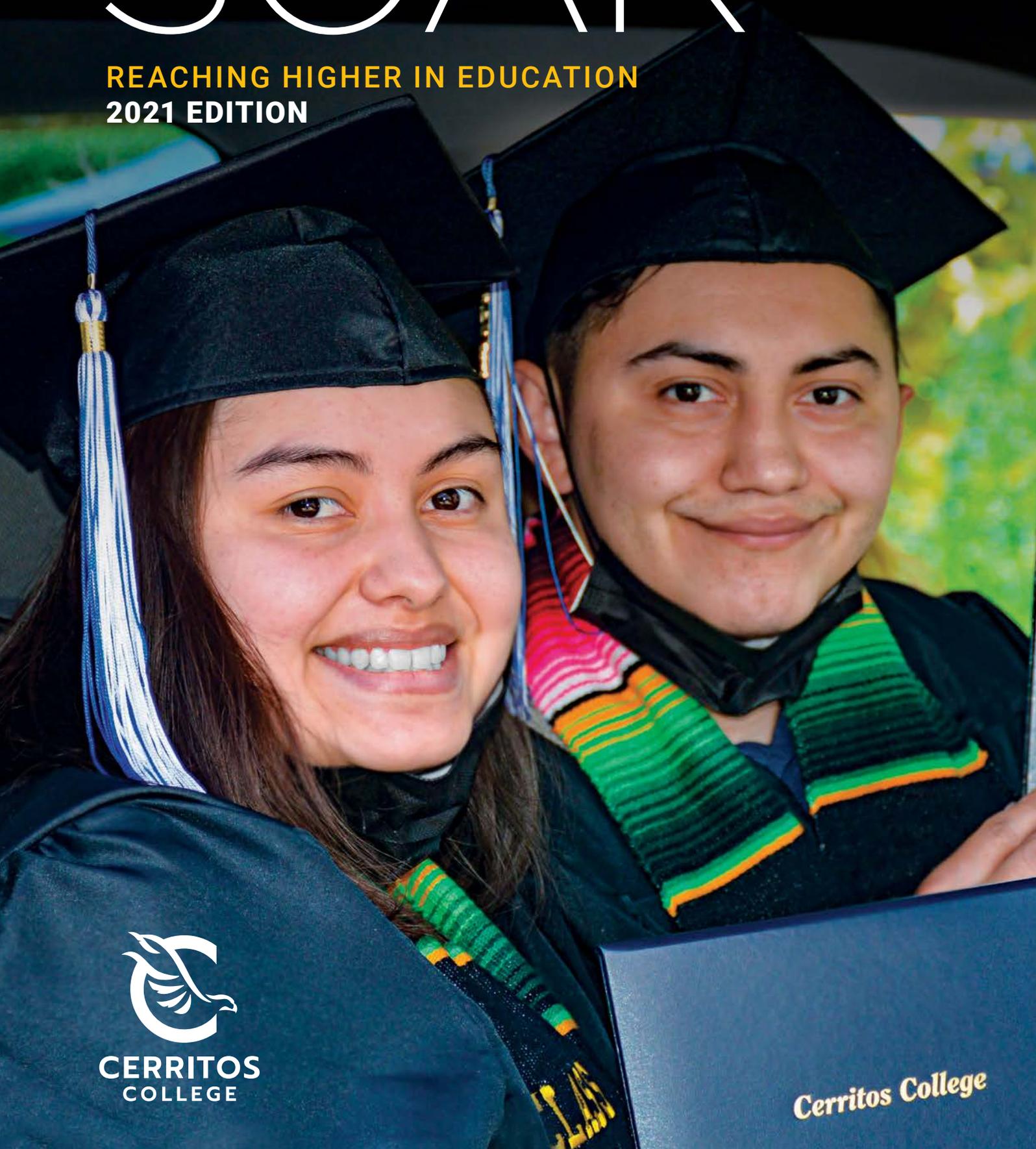


# SOAR

REACHING HIGHER IN EDUCATION  
2021 EDITION



CERRITOS  
COLLEGE

*Cerritos College*

Welcome to **SOAR**.

**SOAR** is designed to give you an opportunity to know Cerritos College better. We are proud Falcons. Take a look at the many accomplishments our students and faculty have achieved and join us as we SOAR higher in education.

This past year was challenging for all of us, and the hard work is not over. Through creativity and stubborn determination, we as a college community continue to find new opportunities to meet the needs of our students. It comes as no surprise how quickly faculty and staff are able to restructure and adapt to new educational models and campus operations that safely serve our students. This is **The Cerritos Way**.



Our students — many who are first-generation college students — are the real stars. They continue to show extraordinary resilience in adapting to different educational settings. Our students stay focused on completing their educational goals.

After operating mostly online since March 2020, we have finally returned to campus so that we can provide a range of services to our students and community. As staff and students return to the College, we established strict measures and protocols to ensure our Cerritos College community is as safe as possible. You can learn more about our safety protocols online at [www.cerritos.edu/covid-19](http://www.cerritos.edu/covid-19).

As you read through this inaugural edition of **SOAR**, we hope you enjoy learning about the accomplishments of our students, faculty, and staff.

Thank you for your continued support.

