

## **Chapter 1 Background**

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## **The District**

### Description of the District

The Rancho Santiago Community College District (RSCCD) is part of the California Community College system — the largest system of higher education in the world, with 112 colleges organized into 72 districts that served a total of 2,424,094 students in 2011-2012.

This multi-college district is in Orange County, a relatively small urban county of 791 square miles in Southern California. Orange County is surrounded by the ocean to the west, Los Angeles County to the north, San Bernardino and Riverside Counties to the east, and San Diego County to the south. The total county population growth evidenced in the past 20 years is projected to continue, with Orange County's 2011 population of 3,055,745 projected to reach 3,533,935 by 2020.

The RSCCD boundaries encompass 193 square miles, or 24% of Orange County. The portion of Orange County that includes RSCCD is densely populated. More than 768,000 residents live within RSCCD boundaries in the communities of Anaheim Hills, Garden Grove, Irvine, Orange, Santa Ana, Tustin, and Villa Park. The population of residents within the district boundaries is xxx, comprising xxx adults and xxx residents 19 and younger. The projection is for a xxx% increase in the total population within the district between 2010 and 2030. *<insert numbers from data in Chapter 2>* Chapter 2 of this document includes current demographics of the local population and economy and forecasts local population and economic changes.

RSCCD is surrounded by five other community college districts: Coast and South Orange County Community College Districts to the west, Mount San Jacinto Community College District to the south east, Chaffey Community College District to the north-east, and North Orange County Community College District to the north. Given the proximity of these six districts, there is considerable free flow because students have many community college options within a reasonable driving distance.

Today RSCCD is one of the largest in California and served xxx students or 24,630 full-time equivalent credit students and 12,898 non-credit students in 2011-2012. RSCCD includes two colleges, one of the state's oldest community colleges, Santa Ana College, and one of its newest, Santiago Canyon College.

### Santa Ana College

In 1915, Santa Ana College began as a department of Santa Ana High School with twenty-six students and eleven teaching faculty. It was the second junior college founded in Orange County and is the fourth oldest in all of California.

The earthquake of 1933 forced the college to relocate to a site on North Main Street, where it served 803 students with thirty-four teaching faculty. In 1947, it moved to a permanent campus at 17th and Bristol. The college continued to expand at this site and added sites across the community to increase student access. In 1971, Santa Ana College formally separated from the Santa Ana Unified School District. Shortly thereafter, the territory of the Orange Unified School District and portions of the Garden Grove Unified School District were added and the new organization was named the Rancho Santiago Community College District.

Santa Ana College has continued to grow; in fall 2011 the college served 29,246 students: 17,681 students taking credit courses and 11,565 students taking noncredit courses. The college offers a full complement of general education, transfer-level, pre-collegiate level, and career and technical education classes leading to an associate degree or vocational certificate. The college is ranked 25<sup>th</sup> among the top 100 colleges in the number of minority students earning associate degrees.

Santa Ana College's original 48-acre site was bounded by Seventeenth Street to the north, Bristol Street to the east, Campus Road to the south, and College Avenue to the west. Although the core remains within this original area, the campus expanded beyond the original boundaries to now include 65 acres that provides 378,928 assignable square footage of space.

The college's primary off-campus sites are:

- Centennial Educational Center: This facility on leased space offers almost 40,000 square feet of instructional space which houses a full spectrum of adult education and continuing education courses for adults learners. Enrollment averages 20,000 students per (?) with the largest portion enrolled in English as a Second Language courses. Other offerings include adult basic education, high school completion, parent education and vocational training.
- Digital Media Center: On approximately one acre, this facility of approximately 11,000 square feet (or 28,000 square feet?), houses classrooms, digital graphic

design laboratories, and one of the largest television and video production studios in the community college system. This center includes a business incubator program dedicated to the emerging digital media industry in Orange County.

- Orange County Sheriff's Regional Training Academy: This facility on 15 acres offers a little over 8,000 square feet of instructional space for lecture and applied practice courses for students enrolled in the Sheriff's Training Academy programs as well as continuing education for law enforcement professionals.
- Regional Fire Academy: This facility on almost four acres of leased space is used for fire technology lecture and applied practice courses for students enrolled in the Fire Academy programs as well as continuing education for fire professionals.

