EXTERNAL EVALUATION REPORT

Cerro Coso Community College
3000 College Heights Blvd.
Ridgecrest, CA 93555

This report represents the findings of the evaluation team that visited Cerro Coso College on October 1-4, 2018

Monte E. Perez, Ph.D.
Team Chair

Cerro Coso College
Comprehensive Evaluation Visit
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# List of Team Members

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Chair</strong></th>
<th><strong>Team Assistant</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Dr. Monte Perez  
President  
LA Mission College | Dr. Nicole Albo-Lopez  
Vice President Academic Affairs  
LA Mission College |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Academic Representatives</strong></th>
<th><strong>Administrative Representatives</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Dr. Joseph Carrithers  
Professor of English and Faculty Advisor  
Fullerton College | Ms. Paula Demanett  
Librarian  
Fresno City College |
| Ms. Diane Putnam  
Instructor, English  
Cabrillo College | Dr. Christopher McDonald  
Vice President for Instruction  
Irvine Valley College |
| Dr. Kathryn Weiss  
Dean, Arts and Humanities  
San Bernadino Valley College | |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Attending ACCJC Vice President</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Steven Reynolds</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Summary of Peer Review Report**

INSTITUTION: Cerro Coso College

DATES OF VISIT: September 30 - October 4, 2018

TEAM CHAIR: Monte Perez, Ph.D.

The purpose of the External Evaluation Report for Cerro Coso College is to provide the results of the ACCJC Team that reviewed the ISER and conducted the team visit September 30 to October 4, 2018. The review of the ISER and the College’s alignment with accreditation standards were completed on or shortly after September 21, 2018. The ISER reviews were submitted to the Team Chair and Team Assistant and organized for the Team during the Cerro Coso team visit, October 1, 2018.

The ISER reviews by the team members identified the need for further evidence, questions for the College to respond, and individuals that should be interviewed during the team visit. The visit to the College was well organized by the ALO and the ability to interview, obtain further evidence, and coordinate calendars was effective.

The team found Cerro Coso to be a unique and outstanding institution. By ensuring inclusiveness on the College campus and the five distant sites through governance processes and technological systems, Cerro Coso was determined to have sustained institutional effectiveness. The team determined that five commendations and one recommendation for institutional improvement was appropriate at the conclusion of the visit, October 4, 2018.
Introduction

Cerro Coso College is located in Ridgecrest, California next to the Mojave Desert. Edwards Air Force base is located in Ridgecrest with 300 military personnel and 3,000 civilian contract workers. The base is primarily used for weapons testing and technology research.

Cerro Coso is part of the three multi-college district of Kern County. It serves 18,000 square miles covering Mammoth Lakes, Bishop, Lake Isabella, and Tehachapi. The annual FTES is 3,000 and provides Associate of Arts Degrees, Certificates, and noncredit programs.

The climates at the main campus and satellite sites are very positive. Faculty, staff and students are included in the governance of the college as a whole through online and interactive Television technology.

Teaching and learning are enhanced by the quality of the instructors and the ever-present technology that affords instructional and student support services. The instructional programs and services are comprehensive and targeted to the needs of students.
Major Findings, Commendations, and Recommendations of the

2018 External Peer Review Team

Team Commendations

Commendation 1
The team commends the college for its thoughtful scheduling of classes at the Bishop, Lake Isabella, Tehachapi, and Mammoth Lakes sites, thereby allowing students to complete the requirements for a degree or certificate within a two-year period. (II.A.6)

Commendation 2
The team commends the college on its usage of technology to connect students and employees with each other at all campuses to maximize access to courses, programs, services, and participatory governance. (II.A.7, II.B.1, II.C.3, III.C.1)

Commendation 3
The team commends the college on the level of student engagement and leadership. It is evident that student voices are actively solicited and have an impact on the institution’s continual process for improvement of services. (IV.A.1)

Commendation 4
The team commends the college president on empowering a leadership team at all campus centers that works cooperatively and consistently to organize the college and engage with the community in keeping with its unique geography and diversity in support of the college mission. (IV.B.2, IV.B.6)

District Commendation 1
The teams commend the District for establishing and maintaining a culture of fiscal stability as evidenced by unmodified audit reports, funds earmarked toward known liabilities, substantial reserves, clearly defined plans to address potential future uncertainties, and a high degree of financial transparency. With the establishment of the District-wide Budget Committee, the District has demonstrated its commitment to collaborative decision-making and continuous improvement. (III.D.1, III.D.9)