Dr. Jose Fierro  
President/Superintendent

Twitter: [@DrJfierro](https://twitter.com/DrJfierro) Instagram: [cerritoscollegepres](https://www.instagram.com/cerritoscollegepres)



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## Campus Re-Opens with In-Person and Online Hybrid Classes

After operating almost entirely online for three semesters, Cerritos College welcomed students, staff, and faculty back to campus for fall 2021. The College resumed on-campus services at 50 percent capacity, offering 50 percent of all classes in a hybrid format — a combination of on-site and virtual/online courses. Specialized classrooms, such as laboratories, art, design, theater arts studios, and music practice rooms resumed at full capacity for activities fulfilling academic requirements.

On August 4, the Board of Trustees passed a resolution to require all students and employees to show proof of vaccination or commit to mandatory weekly COVID-19 testing to access campus, effective October 1, 2021.

Students taking classes on campus in fall 2021 are required to follow the College’s mandatory COVID-19 protocols. They must complete an online pre-screening questionnaire, adhere to indoor mask requirements, practice social distancing, report COVID-19 symptoms, and wear a daily wristband. Campus employees are required to work in-person at 50 percent capacity with staggered schedules online and on-campus. Staff follows the same safety measures as students.

At its October 6 board meeting, the Board adopted a vaccine-only policy requiring COVID-19 vaccination for all staff and students who plan to work or attend classes on campus beginning spring 2022.

The District’s goal is to provide the safest possible work and learning environment for students, staff, and faculty.

### The Re-Opening Process

The process to re-open campus was driven by research and a comprehensive plan to ensure safety. The College followed local, state, and federal COVID-19 guidelines. To develop best practices, policies, and procedures to return to campus, the District solicited feedback from students and employees.

The District also adopted notable safety measures. The College’s operations team replaced old HVAC air filters with stronger MERV 13 filters, added hand sanitation stations across campus, set up temperature check stations in high-traffic areas, and implemented an indoor mask requirement, among other preventative measures. To ensure ongoing campus safety, the College will continue to comply with local, state, and federal mandates.

### Addressing Rising COVID-19 Cases

The Gateway Region is severely impacted by COVID-19 with some of the highest COVID-19 cases across Los Angeles County. To help reduce infection rates, Cerritos College hosted two on-campus COVID-19 vaccine clinics over the summer and currently serves as a regional vaccine site in partnership with the City of Hawaiian Gardens. The College’s Student Health Services also offers students and employees free Moderna vaccines on-campus by appointment.

Cerritos College’s COVID-19 resources and updates can be found at [www.cerritos.edu/covid-19/](http://www.cerritos.edu/covid-19/).

## New Cerritos College Logo and Refined Seal



Cerritos College unveiled a new logo and college seal over the summer. The new modern logo reflects the College’s identity as diverse, innovative, and inspiring.



Commencement is the most wonderful time of the year at Cerritos College. Since many of the College's students are first generation, earning a degree or certificate is a significant milestone toward a better life for themselves and their families.

To honor the Class of 2021, the College hosted a unique virtual ceremony and its first-ever CAR-mencement drive-thru celebration. Graduates and their families, friends, and supporters drove their

vehicles along the campus' celebration route. At the 'Blue Carpet Zone,' graduates received their diploma covers and took photos.

The College presented 4,600 associate degrees and skills certificates to students. Many transitioned to some of the nation's top colleges and universities, including USC, UCLA, UC Berkeley, UC Santa Barbara, and several schools within the California State University system.

## Commencement Highlights

San Diego native **Elizabeth Silva** earned an astounding 12 degrees and certificates, completing all her units online from the Norwalk-based campus. Elizabeth's accomplishments include associate degrees and certificates in business administration, human resources management, international business, business management, retail management, and entrepreneurship. Elizabeth knew education could be life-changing but, as a single parent of three, she delayed going to school to support her family instead. With the pandemic spurring additional online classes, Elizabeth was able to earn more degrees and certificates. With her new credentials, Elizabeth plans to transfer to a four-year university and, one day, start her own non-profit organization addressing the needs of homeless women and children.



**Haya Chehada** is one of 72 recipients of the Jack Kent Cooke Foundation's prestigious Undergraduate Transfer Scholarship, a highly competitive national scholarship that will provide Haya with up to \$40,000 a year to complete her bachelor's degree. Originally from Syria, Haya migrated to the United States in 2016 and started working at 7-Eleven to help her family. Despite the difficulties she faced as a recent immigrant, she did not give up her dream of pursuing a degree and enrolled at Cerritos College in spring 2018. Haya transferred to USC this fall and is pursuing a bachelor's degree in business administration with an accounting concentration. Next summer, she will begin an internship with Ernst & Young, one of the Big Four global accounting firms. Her career goal is to earn a Certified Public Accountant license and work at a large public accounting firm.



More than 400 students received a medallion for taking part in the College's Promise Program, Cerritos Complete. The program makes the transition to college easier by offering two years of free tuition (at in-state rates), priority enrollment, one-on-one counseling, career exploration, among other benefits. Cerritos Complete is geared toward local high school seniors or adult students finishing their high school equivalency. The program also gives students an opportunity to graduate on time. Since the program's inception in 2015, nearly 900 students have completed the program. Cerritos Complete is a partnership between Cerritos College and seven local school districts: ABC, Bellflower, Compton, Downey, Lynwood, Norwalk-La Mirada, and Paramount Unified School Districts.