In addition to these locations, the college offers credit and non-credit courses at ninety other community locations including the Santa Ana Unified School District, hospitals, churches and community centers.

In addition to courses offered face-to-face in these locations, the college also offers online access. Approximately 100 degree programs offer 50 percent or more of the required courses through distance education.

### Santiago Canyon College

In 1980, RSCCD began the development of a center on 30 acres in East Orange and in fall 1985, the Orange Campus began its first semester, offering a variety of general education, transfer and vocational education courses to more than 2,500 students. By 1996, enrollment at the Orange Campus had more than doubled.

In July 1997, the Board voted unanimously to change the name of the Orange Campus to Santiago Canyon College. The college was independently accredited in 2000.

The college has continued to grow; in fall 2010 Santiago Canyon College served 15,248 students: 8,861 students taking credit courses and 6,387 students taking noncredit courses. *<note: replace with fall 2011 data when Chapter 2 is completed>* The college offers a full complement of general education, transfer-level, pre-collegiate level, and career and technical education classes leading to an associate degree or vocational certificate. The college directs the state's largest trades apprenticeship programs,

providing trained workers in fields such as barbering, carpentry, cosmetology, electricity, maintenance, and surveying.

Today, Santiago Canyon College has grown to 82 acres, occupying most of the land bounded by Jamboree Road, East Chapman Avenue, Newport Boulevard, and East Santiago Canyon Road. The building inventory has grown to over 356,000 square feet and continues to grow with the construction of the Humanities Building, Gymnasium, and Swimming Pool currently in progress.

The college's off-campus site is the Orange Education Center. This facility provides xx square feet of instruction instructional space which houses a full spectrum of adult education and continuing education courses for adult learners. The majority of the 14,504 students who took advantage of this facility in 2011-2010 were enrolled in either English as a Second Language (39%) or non-credit career technical education programs (29%). Other offerings include adult basic education, high school completion, and health/safety education.

In addition to courses offered face-to-face in these locations, the college also offers online access. *<Need a status statement on distance education for SCC>*.

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## National and State Context

The nation is in a slow recovery from the most serious economic downturn since the 1930's. The impact is evident in every facet of the economy, including high unemployment rate and a sluggish housing market. Economists predict that this slow recovery will continue over the next two years. (<http://uclaforecast.com>)

The pace of the economic recovery is illustrated in the slow rate of change in unemployment. The national unemployment rate was between 8.1% and 8.3% for all of 2012 until September when the rate dropped to 7.8%. (<http://www.bls.gov>) To provide a frame of reference, in December 2007, the national unemployment rate was 4.9% and at the beginning of 2011, the national unemployment rate was 9.4%. UCLA's Anderson School of Management forecast that there would not be an appreciable improvement in unemployment rates until 2014.

A similar pattern of slow but hopeful growth is seen in housing, evidenced by slight gains in new home construction and home prices along with record low mortgage interest rates.

Compared to the nation, the downturn in California hit earlier and has been more severe. In December 2006, the state's unemployment rate was 4.6% and in January 2010, the rate had almost tripled, reaching 13.2%. Despite the good news that the national unemployment rate was below 8% in September, the news for California was less optimistic. California's 10.2% unemployment rate was the third highest compared to other states. The forecast is for unemployment in the state to remain close to 10% through 2014, with a full recovery of nonfarm jobs lost during the Great Recession in the second quarter of 2016. If this forecast proves to be accurate, this is a staggering seven years after the official end of the recession in June 2009. (<http://www.ebudget.ca.gov>)

Given the length of this recession, economists predict that many workers have become discouraged and have dropped out of the labor force. Such a decline in the number of adults participating in the workforce would distort the actual rate of unemployment; the actual unemployment rate is probably higher than the official estimates. The unemployment rate is unevenly distributed, with younger, unskilled population experiencing much higher rates of unemployment than older, better skilled and higher educated cohorts. (<http://business.fullerton.edu>)