Recommendation to Improve Quality

Recommendation 1
In order to improve institutional effectiveness, the college should develop evaluation criteria for resource allocation decisions. (I.B.9, III.D.2, III.D.3)
Eligibility Requirements

1. Authority
The college is part of a multi-college district authorized to operate as a postsecondary degree-granting educational institution by the State of California, the Board of Governors of the California Community College System, and the Governing Board of Kern Community College District. The college has maintained continuous accreditation by ACCJC since its inception in 1973.

Conclusion: The college meets ER1.

2. Operational Status
The college’s Office of Institutional Research provides extensive data which is used for planning purposes. Program reviews for degree-granting programs provide further documentation of students’ active enrollment and completion rates in certificates and programs.

Conclusion: The college meets ER2.

3. Degrees
A substantial portion of the educational offerings are programs that lead to degrees, many of which are two years in length. A significant proportion of the students are enrolled in such programs.

Conclusion: The college meets ER3.

4. Chief Executive Officer
The college’s CEO has been appointed by the Board, as such, has the authority to administer Board policies, and her full-time responsibility is to the institution. This CEO does not serve as the chair of the Governing Board.

Conclusion: The college meets ER4.

5. Financial Accountability
It is confirmed that the college engages a qualified external auditor to conduct audits of all financial records. All audits are certified and all explanations of findings are documented appropriately. Resulting audit reports are made available.

Conclusion: The college meets ER5.
Checklist for Compliance with
Commission Policies and Federal Regulations

The evaluation items detailed in this Checklist are those which fall specifically under federal regulations and related Commission policies, beyond what is articulated in the Accreditation Standards; there may be other evaluation items under ACCJC standards address the same or similar subject matter. Evaluation teams will evaluate the institution’s compliance with standards as well as the specific Checklist elements from federal regulations and related Commission policies noted here.

General Instructions: The form should contain narrative as well as the “check-off.”

a) The team should place a check mark next to each evaluation item when it has been evaluated.
b) For each subject category (e.g., “Public Notification of an Evaluation Visit and Third Party Comment”), the team should also complete the conclusion check-off.
c) The narrative will cite to the evidence reviewed and team findings related to each of the evaluation items. If some content is discussed in detail elsewhere in the team report, the page(s) of the team report can be cited instead of repeating that portion of the narrative.
d) Any areas of deficiency from the Checklist leading to noncompliance, or areas needing improvement, should be included in the evaluation conclusions section of the team report along with any recommendations.

This Checklist will become part of the evaluation team report. Institutions may also use this form as a guide for preparing documentation for team review. It is found as an appendix in the team and institutional self-evaluation manuals.

Public Notification of an Evaluation Team Visit and Third Party Comment

Evaluation Items:

| X | The institution has made an appropriate and timely effort to solicit third party comment in advance of a comprehensive evaluation visit. |
| X | The institution cooperates with the evaluation team in any necessary follow-up related to the third party comment. |
| X | The institution demonstrates compliance with the Commission Policy on Rights and Responsibilities of the Commission and Member Institutions as to third party comment. |

[Regulation citation: 602.23(b).]

Conclusion Check-Off (mark one):

| X | The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the Commission’s requirements. |
| | The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the Commission’s requirements, but that follow-up is recommended. |
The team has reviewed the elements of this component and found the institution does not meet the Commission’s requirements.

**Narrative:** Cerro Coso College adequately posted information and a link to the ACCJC third-party comments form on its website in advance of the visit and shared visit information publically. The college meets the federal regulations and ACCJC commission policy.

**Standards and Performance with Respect to Student Achievement**

**Evaluation Items:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>The institution has defined elements of student achievement performance across the institution, and has identified the expected measure of performance within each defined element. Course completion is included as one of these elements of student achievement. Other elements of student achievement performance for measurement have been determined as appropriate to the institution’s mission.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td>The institution has defined elements of student achievement performance within each instructional program, and has identified the expected measure of performance within each defined element. The defined elements include, but are not limited to, job placement rates for program completers, and for programs in fields where licensure is required, the licensure examination passage rates for program completers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td>The institution-set standards for programs and across the institution are relevant to guide self-evaluation and institutional improvement; the defined elements and expected performance levels are appropriate within higher education; the results are reported regularly across the campus; and the definition of elements and results are used in program-level and institution-wide planning to evaluate how well the institution fulfills its mission, to determine needed changes, to allocating resources, and to make improvements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td>The institution analyzes its performance as to the institution-set standards and as to student achievement, and takes appropriate measures in areas where its performance is not at the expected level.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[Regulation citations: 602.16(a) (1) (i); 602.17(f); 602.19 (a-e).]