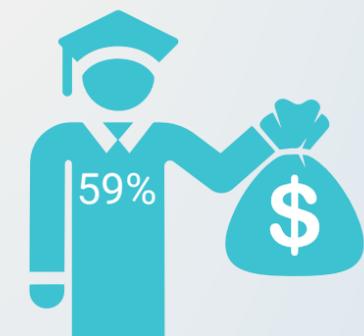
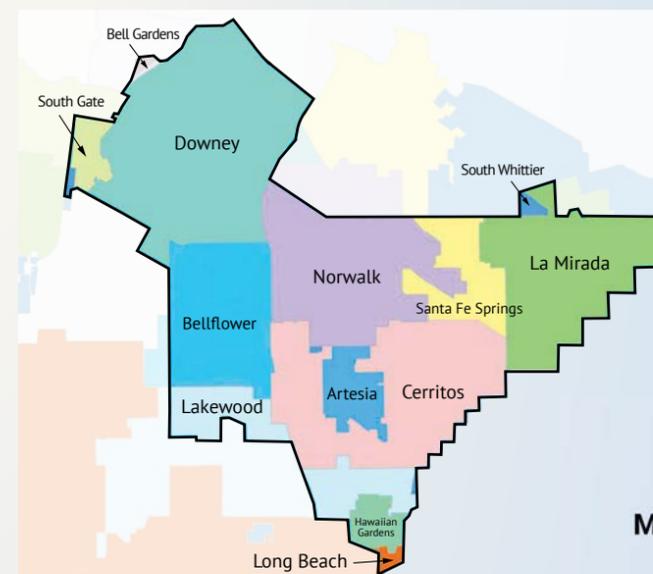
In 2020, Cerritos College was named an Equity Champion of Higher Education by The Campaign for College Opportunity. The College was recognized for its leading role among California Community Colleges in awarding Associate Degrees for Transfer to Black students. Awards are based on a new Equity Index created by the Campaign for College Opportunity, which assigns a value to each college according to the number of Associate Degrees for Transfer conferred to Black and/or Latinx students relative to the population of Black and/or Latinx students intending to transfer on a particular campus. Cerritos College was one of five Equity Champions of Higher Education across the state.



## At a Glance

With a strong focus on student development and academic success, Cerritos College offers nearly 300 degrees and certificate programs in nine divisions. The diverse student body is made up of more than 17,000 students studying in areas such as business, fine arts and communication, liberal arts, kinesiology, health occupations, humanities and social sciences, science, engineering and mathematics, and technology.

The District encompasses southeastern Los Angeles County communities: Artesia, Bellflower, Cerritos, Downey, Hawaiian Gardens, La Mirada, Norwalk, and portions of Bell Gardens, Lakewood, Long Beach, Santa Fe Springs, and South Gate.



### Financial Aid (2020-21)

Approximately **59%** of Cerritos College students receive financial aid.

Cerritos College disbursed more than **\$55 million** in financial aid.

Source: Cerritos College Financial Aid Office

## QUICK FACTS



Cerritos College ranks ninth among the nation's Top 100 schools for most Hispanic enrollment

Source: *Hispanic Outlook in Higher Education*



Student/Faculty ratio is 25-to-1

Source: *US News*



Named Best Value Accounting Associate Degree School in California

Source: *Business Degree Central*



Equity Champion of Higher Education for awarding Associate Degrees for Transfer to Black students

Source: *The Campaign for College Opportunity*



More than 5,600 Associate Degrees for Transfer have been awarded since 2012 (College offers 30 AD-T programs)

\*The AD-T degree guarantees transfer admission

## BUDGET INFORMATION

### Revenue

\$131,214,147

#### State

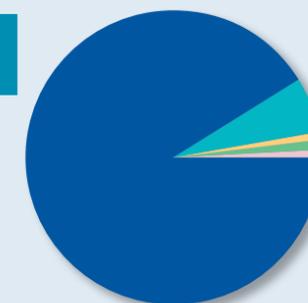
\$90,679,534

#### Local

\$40,356,613

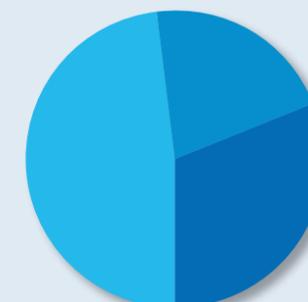
#### Other

\$178,000



### Expenses

Expense	\$
Employee Costs	\$ 115,717,043
Operating	\$ 7,735,824
Supplies and Materials	\$ 1,332,338
Capital Outlay	\$ 1,216,280
Interfund Transfers – Out	\$ 977,096

