



DATE: April 24, 2025

TO: Chabot-Las Positas Community College District

FROM: Chancellor Ronald P. Gerhard, CLPCCD
President Jamal Cooks, Chabot College
President Dyrell Foster, Las Positas College

SUBJECT: CLPCCD Communication – Executive Order on Accreditation

On April 23, 2025, President Trump signed an executive order that may reshape key aspects of higher education accreditation nationwide. The order targets federally recognized accrediting agencies, such as the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC), accusing them of overstepping their authority and prioritizing diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) initiatives over academic quality and measurable student outcomes.

What the Executive Order Seeks to Achieve:

- **Refocus accreditation standards on “student outcomes” and return on investment**, while prohibiting the use of race, ethnicity, or sex as evaluation metrics
- **Ban federally recognized accreditors from mandating DEI-related requirements** or standards deemed to conflict with federal or state law
- **Streamline the process for institutions to change accreditors**, particularly where existing standards are perceived as incompatible with institutional values
- **Encourage the recognition of new accreditors** and introduce more competition within the accreditation system
- **Call for the suspension or termination of recognition for accrediting bodies** that fail to align with these new federal priorities

Potential Impacts on California Community Colleges:

While it is too early to determine the full extent of the executive order’s impact, several key issues are evident:

- **Institutional Autonomy and DEI Efforts:** California’s public colleges, including our own, have long emphasized access, inclusivity, equity-minded student support, and mission-driven accountability. This order introduces potential tension between federal directives and state/institutional DEI programs.

- **Access to Federal Financial Aid:** Any disruption to the federal recognition of accreditors like ACCJC could introduce risk to institutional eligibility for Pell Grants, student loans, and other federal aid, although existing legal frameworks ensure due process before any such action can occur.
- **Regulatory Uncertainty:** The order signals potential changes to federal oversight, reporting, and recognition processes. Implementation details will likely unfold through rulemaking, legal review, and guidance from the U.S. Department of Education.

What We Are Doing:

We are actively tracking developments alongside our partners at ACCJC, the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office, and our regional and national associations. Our focus remains on:

- **Maintaining compliance with all applicable federal and state laws**, while continuing to advance our commitments to equity, student success, and academic integrity.
- **Protecting our students' access to federal financial aid and institutional support systems.**
- **Keeping you informed.** As the landscape evolves, we will provide timely updates, including opportunities for campus dialogue, shared understanding, and collaborative planning.

Please rest assured that **there are no immediate changes required of our colleges or district operations** as a result of this latest executive order. Our values, our mission, and our commitment to serving our students with integrity remain unchanged.