipated vacancy of an instructional dean position and permanently reassigning another dean or deans to assume leadership, maintaining full responsiveness, advocacy, and support across all instructional departments and academic clusters.

Toward that end, the VPAA will elicit feedback from Academic Affairs leadership teams, College constituency groups, and collective bargaining units to inform a final proposed model for implementation in Fall 2026.

Strategic Enrollment Management

At the end of Fall 2025, the College arrived at the halfway mark of its five-year Strategic Enrollment Management Plan (SEMP), that was implemented in Fall 2023 and designed to restore District enrollment to 17,500 FTES by 2027/28.

The SEMP Implementation Workgroup continues to meet regularly to support ongoing implementation of seven key strategies outlined in the SEMP: 1) schedule development, 2) data analysis, 3) organizational alignment, 4) enrollment growth and recovery areas, 5) marketing and communications, 6) student retention and support, 7) continuous improvement.

Encouragingly, enrollment figures have now approached the midpoint of the enrollment recovery goal, restoring approximately 2,500 of the 5,000 FTES that the District lost during the pandemic. A detailed overview of enrollment trends is provided in the section below.

The two tables below show the steady progress toward enrollment recovery that has been achieved from 12,500 FTES in 2021/22 to 14,817 FTES in 2024/25. The current academic year, 2025/26, shows the District's 320 Report, P1 projection at 15,232 FTES, as actual annual data does not become available until the end of the academic year.

Year	FTES	Change over Prior Year	Notes
2025/2026	*15,246	429 FTES	SEMP Implementation Year 3
2024/2025	14,817	1,042 FTES	SEMP Implementation Year 2
2023/2024	13,775	665 FTES	SEMP Implementation Year 1
2022/2023	13,110	610 FTES	SEMP Planning Year

*District 320 Report, P1 Projection assumes 3% growth

Year	FTES	Change over Prior Years	Notes
2021/2022	12,500	-5,000 FTES	Low-Point Year, Post-Pandemic
2018/2019	17,500		Baseline Year, Pre-Pandemic

While complete, yearend enrollment data for 2025/26 is not yet available, Fall 2025 enrollment illustrates a continuing trend of enrollment recovery across four consecutive fall terms, in the following two tables. Notably, though, the percent increase is smaller in the most recent fall to fall term comparison, 2.8% from Fall 2024 to Fall 2025, revealing an observable flattening of the overall enrollment trend. This is critical because if enrollment continues to lag behind SEMP targets, additional budgetary reductions will be required. District leadership has been engaging around that possibility and more information will be forthcoming.

District Enrollment (FTES) Fall to Fall			
Fall 2022	Fall 2023	Fall 2024	Fall 2025
5,930	6,216	6,618	6,801

District Enrollment (FTES) Fall to Fall		
Percent Change 2022 to 2023	Percent Change 2023 to 2024	Percent Change 2024 to 2025
4.8%	6.5%	2.8%

More specifically, the tables below indicate the extent to which each enrollment recovery and growth area, identified in SEMP Strategy 4, continues to rebound across the past four consecutive fall terms.

Enrollment Recovery and Growth Areas SEMP Strategy 4, Fall to Fall FTES				
	Fall 2022	Fall 2023	Fall 2024	Fall 2025
Dual Enrollment	196	232	269	275
Work Experience	597	614	679	705
*ISAs	625	618	656	651
Lifelong Learning	68	53	56	60
Apprenticeship	17	17	17	22
Noncredit CDCP	885	929	1,014	1,010
Cal. Virtual College	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Kines, Athl., Dance	159	168	170	111
Career Education	2,161	2,281	2,448	2,569

*Instructional Service Agreements

Enrollment Recovery and Growth Areas SEMP Strategy 4, Fall to Fall FTES			
	Percent Change 2022 to 2023	Percent Change 2023 to 2024	Percent Change 2024 to 2025
Dual Enrollment	18.4%	15.9%	2.23%
Work Experience	2.9%	10.6%	3.83%
*ISAs	-1.1%	6.2%	-0.76%
Lifelong Learning	-22%	5.7%	7.14%
Apprenticeship	0.0%	0.0%	29.5%
Noncredit CDCP	5.0%	9.2%	-0.4%
Cal. Virtual College	n/a	n/a	n/a
Kines, Athl., Dance	5.7%	1.2%	-3.5%
Career Education	5.6%	7.3%	4.9%

*Instructional Service Agreements

In Spring 2026, SEMP Implementation Workgroup co-chairs, the Vice President of Academic Affairs and Academic Senate President, will facilitate a process by which to evaluate, reexamine, and update the SEMP with strategies that are most relevant now, and in the anticipated road ahead.

This will include a thorough review, analysis, and discussion of Fall 2025 enrollment data, overall and disaggregated by specific programs, populations, and other variables.

It will also involve generating an updated environmental scan, capturing demographic trends, economic forecasting, labor market analysis, and other regional, statewide, and national data.

Finally, a half-day SEMP retreat will be held on Friday, February 27, 2026, to analyze each of the seven SEMP strategies, revisiting what was originally proposed, assessing what has been accomplished to date, and determining how to optimally shape SEMP goals and activities moving forward to continue reaching District enrollment goals in the years to come.

Accreditation—Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)

In January of 2025, the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC), sent formal notification that SRJC had addressed pending compliance requirements, corrected deficiencies, and met accreditation standards pertaining to analyzing disaggregated student learning outcome data to inform planning, resource allocation, teaching and learning.