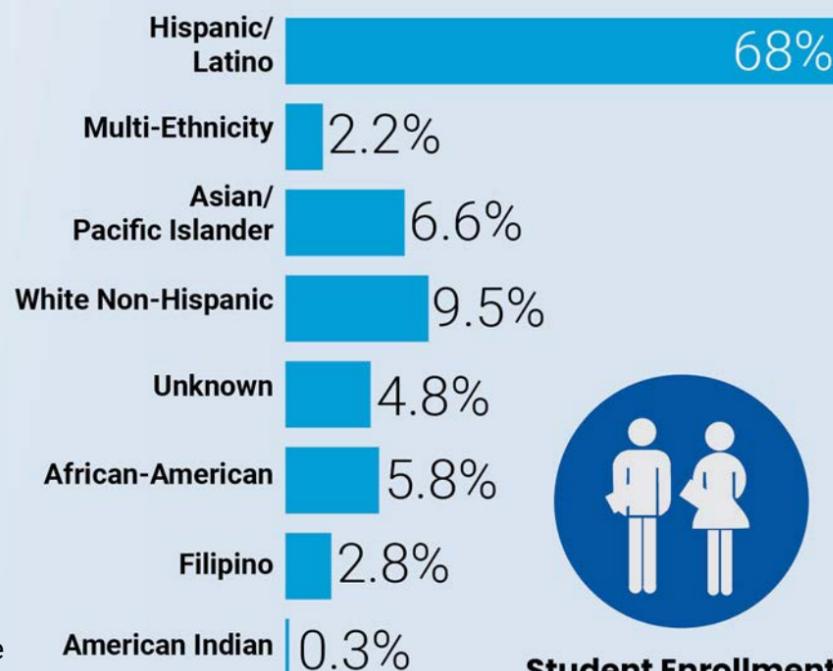


Employee Cost	\$
Academic	\$ 55,684,367
Classified	\$ 24,268,585
Benefits	\$ 35,764,091

Source: Fiscal year 2021-22 adopted budget – unrestricted general fund

### Enrollment by Ethnicity

Source: CCCC Data Mart/Cerritos College IERP



### Student Enrollment

(Spring 2021)

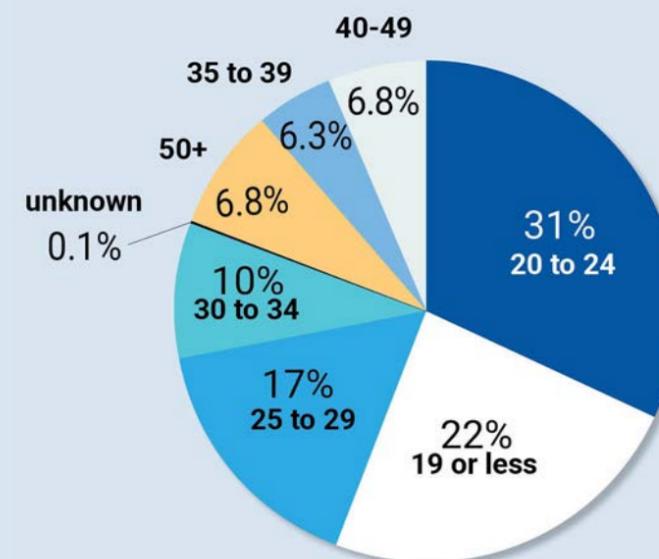
17,844

Source: CCCC Data Mart/Cerritos College IERP

### Enrollment by Age

(Spring 2021)

Source: CCCC Data Mart/Cerritos College IERP



### Federal Dollars Supporting Students

Congresswoman Linda T. Sánchez (D-CA) helped the College secure \$45 million in federal funding through the Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund III (HEERF III) as part of the American Rescue Plan. The funding provided financial support to students and additional technology enhancements to the campus. Subsequently, Cerritos College disbursed over \$10 million in direct payments to more than 10,000 students for emergency support to buy food, supplies, and technology using federal CARES Act funds since spring 2020.



Congresswoman Sánchez, Student Trustee Ninel Sutherland, President Dr. Fierro, and Trustee Marisa Perez

# YOUR BOND DOLLARS AT WORK

In 2012, voters approved Cerritos College’s \$350 million General Obligation Bond measure (Measure G) to modernize the 65-year-old campus. The College is currently updating classrooms, technology infrastructure, and computer labs; repairing and replacing aging facilities; upgrading job-training facilities; and improving classrooms to accommodate growing workforce demands.

Through Measure G, the College is also developing and building energy efficient and sustainable designs that will provide an eco-friendly learning environment for years to come. Bond funds are also being used to implement the College’s Facilities Master Plan.

For more information about the College’s construction programs, visit [www.cerritos.edu/master-plan](http://www.cerritos.edu/master-plan).