**Conclusion Check-Off (mark one):**

| X | The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the Commission’s requirements. |

**Narrative:** The college sets and reviews institution-set standards. The standards are shared and
discussed across the college via shared governance committee meetings and in the program review process. Cerro Coso College meets the federal regulations and ACCJC commission policy.

**Credits, Program Length, and Tuition**

**Evaluation Items:**

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td>Credit hour assignments and degree program lengths are within the range of good practice in higher education (in policy and procedure).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td>The assignment of credit hours and degree program lengths is verified by the institution, and is reliable and accurate across classroom based courses, laboratory classes, distance education classes, and for courses that involve clinical practice (if applicable to the institution).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td>Tuition is consistent across degree programs (or there is a rational basis for any program-specific tuition).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td>Any clock hour conversions to credit hours adhere to the Department of Education’s conversion formula, both in policy and procedure, and in practice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td>The institution demonstrates compliance with the Commission Policy on Institutional Degrees and Credits.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[Regulation citations: 600.2; 602.16(a) (1) (viii); 602.24(e), (f); 668.2; 668.9.]

**Conclusion Check-Off (mark one):**

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td>The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the Commission’s requirements.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the Commission’s requirements, but that follow-up is recommended.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The team has reviewed the elements of this component and found the institution does not meet the Commission’s requirements.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Narrative:** Cerro Coso College awards academic credit based on accepted practices for degree-granting institutions. The college has written policies and procedures for determining a credit hour as outlined by USED. The college meets the federal regulations and ACCJC commission policy.

**Transfer Policies**

**Evaluation Items:**

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td>Transfer policies are appropriately disclosed to students and to the public.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td>Policies contain information about the criteria the institution uses to accept credits for transfer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td>The institution complies with the Commission Policy on Transfer of Credit.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[Regulation citations: 602.16(a) (1) (viii); 602.17(a) (3); 602.24(e); 668.43(a) (ii).]
Conclusion Check-Off (mark one):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the Commission’s requirements.</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The team has reviewed the elements of this component and found the institution does not meet the Commission’s requirements.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Narrative:** Cerro Coso College policies and information related to transfer are readily available on the college website and catalog. The college meets the federal regulations and ACCJC commission policy.

**Distance Education and Correspondence Education**

**Evaluation Items:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>The institution has policies and procedures for defining and classifying a course as offered by distance education or correspondence education, in alignment with USDE definitions.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td>There is an accurate and consistent application of the policies and procedures for determining if a course is offered by distance education (with regular and substantive interaction with the instructor, initiated by the instructor, and online activities are included as part of a student’s grade) or correspondence education (online activities are primarily “paperwork related,” including reading posted materials, posting homework and completing examinations, and interaction with the instructor is initiated by the student as needed).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td>The institution has appropriate means and consistently applies those means for verifying the identity of a student who participates in a distance education or correspondence education course or program, and for ensuring that student information is protected.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td>The technology infrastructure is sufficient to maintain and sustain the distance education and correspondence education offerings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td>The institution demonstrates compliance with the Commission Policy on Distance Education and Correspondence Education.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[Regulation citations: 602.16(a) (1) (IV), (VI); 602.17(g); 668.38.]

Conclusion Check-Off (mark one):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the Commission’s requirements.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td>The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the Commission’s requirements, but that follow-up is recommended.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The team has reviewed the elements of this component and found the Institution does not meet the Commission’s requirements.

**Narrative:** Cerro Coso College demonstrated that it has policies and procedures for distance education. The college course outlines of record are the same for distance education and in-person courses. The college meets the federal regulations and ACCJC commission policy.