Other economic indices also are showing a slow but steady economic recovery for both

California and Orange County. Job growth is projected to trend upward throughout 2013 and the trend for high housing affordability that began in 2012 is projected to continue through 2013. (<http://capitalsolutionsfundgroup.com>)

Due to the concentration of financial services located in Orange County, the county entered the recession earlier than other California counties. Layoffs in the financial service spread to the related local construction and development industries and eventually throughout the Orange County economy. During this recession the county's unemployment rate was close to 10% in mid-2009, but since then has declined at a faster rate than the statewide unemployment rates. In September 2012, the unemployment rate for Orange County is 7.1%, which is significantly below the statewide unemployment rate of 10.2% for the same month.

Several occupational sectors in Orange County have shown positive job growth despite the recession: educational and health services; accounting, tax preparation and book-keeping services; management; scientific and technical consulting; legal services; computer systems design and related services and specific subsectors of leisure and hospitality. The sectors in Orange County most impacted by this recession are construction; information; financial activities; manufacturing; retail trade; professional and business services; and government.

Due to the declines in every sector of the economy, state lawmakers have been coping with deficits in the billions of dollars each year. All state-supported public services and programs have suffered significant reductions in state allocations, including California community colleges.

### Community Colleges

Based on the belief that college-educated residents are necessary in order to advance its economic, political, and social success, California developed an impressive system of 112 community colleges. The colleges are as diverse as the regions and populations they serve. The largest higher education system in the world, California community colleges served a total of 2,606,356 students by headcount and 1,235,078 full-time equivalent students taking credit courses and 78,787 full-time equivalent students taking non-credit courses in 2010 – 2011. To place these numbers in perspective, 24% of all community college students in the nation are enrolled at a California community college. ([www.ccleague.org](http://www.ccleague.org))

California community colleges are the most cost-effective system of education in the state when compared to K-12 public schools and the University of California and CSU. In 2010 – 2011, the state revenue allocated for a full-time community college student was \$5,400 compared to \$7,708 a year for a full-time student in the K-12 system and \$11,500 and \$21,500, respectively, at a California State University and a University of California.

Today California community colleges are called upon to continue providing quality higher education while also addressing these four powerful challenges.

- Fiscal Challenge  
The Great Recession has had a significant impact on California community colleges. State allocations to the colleges have declined by \$809 million, or 12 percent, since 2008-09. In the November 2012 elections, a proposition to increase temporarily increase taxes was approved and will result in an additional \$210 million in funding this year for the express purpose of restoring courses that were cut due to reduced allocations.
- Increase in Student Demand  
Two of the ripple effects of the Great Recession have increased student demand for access to community college programs and services. First, given California's high unemployment rate, students are seeking entry into community colleges for career training. Second, since the state's budget deficits have impacted all three of the state's public higher education systems, the state's universities have reduced the number of students in their freshman classes. As a result there is an increase in the numbers of students seeking entry into community colleges to fulfill transfer requirements.
- National Emphasis on Degree and Certificate Completion  
Once the industrialized country with the highest percentage of young adults with a college degree globally, America now ranks 10<sup>th</sup>. College-age students are now likely to be less well educated than their parents. President Barack Obama recently announced an American Graduation Initiative that challenges the nation to produce an additional five million degree and certificate holders by 2020. Extrapolating that challenge to community colleges, each California community college needs to triple the number of degrees and certificates awarded by 2020. (<http://www.cccvision2020.org>)

Despite ready access to community colleges, California ranks lower than many other states on the higher education achievements of its residents. About 54 percent of community college students earn a certificate, a degree or transfer to a four-year institution. That number drops further for students who are African-American (42 percent) or Latino (43 percent).