## CURRENT PROJECTS

### Performing Arts Center (Measure G)

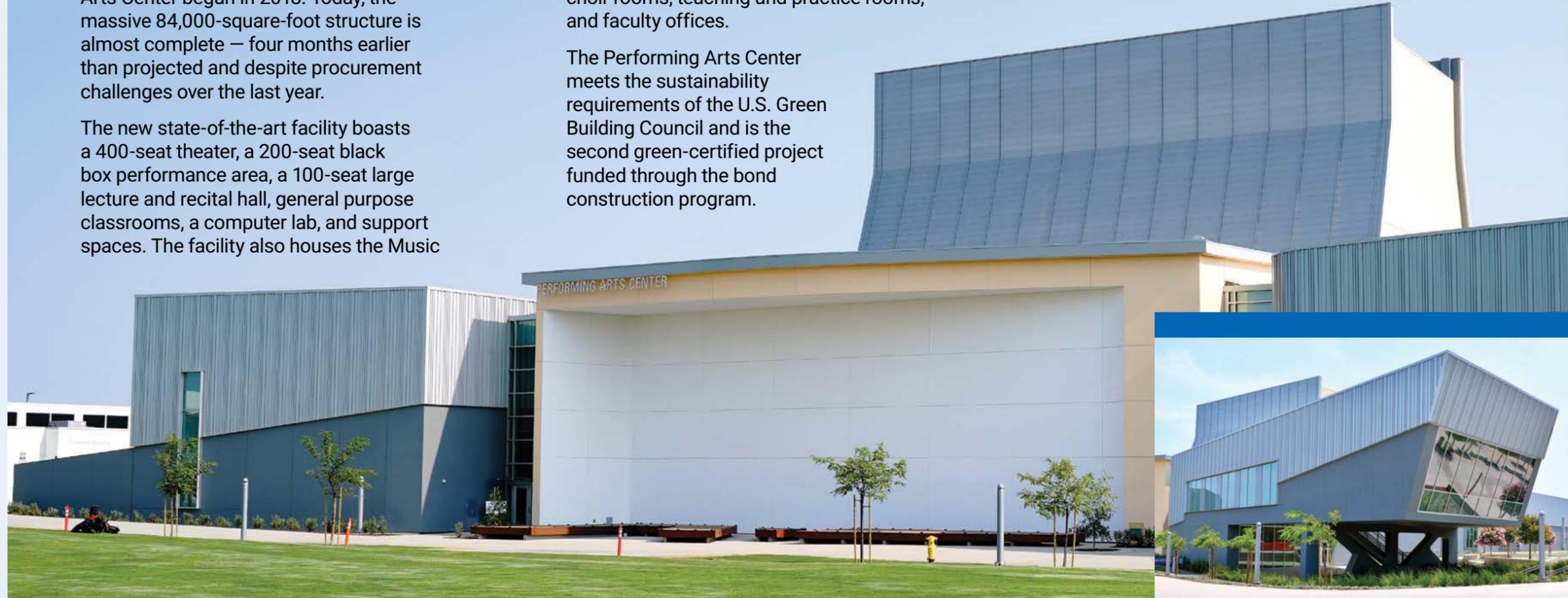
Construction of the new Performing Arts Center began in 2018. Today, the massive 84,000-square-foot structure is almost complete – four months earlier than projected and despite procurement challenges over the last year.

The new state-of-the-art facility boasts a 400-seat theater, a 200-seat black box performance area, a 100-seat large lecture and recital hall, general purpose classrooms, a computer lab, and support spaces. The facility also houses the Music

Department’s instructional labs, band and choir rooms, teaching and practice rooms, and faculty offices.

The Performing Arts Center meets the sustainability requirements of the U.S. Green Building Council and is the second green-certified project funded through the bond construction program.

Performing Arts Center



## UPCOMING PROJECTS

### Health Science Renovation (Measure G + State funding)

Built in 1974, The Health Science building is home to the Cosmetology and Health Occupations programs. Through Measure G and state funding, the building will be seismically retrofitted and renovated to be more efficient, accessible, and sustainable. This will also include modernizing facilities to serve students and the community. Construction is anticipated to begin in spring 2022, with completion slated for spring 2024.



Health Science rendering



Student Services and Administration Center rendering

### Student Services and Administration Center

The Student Services and Administration Center will become the new gateway into Cerritos College. The project will replace the current Administration, Bookstore, and Public Affairs buildings, centralizing student services and administration functions that are currently dispersed around campus. The design process for the Student Services and Administration Buildings began in 2019 and is currently in plan check through spring 2022.

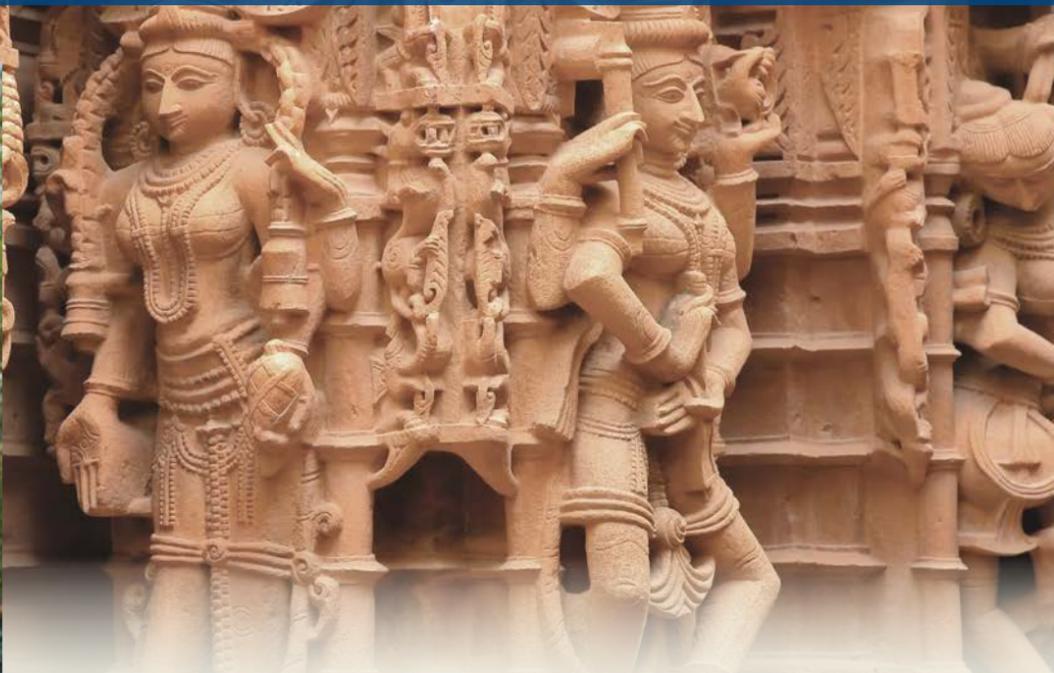
Demolition of the Burnight Theater, originally constructed in the mid-1960’s, and the Public Affairs building, developed in the early 2000’s, are scheduled for fall 2021. The Bookstore will be demolished during summer 2022.