**Student Complaints**

**Evaluation Items:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>X</th>
<th>The institution has clear policies and procedures for handling student complaints, and the current policies and procedures are accessible to students in the college catalog and online.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td>The student complaint files for the previous six years (since the last comprehensive evaluation) are available; the files demonstrate accurate implementation of the complaint policies and procedures.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td>The team analysis of the student complaint files identifies any issues that may be indicative of the institution’s noncompliance with any Accreditation Standards.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td>The institution posts on its website the names of associations, agencies and governmental bodies that accredit, approve, or license the institution and any of its programs, and provides contact information for filing complaints with such entities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td>The institution demonstrates compliance with the Commission Policy on Representation Of Accredited Status and the Policy on Student and Public Complaints Against Institutions.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[Regulation citations: 602.16(a) (1) (ix); 668.43.]

**Conclusion Check-Off (mark one):**

| X | The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the Commission’s requirements. |
| X | The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the Commission’s requirements, but that follow-up is recommended. |
| X | The team has reviewed the elements of this component and found the institution does not meet the Commission’s requirements. |

**Narrative:** Cerro Coso College has clear processes to address student complaints. The processes are posted online and in the college catalog. Evidence provided demonstrated that the college meets the federal regulations and ACCJC commission policy.
Institutional Disclosure and Advertising and Recruitment Materials

Evaluation Items:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>The institution provides accurate, timely (current), and appropriately detailed information to students and the public about its programs, locations, and policies.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The institution complies with the Commission Policy on Institutional Advertising, Student Recruitment, and Representation of Accredited Status.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The institution provides required information concerning its accredited status as described above in the section on Student Complaints.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[Regulation citations: 602.16(a) (1)(vii); 668.6.]

Conclusion Check-Off (mark one):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the Commission’s requirements.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the Commission’s requirements, but that follow-up is recommended.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The team has reviewed the elements of this component and found the institution does not meet the Commission’s requirements.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Narrative: Cerro Coso College appropriately provides accurate, timely and appropriate information to constituents related to its program, locations, and policies. The college meets the federal regulations and ACCJC commission policy.

Title IV Compliance

Evaluation Items:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>The institution has presented evidence on the required components of the Title IV Program, including findings from any audits and program or other review activities by the USDE.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The institution has addressed any issues raised by the USDE as to financial responsibility requirements, program record-keeping, etc. If issues were not timely addressed, the institution demonstrates it has the fiscal and administrative capacity to timely address issues in the future and to retain compliance with Title IV program requirements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The institution’s student loan default rates are within the acceptable range defined by the USDE. Remedial efforts have been undertaken when default rates near or meet a level outside the acceptable range.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Contractual relationships of the institution to offer or receive educational, library, and support services meet the Accreditation Standards and have been approved by the Commission through substantive change if required.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The institution demonstrates compliance with the Commission Policy on Contractual Relationships with Non-Regionally Accredited Organizations and the Policy on Institutional Compliance with Title IV.

[Regulation citations: 602.16(a) (1) (v); 602.16(a) (1) (x); 602.19(b); 668.5; 668.15; 668.16; 668.71 et seq.]

**Conclusion Check-Off:**

- The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the Commission’s requirements.

- The team has reviewed the elements of this component and has found the institution to meet the Commission’s requirements, but that follow-up is recommended.

- The team has reviewed the elements of this component and found the institution does not meet the Commission’s requirements.

**Narrative:** Cerro Coso College does not offer student loans, therefore the college meets the federal regulations and ACCJC commission policy.
Evaluation of College Quality Using Each Accreditation Standard

Standard I: Mission, Academic Quality and Institutional Effectiveness

IA. Mission

General Observations:
The college recently revised its mission statement, and the District’s Board of Trustees approved the updated version in April 2018. Since its last accreditation visit, the college has adopted a three-year cycle for the review and possible revision of the mission, and the new version of the mission has been widely publicized both on and off campus. The college has created processes for using a wide range of data to examine how effectively it achieves its mission, and through its regular decision-making and planning processes, it evaluates how well its programs and services align with the mission.