Moreover, the new practices and resources adopted at SRJC—software tools, faculty coordinators, annual SLO retreats— improves organizational capacity for evidence-based inquiry and data-informed decision making. However, these efforts entail extensive logistical planning and coordination regarding technological integration, data access, and streamlined processes.

To support this crucial work, in Spring 2026, the District will assemble an Outcomes and Assessment Committee, based on an Academic Senate resolution, and begin a regular meeting schedule. The VPAA and Academic Senate President, or their designees, will serve as co-chairs and there will be an open call for faculty who wish to express interest in serving as members of this new committee, along with SLO faculty coordinators, and select administrators.

Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI)

SRJC gained the federal designation as a Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI) in 2013 and subsequently received four separate, multi-year HSI grant awards.

On September 10, 2025, the Department of Education sent a press release regarding Minority-Serving Institution (MSI) grant programs along with notice of discontinuation of certain Title III and V programs.

Based on those communications, and under advisement of HSI external evaluators, the District began the process of sunsetting all three active HSI grant initiatives—*Lanzamiento*, *Avanzando*, and *Transformando*, by the end of the current grant year, September 30, 2026.

While the discontinuation of HSI funding is a material loss for District, the innovative and culturally responsive practices that have been developed, implemented, and assessed through these educational initiatives can be adopted within existing student service areas and infused across the curriculum for the benefit of all learners. Toward that end, HSI directors and leadership teams are in communication with select areas to institutionalize innovative HSI strategies throughout the College. Furthermore, the District is following set procedures and collective bargaining agreements to support employees in positions that are HSI grant funded.

The District affirms its commitment to serving all student populations, including immigrant and undocumented communities, and striving to reduce disparities in academic achievement among demographic groups through bold educational programming and student support resources within a culture of "servingness" a theoretical concept within the HSI community that urges

practitioners to maintain a strong focus on unique learner needs to foster organizational transformation and continuous progress.

As such, the District assembled an HSI Advisory Group that began regular meetings in September 2025. The group's initial focus is on strengthening connections between credit and noncredit educational programs, employing strategic marketing and communications to reach diverse communities, providing HSI-themed professional development to all employee groups, and establishing a Latine Student Success Center. More information about how others can engage and support the work of the HSI Advisory Group will be forthcoming in Spring 2026.

California Virtual Campus (CVC)—Peer Online Course Review (POCR) Process

In Fall 2025, the District and AFA negotiated a side letter regarding the District's intent to implement a Peer Online Course Review (POCR) process for online courses. This was in response to the Academic Senate's recommendation to the District. As such, in Spring 2026, the Office of Distance Education will begin the implementation of a pilot POCR process involving a select group of instructors and online courses.

This is an exciting step for SRJC, as having an established POCR process is a requirement for becoming a Teaching College through the California Virtual Campus (CVC). SRJC joined the CVC in May 2023 as a Home College, which provides SRJC students seamless access to enroll in courses offered through the CVC Course Exchange. SRJC becoming a Teaching College would allow SRJC faculty to teach online courses through the CVC Course Exchange, enabling SRJC online course offerings to reach new student populations throughout California. More information will follow regarding the POCR pilot process and SRJC's participation as a member of the California Virtual Campus.

Textbook Affordability—Zero Textbook Cost (ZTC) Open Educational Resources (OER)

SRJC's commitment to improving textbook affordability for students will continue in Spring 2026, with opportunities for faculty to participate in Zero Textbook Cost (ZTC) and Open Educational Resources (OER) activities.

This includes engaging the following approaches: 1) participating in professional development that explores OER, 2) converting courses to ZTC by adopting, adapting, or remixing OER or ZTC materials, 3) updating existing ZTC course with OER or other ZTC materials, 4) serving as an OER author.

The Dean of Learning Resources & Educational Technology and ZTC faculty coordinator are leading the Collegewide effort to increase the percentage of ZTC courses at SRJC from its current level, less than 20%, to 50% by Fall 2028.

Shifting District Resources to Support Growth Areas

In Fall 2025, the District implemented a Productivity-based FTEF allocation model, a schedule development tool to that allows departments with higher enrollment demand to increase its

course offerings in the schedule of classes while protecting departments with lower enrollment demand from experiencing downward enrollment spirals.

As high demand instructional areas expand programming levels, there is a corresponding need to shift resources, including staff positions, to support increased operational workflow and volume. In Spring 2026, the District will confer with appropriate collective bargaining units regarding opportunities for reassigning a select number of District employees to serve instructional areas that require enhanced infrastructure to meet increased programming needs based on growth.

Summer Repertory Theater (SRT)

In Spring 2025, the Dean of Arts and Humanities and Theatre Arts and Fashion Department Chair submitted an evaluation report regarding the Summer Repertory (SRT) instructional program to the Vice President of Academic Affairs. This is according to the 3.6 Program Review, Evaluation, Revitalization and Discontinuance process. Since then, there has been a change in department chair and an opportunity to revisit the evaluation report.

In Spring 2026, in an effort to ensure due diligence, the Vice President of Academic Affairs will meet with the Dean of Arts and Humanities and the Theatre Arts and Fashion Department chair to discuss the content of the evaluation report and next possible steps for making a sound and informed recommendation regarding the sustainability and viability of the Summer Repertory Theater (SRT) program and Theatre Arts programming at SRJC.

Conclusion

Achieving the desired courses of action and outcomes presented in this report will require broad participation, careful planning, and implementation.

Please reach out to your department chair, instructional dean, or the Office of Academic Affairs to share questions, feedback, or considerations. Your participation is vital and welcomed.

Here's to our horizon.