## COMPLETED MAJOR PROJECTS (Measure G)

- Health and Wellness Complex
- Mathematics/Computer Information Science Building
- Fine Arts Building
- Child Development Center
- Security enhancements
- Shade structures
- Learning Resource Center modernization



Jain Chair Lee Anne McIlroy



## Historic **\$1 Million** Commitment Establishes Endowed Scholar of Jain Studies

Endowment marks first Jain chair at a community college

Cerritos College is the recipient of a historic gift commitment of one million dollars to establish the **Bhagavan Kunthunath Endowed Scholar of Jain Thought Leadership**. Thanks to the generosity of donors Drs. Jasvant and Meera Modi and Harshad and Raksha Shah, the endowment will be used to generate awareness of Jainism and its teachings of Ahimsa – nonviolence in thought, word, and deed; non-possessiveness; and acceptance of multiple viewpoints.

### About Cerritos College's Endowed Scholar

Credit ESL Instructor Lee Anne McIlroy was named the College's Endowed Scholar for 2021. Lee Anne, who is also the College's Student Learning Outcomes Coordinator, has an extensive background in Jainism, having been introduced to the philosophy by her father when she was eight years old. In 2017, she adopted the five Jainist vows, or Anuvratas, which she uses in her daily life.

Previously, Lee Anne was the Senior English Language Fellow in Tanzania and has worked as a Language Specialist for the U.S. Department of State, as well as Georgetown University's Center for Intercultural Education and Development in Tanzania and the Comoros Islands.

### Promoting Jainism Awareness

To date, the Jain community has made a \$14 million investment to establish Jain studies in higher education, including at several Southern California universities. The ancient Indian religion, which practices nonviolence, concern for the environment, spirituality, and meditation, is the sixth largest religion and one of the oldest in the world.

Part of the Cerritos College endowment will be used to establish an annual Jain conference on various aspects of the religion, as well as other Jainist programming on its religious principles.

To contribute to the Endowed Jain Scholar Fund or Ahimsa Scholarship at Cerritos College, please contact the Cerritos College Foundation at [foundation@cerritos.edu](mailto:foundation@cerritos.edu).

## Foundation Assets Reach **\$10 Million**

The Cerritos College Foundation continues to experience rapid growth, doubling its assets over the past three years to a net total of \$10 million as of July 2021.

In addition to a \$1-million pledge for the Jain Endowed Scholar program, the Foundation received \$673,000 from the estate of former instructional dean and music professor Connie Mayfield, and \$275,000 from the estate of James and Cleo Hart.

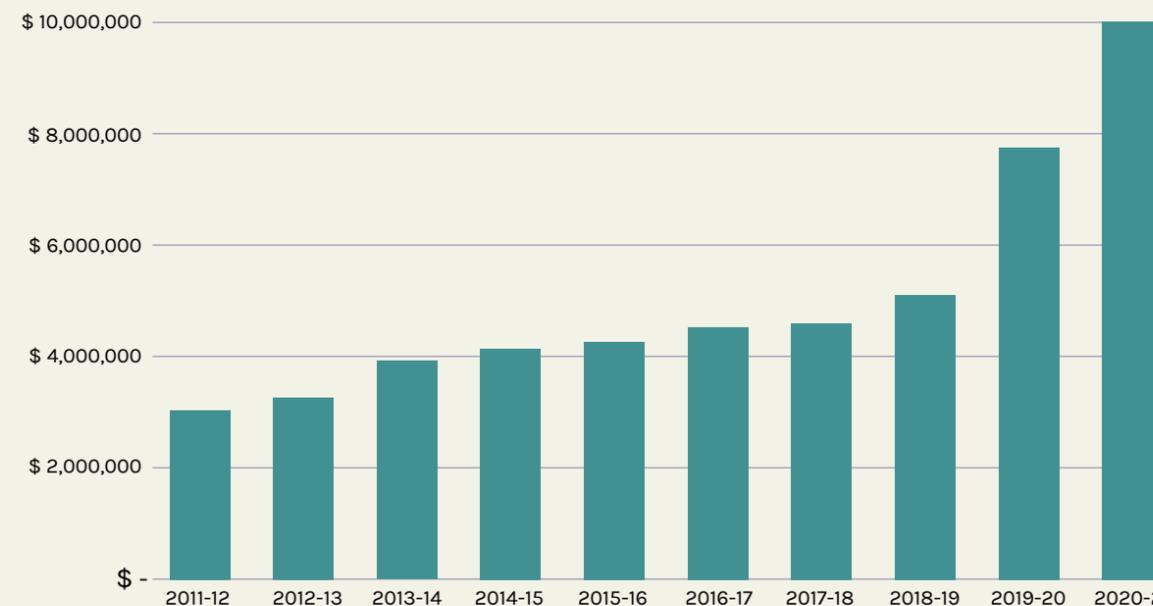
The Mayfield gift is earmarked for the purchase of world-class pianos that will be housed in the College's new Performing Arts Center. The Hart estate gift, made through proceeds from the sale of the couple's home in Artesia, will fund a new scholarship for transfer students.