Findings and Evidence:
The college’s mission addresses each of the Commission’s expectations. The broad educational purpose is defined in the mission statement as improving the life of every student the college serves, and its intended student population as the residents of the rural communities and unincorporated areas of the Eastern Sierra. The mission lists transfer preparation, workforce education, remedial education, and other learning opportunities as the types of degrees and other credentials that it offers, and it notes the college’s use of both traditional and distance delivery. Through its mission statement, the college affirms its commitment to student learning and student achievement by the inclusion of a promise of clarity of educational pathways, comprehensive and equitable student services, and a commitment to equity as well as the development of an ethical and effective citizenry. (I.A.1)

The college collects and analyzes a wide range of data for use in determining how effectively it is accomplishing its mission. The data reported in the Institutional Self Evaluation Report link to different aspects of the mission, vision, and values statements and focus primarily upon student learning and achievement, particularly success and retention rates, degrees and certificates awarded, and levels of student participation in programs and services. Among the regular reports that the college uses in assessing its success at accomplishing its mission are the Student Success Scorecard developed by the California Community College Chancellor’s Office and program review data supplied by the district and campus institutional research offices. The college also publishes annual reports on how well it is achieving the strategic goals that were developed concurrently with the mission statement. Much of the data examined by the college focuses more directly on the college’s progress in meeting its strategic goals, which are reviewed and updated as part of the review of the mission that occurs every three years. Annual results on the achievement of the institution set standards are posted with the mission and guiding principles on the college’s website. The college’s results on the annual Community College Survey of Student Engagement reveal high levels of satisfaction with the quality of the programs and services.
provided by the college. The college also has access to in-depth qualitative information from the community it serves through testimonials from the many partnerships with community organizations and its alumni who remain in the area. (I.A.2)

The college uses various means to ensure that its programs and services align with its mission. For example, the Annual Planning Reports require departments and programs to describe how they contribute to the achievement of the mission. The Integrated Planning Cycle calls for discussions of progress on the strategic goals in the division and section plans, including those for each location at which the college offers classes. The most recent version of the strategic goals was adopted at the same time as the mission, vision, and values. Due to the short period of time that has elapsed since the adoption of the new mission (April 2018), most evidence provided in the ISER uses the previous version of the mission (adopted in 2013). The college conducts planning surveys every two years to determine, among other items, the level of employee familiarity with the mission and how well it guides decision making, planning, and resource allocation. The most recent College Report Card reflecting the results of the planning survey is from 2016, so the results could be slightly different now that revised version has been adopted, but employees report high levels of knowledge about the mission and its use in decision making and other campus processes. (I.A.3)

The mission statement is widely publicized and has been adopted by the governing board. The college has also established a regular timeline for the review of the mission and recently updated and clarified the mission and other statements about its overall purpose. The college’s mission, vision, and values appear on its website as “Our Mission and Guiding Principles.” This page also includes the college’s strategic goals and institution-set standards. The college publishes its mission, guiding principles, and strategic goals in its annual College Catalog, the Strategic Plan, and its annual reports, among other documents. The current mission was adopted by the Kern Community College District Board of Trustees at its April 2018 meeting. The process for evaluating and potentially revising the mission every three years appears in the Participatory Governance Model Handbook, which also details the kinds of circumstances that could lead to a review at other times. (I.A.4)

Conclusions:
The college meets the Standard.

IB. Assuring Academic Quality and Institutional Effectiveness

General Observations:
Cerro Coso Community College’s mission statement explains the commitment to ‘improve the life of every student it serves through transfer preparation, workforce education, remedial instruction, and learning opportunities.’ The institution has sustained, substantive and collegial dialog about student outcomes, student equity, academic quality, institutional effectiveness, and continuous improvement
of student learning and achievement. This is achieved by substantial assessment of student learning outcomes and achievement data through campus-wide committees in SSSP, Institutional Effectiveness, Outcomes, and Program Review Committees, alignment of these committees may advance institutional effectiveness.

Findings and Evidence:
Cerro Coso College has a sustained, substantive, and collegial dialog about student outcomes, student equity, academic quality, institutional effectiveness, and continuous improvement of student learning and achievement, as demonstrated in various committees through minutes and observation in person. The committees observed include Outcomes Assessment, SSSP, Program Review, and Institutional Effectiveness. Evidence provided in the ISER revealed many of the committees recently converted to a participatory governance structure to include faculty, staff, students, and administrators. Each committee is responsible for a specific task on improving processes at the institution as described in the mission statement related to student outcomes, student equity, academic quality, institutional effectiveness, and continuous improvement. Some key advancements include incorporation of RP’s Groups Six Student Success Factors, which was presented at flex day. The success factors have been adopted by instructional departments. The college has a wide array of student learning and achievement data such as student engagement surveys, outcomes, and achievement metrics as presented in college scorecards, reports, committee minutes and the college website. (I.B.1)