Approximately 38% of the state's working-age adults (25 to 64 years old) hold at least a two-year degree. If this trend continues at a pace similar to recent years, 44% of the state's working-age adults will have achieved that educational level by 2025. However, in order to fulfill the workforce needs projected for 2025, 60% of the state's working-age adults will need at least a two-year degree. (<http://www.luminafoundation.org>)

- California Achievement Gap

A recent study by the Institute for Higher Education Leadership and Policy at California State University in Sacramento identified ethnic differences in student achievement. Among the black and Latino students who attend community colleges, proportionately fewer black and Latino students (26% and 22% respectively) completed a degree or certificate within six years compared to white and Asian Pacific Islanders (37% and 35% respectively). Proportionately twice as many white students transfer to a four-year university than Latino students. ([http://www.csus.edu/ihelp/PDFs/R\\_Div\\_We\\_Fail\\_1010.pdf](http://www.csus.edu/ihelp/PDFs/R_Div_We_Fail_1010.pdf))

How can California community colleges continue to provide quality education given the state's inability to fund the same level of education? Although access to higher education is the solution to some of these challenges, California community colleges have reduced the available programs and services for students in response to decreased state allocations. Between 2008-2009 and 2011-2012, the number of course sections decreased 24% and non-credit course sections decreased 38% statewide. As a result, enrollment decreased by more than 485,000 students over these years. (<http://californiacommunitycolleges.cccco.edu>)

Three statewide solutions to these challenges developed in 2012 are:

- To direct the energies of the California community college system toward solutions to these issues, the Community College League of California asked 33 college leaders to develop system-wide recommendations based on an analysis of 24 influential reports on student success. These reports explored various

influences on student success: the impact of fiscal and academic policies, best practices, and state and local accountability. Based on their analysis, the Commission prepared the *Report on the Commission on the Future* that offers 17 recommendations of strategies to address the challenges facing California's community colleges. (<http://www.cccvision2020.org>)

- A Student Success Task Force of statewide leaders studied best practices and proposed initiatives that promise to improve students' successful completion of degrees and certificates. Several of these initiatives are being implemented. Through legislation (SB1456), colleges would be required to: (i) provide intensive orientation to help new students establish their educational goals; (ii) administer a common assessment to students upon entry into a community college; (iii) monitor completion of academic goals in order for students to qualify for a Board of Governors' fee waiver and (iv) post a student success "scorecard" with statistics such as certification, degree and transfer rates broken down by gender and ethnicity. In addition to this legislation, the Board of Governors approved a change in priority registration to be implemented in fall 2014: new students who have completed college orientation, assessment and developed education plans as well as continuing students in good academic standing who have not exceeded 100 units (not including units in basic English, math or English as a Second Language) will have priority over students who do not meet these criteria.
- An important strategy to improve California's degree completion rates has been codified in the Student Transfer Achievement Reform Act (SB 1440). Research shows that approximately 50,000 California community college students annually transfer to a state university with an average of 80 semester units when only 60 are needed. Under the provision of this recent legislation, eligible students will receive an associate degree for transfer in their area of study with 60 units. They will be guaranteed admission into a CSU campus as a junior and only need to complete 60 additional units in order to graduate with a bachelor's degree.

In addition to coping with these changes, at local levels many community colleges are re-examining their missions to align their programs and services with today's fiscal realities and to eliminate programs and services born in the era when community colleges strove to be all things to all people.

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## **Purpose of the RSCCD Comprehensive Master Plan**

The *Rancho Santiago Community College District 2013 Comprehensive Master Plan* is a long-term plan that describes the district's projections and goals for the coming decade. This plan includes the identification of current and anticipated challenges, RSCCD Goals; summaries of the colleges' educational and facilities master plans; the technology plan for centralized technology needs; and plans for [off-site college and district facilities](#). Refer to the *Rancho Santiago Community College District Planning Design Manual 2012* for greater detail on district's planning processes.

The *RSCCD 2013 Comprehensive Master Plan* has been collaboratively developed to fulfill these purposes:

- Analyze selected current and projected district-wide demographic data to identify implications for planning;
- Develop RSCCD Goals that will serve as the basis for the RSCCD Strategic Plan and the colleges' strategic plans;
- Provide a framework for the development of the facilities portion of this master plan;
- Inform the public of RSCCD intentions; and
- Support accreditation and demonstrating compliance with accreditation standards.