Thanks to support from generous donors, a total of 24 new scholarships have been created over the past two years. The Foundation awarded more than \$230,000 in scholarships and other direct aid to students over the past year, and provided \$670,500 in total support (monetary and non-monetary) to the district last year.



*I am so grateful for the professors and faculty here at Cerritos College that pushed me to become a better version of who I was yesterday. Receiving a scholarship means so much to me, because this proves that any set goal can be accomplished through hard work and perseverance.*

Nathan De Guzman  
2021 recipient of the Jules Crane Scholarship





## Monthly Food Drive Helps 30,000 Families; Distributes More than One Million Pounds of Food

Cerritos College reached a milestone with its monthly food drive, providing 30,000 families with free food and resources. During the pandemic alone, the College distributed over one million pounds of food.

Since 2017, Cerritos College has partnered with the L.A. Regional Food Bank to distribute free food to students and the community. Prior to COVID-19, the College hosted a bimonthly walk-up food distribution on campus and served about 500 households. However, over the last year, the campus doubled its outreach efforts, serving 1,300 families via drive-thru events.

### Addressing Basic Needs

Research shows food and housing insecurity is a persistent issue for college students. According to the 2019 #RealCollege Survey Report conducted by The Hope Center, 46 percent of Cerritos College student respondents experienced food insecurity within 30 days prior to taking the survey. As such, students are facing an unspeakable dilemma — having to choose between paying for living expenses or purchasing a meal.

To meet the growing need, the College expanded its **Falcon's Nest**, a centralized support program for students facing basic needs insecurity. With the support of Falcon's Nest, students have access to a food pantry, on- and off-campus resources, clothing, hygiene support, and more. Students also benefit from technology assistance and emergency aid funds. Find out more information about Falcon's Nest and the College's basic needs support services at [www.cerritos.edu/basic-needs](http://www.cerritos.edu/basic-needs).

### Providing Safe Housing

Cerritos College offers housing to students who face home insecurity. In June 2020, Cerritos College celebrated the grand opening of The Village, California's first community college housing development exclusively for students facing homelessness. Located blocks away from campus, the project features seven modern townhomes with a combination of free and affordable rental options for students between 18-25 years old. The College recently expanded its housing options to include older students, and students with children and families. Learn more about The Village at [www.cerritos.edu/thevillage/](http://www.cerritos.edu/thevillage/).

## College Receives **\$1.5 Million** Clean Transportation Grant from the California Energy Commission

Funding helps develop and prepare skilled clean energy workforce

Cerritos College's Advanced Transportation and Logistics Center (ATL) received \$1.5 million from the California Energy Commission (CEC). This funding is part of the commission's ongoing initiative to foster growth in clean transportation.

The College previously received a \$1-million grant from the CEC in 2017 and another \$1-million grant in 2019. Both grants helped develop clean fuel training programs for high schools in underserved communities, regions impacted by poor air quality, and areas serving minority populations.

The new CEC grant will allow the College to expand its pilot program to more high schools and include training for zero-emission medium- and heavy-duty vehicles.

The College's ATL program has a proven record of successfully training members of the clean transportation field workforce. Since its inception, the College's Zero-Emission Vehicle Career Pilot Programs have funded 28 high schools, served approximately 1,800 students annually, and trained 36 high school and community college faculty members on the new electric vehicle curriculum.

Through its energy academies and career technical education pathways, ATL increases interest in clean transportation through hands-on training with advanced vehicle technologies. Focusing on underserved communities, ATL gives students an opportunity to enroll in college training programs that increase their potential for greater economic success.



Calexico High School students and instructor



Davis High School students



Mira Mesa High School students



Rhamondre Stevenson, Photo by Daryl Peterson

## Court 2 College Offers Many a Second Chance at Life

Program enhances access to  
education for non-violent offenders

The program provides eligible participants with individualized short- and long-term educational planning, dedicated faculty and staff assistance, book and supply vouchers, early class enrollment, tuition, tutoring, and financial aid. Scholarship assistance is available for those who qualify. The College serves 20 students each semester and offers leadership skills workshops, monthly counseling sessions; transfer assistance, including campus visits, and employment support services.



Counselor Mark Gambala with student Sergio Gonzales

Research shows education is the most cost efficient and effective means of reducing recidivism. According to Legislative Analyst's Office data, it costs an average of \$81,000 per year to incarcerate an inmate in California. According to C2C figures, the average cost of community college is less than \$5,000 per participant, saving California taxpayers thousands of dollars annually.

For more information about C2C, visit [www.cerritos.edu/c2c](http://www.cerritos.edu/c2c).

## Former Falcons Make Plays on the Gridiron with the NFL

Former Cerritos College Falcons hope to make an impact on the field.

### Rhamondre Stevenson

As a student, Cerritos College running back Rhamondre Stevenson led the nation among community colleges in rushing yards, amassing more than 2,000 yards in 2018. While playing with the Falcons his sophomore year, Stevenson broke the school record for most rushing yards in a season (2,111) and led the nation in rushing — a total that was the second most in a season in California Community College history. Not only did Stevenson lead the country in rushing, but he also averaged 9.5 yards per carry and scored 16 touchdowns. After a pair of seasons as a feature running back at the University of Oklahoma, Stevenson was drafted by the New England Patriots in the fourth round of the NFL Draft.