Cerro Coso College defines and assess learning outcomes at a minimum every five years with many being assessed more often. In the review of the outcomes and program review page, the college evaluates all instructional, student support, and learning support services. Programs have both course and program learning outcomes. The analysis of outcomes is incorporated into program review, where a chart with all due dates of assessment (SLOs, PLOs, and AUOs) is completed. A review of the Outcomes Assessment page verified a systematic and regular assessment cycle for instructional, student support, and learning support services. Further, the institution uses assessment to improve instruction and services at the college as demonstrated in program review documents. At the culmination of the assessment cycle, if a gap exists, the department or unit develops an action plan for improvement. Improvement plans are evaluated during the subsequent cycle. The cycle is clear, defined, and posted on the college outcomes page. Further improvement of outcomes is described in the Institutional-Self Evaluation Report (ISER) sections II.A.3 for instructional, II.B.3 for learning support services, and II.C.2 for student services. To be proactive, the institution has purchased an electronic infrastructure to help with the mapping of course SLOs to ILOs as discussed in meeting minutes. (I.B.2)

Cerro Coso College has established institution-set standards on student achievement (successful course completion, degrees, certificates, transfer, basic skills course success rate, online course success rate, and CTE pass and job placement rates). Standards are posted on the college
website. Programs evaluate themselves against the set standards during the program review process as was verified in a review of those documents. It is evident the institution has a history of using standards to continually improve by reviewing past and future plans. During the most recent update (2018), the institution set aspirational targets as documented in College Council meeting minutes. The targets are both aspirational and attainable. However, additional documentation on the annual review of these student achievement standards is imperative to increase institutional effectiveness. The USDE graduation rate for Cerro Coso is 23%. Additionally, the college has seen dramatic increases in its course success rate from 71.0% in 2015 to 74.2% in 2017. Further, Degrees have increased from 343 to 381 in that same timeframe. One area of focus the institution should consider, is the basic skill success rate, which has remained relatively flat or decreased over that same time-span. (I.B.3)

The college has been proactive in establishing its own Institutional Research Office. In 2016, the institution requested an Institutional Effectiveness Partnership Initiative Partnership Team based on the increase in accountability from external agencies. The results of this partnership led to the hiring of a new classified manager to lead the Institutional Research office. The position is new to the institution and will be essential in furthering the criteria and processes for appropriate alignment to the campus standards and mission. The college has a history with institution-set standards. Documentation on the website demonstrates the institution allocates resources to further support the development of the Institutional Research Office. (I.B.3)

Cerro Coso College uses assessment data to support student learning and achievement as demonstrated in various program review documents. The institution discussed achievement across multiple committees as identified in I.B.1. A review of unit plans, revealed the wealth and amount of student learning and achievement data built into unit planning at the college. As detailed in the ISER section I.B.9, Cerro Coso requires assessment at the unit, section, and department level, and includes an action plan and measurement of success. The institution has documentation on its institutional planning process website and the information is also detailed and explained in its participatory governance handbook under the section ‘Institutional Planning’. In this section, Cerro Coso College explains the planning from the education master plan, three year systemic year, and triggered review. Some examples of data driving college planning was the development of the Umoja program based on equity data and the hiring of an Institutional Researcher to meet data needs of the institution. (I.B.4)

The college has a robust program review template and evaluation available on their program review page. The institution assesses the accomplishment of its mission through program review and evaluation of goals and objectives, student learning outcomes, and achievement. For example, the Child Development program review has multiple data reported including but not limited to success rate, retention rate, awards, enrollment, course cycles, and labor market analysis. The data is substantial and directly linked to the comprehensive program review.
Additionally, the information is posted on the school’s website under program review page in long term planning. Further, programs are required to address how the program is aligned with the mission within the template. To evaluate the effectiveness of the integration of data into planning, the college distributes a bi-annual survey to assess its effectiveness. (I.B.5)

Cerro Coso College disaggregates and analyzes achievement data by subpopulation as shown in various program review data sets provided by Kern Community College District (KCCD). For example, in the program review workspace, units are asked to address gaps in relation to age, ethnicity, distance education, and gender, in comparison to college-wide data. Through the integrated planning process, unit plans identify gaps based on identified student populations. In the annual unit plan, there is an ability to request additional resources for human, fiscal, and other resources in review of the workspace. An example of aligning resources through this procedure is the development of the Umoja program in addressing equity gaps. (I.B.6)

Further, the institution has identified an area of concern in their ability to disaggregate by learning outcomes. To address the concern, the college has identified a solution and plans to have the ability to analyze learning outcomes for each subpopulation. Given the institution’s dialog with outcomes assessment in meeting minutes, the added infrastructure to disaggregate learning outcomes will assist in additional dialog around student populations. To further institutional effectiveness, the college needs to continue the implementation of the new reporting software eLumen. (I.B.6)

Cerro Coso College has a robust evaluation for policies and practices across all areas of the institution as demonstrated in meeting minutes. As described and verified in section I.B.1 of the ISER, the college engages in robust collegial dialog about student outcomes, student equity, academic quality, institutional effectiveness, and continuous improvement verified by attendance at meetings on-campus and review of evidence. Through observation and review of documents, the Institutional Effectiveness, Program Review, and Outcomes Committees discuss and make recommendations on planning, program review, and outcomes. Each member on the committees evaluates the effectiveness of standards based on a survey that is reported on a college report card. To solidify the analysis, an additional survey is sent out every other year to the campus for feedback on the knowledge of the planning process at Cerro Coso College. With this thorough evaluation, there has been various improvements regarding policies and practices over the last few years. One of the major improvements was the reconfiguration of the SSSP committee, among others, into a participatory governance group to create a more inclusive committee for key decisions on campus. (I.B.7)

The college broadly communicates the results of its assessment and evaluation by various means including the webpage and campus email. Student learning and achievement is displayed on the institution’s website on the college planning, program review, and outcomes assessment pages.
Further, to reach all employees, the college uses campus-wide email to show results on activities surrounding strategic planning results. Through broad-based committee input, Cerro Coso College has the ability to identify improvements and set priorities, as described in I.B.7. Additionally, the college has recently established an Office of Institutional Research, which has allowed for data facilitating and retreats to help identify strengths and weaknesses as verified through conversations on campus. In order to increase institutional effectiveness, the institution should continue in its development of such activities and further develop the data story of its students by using shared metrics. This may help establish the research priorities of the newly established research office and increase institutional effectiveness. Finally, the college produces a community report, which communicates key accomplishments to external agencies about important milestones for the institution in fulfilling its mission. (I.B.8)

Cerro Coso College engages in continuous and broad based planning as described in college documentation. The planning at the institution is robust and substantial after the review of various meeting minutes and supporting handbooks. After reviewing the planning documents, the institution develops and produces an Education Master Plan every 5 years. The strategic plan and mission statement are revised every 3 years. To support and align with the mission, each program has a comprehensive evaluation every 5 years as shown in the unit plans. Additionally, each unit plan has an annual update to request additional resources. After completion of the annual unit plans, sections or divisions find commonalities to develop a plan to address their areas, which is described in their planning documents and verified with on-campus meetings. The four distinct areas for annual division plans are administration services, instruction, student services, and president’s office. Institutional planning addresses both short-term and long-term needs for programs and services by aligning unit plans to the Education Master Plan as described in planning documentation. (I.B.9)

However, there is a deficiency in the evaluation criteria in resource allocation. In discussion with the Budget Development Committee, they recognized the need to build an evaluation criteria for the resource allocation decisions that is transparent and communicated campus wide. The development and implementation of an evaluation criteria will assure an improvement in institutional effectiveness. (I.B.9)

Conclusions:
The college meets the Standard.

Recommendation to Improve Quality:
In order to improve institutional effectiveness, the college should develop evaluation criteria for resource allocation decisions. (I.B.9, III.D.2, III.D.3)
IC. Institutional Integrity

General Observations:
The college has policies and practices in place that align with the standard. It utilizes its website as a primary source of communication. Most areas of this website are current and clearly presented. It reports information regarding its purpose, its programs, and student learning. The college maintains relationships with a variety of accrediting entities and communicates its accredited status with internal and external stakeholders.