### Corey Bojorquez

Former Cerritos College punter Corey Bojorquez plays for the Green Bay Packers. Previously with the Buffalo Bills for three seasons, he led the NFL with a 50.8 punting average last season.

As a collegiate player with the Falcons, Bojorquez was a First Team all-conference selection as a sophomore in 2015, averaging 43.8 yards, with 14 of his 44 punts landing inside the opponent's 20-yard line.

There are now five former Falcons on NFL rosters — Stevenson, Bojorquez, cornerback/punt returner D.J. Reed (Seattle Seahawks), fullback Elijah Penny (New York Giants), and defensive tackle Kyle Peko (Tennessee Titans).

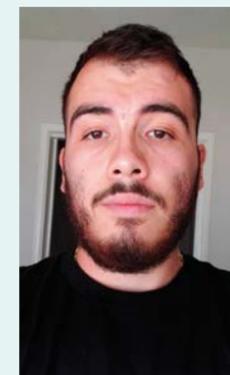
Cerritos College's Court 2 College (C2C) is a one-of-a-kind college and career bridge program to help first-time nonviolent felony offenders. Aimed at reducing recidivism and substance abuse, the program is also designed to increase educational attainment and employability for students. Since its inception in 2015, the program has served 90 students and boasts an 81 percent success rate for repeat offenders.

The C2C program builds on the College's legacy of creating strong, innovative educational opportunities for formerly incarcerated individuals. The origin of C2C began with the ACCESS First program founded by now-retired Los Angeles Superior Court Judge Peter Espinoza and former Cerritos College Counselor Marcelino Saucedo in 2000.

C2C is a partnership between Cerritos College, the L.A. County Department of Health Services Office of Diversion and Reentry, Norwalk Superior Courthouse, and the L.A. County Department of Probation.

### A Fresh Start for Simon Guerrero

Simon Guerrero was engaged in criminal activities as a young man. However, in 2019, his life turned in a positive direction after he was referred to the C2C program. Simon earned an Automotive Mechanical Repair Manufacturer Specialist Certificate and passed the Automotive Service Excellence (ASE) Certification for Auto Electrical Specialists. While he originally attended Cerritos College to avoid prison time, he continued his studies after probation and volunteered at an auto repair shop to complete the requirements for an A.A. Degree in Automotive Technology. Simon is the first person in his family to earn a college degree. He now owns an auto repair shop called L.A. Auto Service Inc. in East Los Angeles, and plans to buy a home.



## 2022 Campus Calendar

**November 29, 2021\***  
Spring 2022 Semester  
Open Enrollment Begins  
*\* Date is subject to change*

**January 10, 2022**  
Spring 2022 semester begins

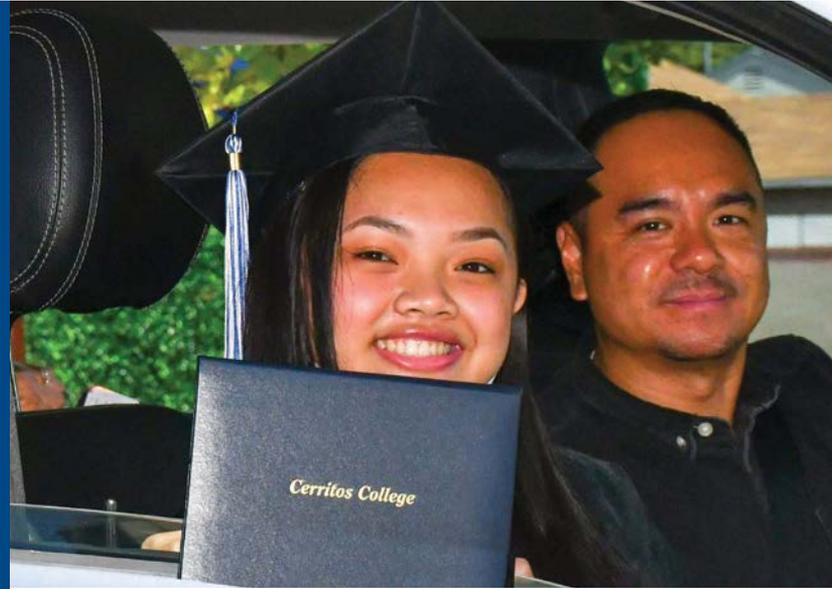
**January 31, 2022**  
15-week session begins

**March 14-20, 2022**  
Spring recess

**March 21, 2022**  
Second 9-week session begins

**May 14-20, 2022**  
Final exams

**May 20, 2022**  
Commencement Ceremony



### Administration

**Jose L. Fierro, D.V.M., Ph.D.**  
President/Superintendent

**Rick Miranda**  
Vice President  
Academic Affairs/  
Assistant Superintendent

**Felipe Lopez**  
Vice President  
Business Services/  
Assistant Superintendent

**Adriana Flores-Church, Ed.D.**  
Vice President  
Human Resources/  
Assistant Superintendent

**Dilcie D. Perez, Ed.D.**  
Vice President  
Student Services/  
Assistant Superintendent

### Board of Trustees

**James Cody Birkey**  
President

**Dr. Shin Liu**  
Vice President

**Carmen Avalos**  
Clerk

**Zurich Lewis**  
Trustee

**Mariana Pacheco**  
Trustee

**Marisa Perez**  
Trustee

**Dr. Sandra Salazar**  
Trustee

**Ninel Sutherland**  
Student Trustee