Findings and Evidence:
The college publishes information on its website and its print materials. The mission is found on the “About Cerro Coso” page and is regularly reviewed by constituent groups. It was recently updated and has since been updated on the website to accurately provide information. There are processes in place to review the accuracy and completeness of information. These processes include ongoing website review by units, annual catalog review coordinated by the Vice President of Instruction (VPI) and Vice President of Student Services (VPSS), and supported by department chairs, district committee review (biannually) of policy and cyclical program review processes which provide review of student learning data. The catalog provides program outcomes for each program. Course level student learning outcomes are found on syllabi. The college’s accredited status is posted on the website, on the accreditation page, and includes all related documents, as well as contact information for the commission for complaints and third-party comments. Community forum comments indicate that the community is well informed regarding the college’s mission and programs, and that they have developed strong support from the community regarding the published mission of the institution. (I.C.1)

A review of the college catalog shows that all commission requirements are addressed. The catalog is available online, both as an interactive website and a pdf document for on demand printing. Additionally, the print version is available in many offices on campuses. The catalog is annually reviewed for accuracy, currency, and completeness, coordinated by the VPI and the VPSS. It is further reviewed and approved by the Board of Trustees annually, each spring. The catalog provides information about programs, student learning outcomes, locations of programs and courses and policies. The catalog specifies expectations for interaction (active participation) for DE courses. Additionally, information is available on the CCOOnline webpage that provides information about faculty availability online to the students. Addendum to the catalog are published on the website as necessary to ensure currency of information. Board Policy 4B3 provides expectations regarding faculty interaction in online courses. (I.C.2)

The college website provides data on student learning and achievement, specifically in, program reviews, annual plans, reports to the community, and the outcomes assessment page. The ISER provided detailed data regarding student learning and progress toward institution-set standards.
Departmental program reviews provide discussion of assessment results and analysis at the department level, which are used to develop unit, division and college plans. Institution-set standards are found on the college website, on the mission and values page. Additionally, aspirational goals and progress towards achievement are presented. (I.C.3)

All degrees and certificates are described in terms of purpose (“what can I do with this?”), content, program requirements, outcomes, and offering patterns within the online college catalog. Additionally, total costs are included for both in-state and out-of-state students – with links to financial aid information where available. Course student learning outcomes are expected on all syllabi as evidenced in the faculty contract and handbook for faculty. These are collected by the VPI and reviewed during evaluation cycles. Students are surveyed regarding receipt of a syllabus that identifies student learning outcomes during the evaluation cycle. Student learning outcomes are included in syllabi and processes are in place to ensure students receive syllabi in every course. (I.C.4)

District policies are conducted on a biannual review cycle (odd/even numbers) via a district committee which includes representation from the college. Interviews with Academic Senate, Classified Senate and Student Senate representatives, as well as college minutes show that when deemed appropriate, policy changes are brought to campus constituency groups for further discussion. The campus utilizes technology to ensure that faculty and staff at its centers also have opportunities to participate in these discussions. Evidence of this participation was observed on multiple occasions during the team visit. Personnel participate in professional development activity, including conferences to maintain currency and updated information such as legislative and legal changes that impact policy and procedure. The catalog is reviewed annually, and the college reports that webpages are reviewed on a semester-by-semester basis at the department and unit level. (I.C.5)

The college catalog provides detailed information regarding programs. There is a link on the page, “How can I afford it?” which includes cost per unit for both California and out of state fees, numbers of units required, total cost of enrollment including fees and approximate textbook and materials costs. The site also includes a link to financial aid information if the program qualifies. (I.C.6)

The college policy on academic freedom is included in the bi-annual review of policies and procedures. It was last reviewed in 2016. The policy is published in the district policy manual and the faculty contract. Additionally, board policy provides guidance in dealing with controversial issues in curriculum. (I.C.7)

The college has board policy on academic honesty and student behavior, last revised in 2001. As stated in the college catalog, violation of this policy may be grounds for disciplinary action.
Actions for violation of student conduct policy is found on the college website. Cheating and plagiarism are defined in administrative procedure 4F7D. These policies are are included as learning outcomes in English and Library research courses. Sample syllabi show that some faculty include expectations regarding academic honesty on course syllabi. The faculty handbook (Faculty 411-available via the Course Management System) states the expectation that faculty report incidents of academic dishonesty. Board Procedure 4B3 requires faculty teaching courses online to incorporate methods of authenticating student identity, such as proctored exams and “getting to know student voice.” The Pedagogy and Technology Committee has established several recommended strategies to ensure students enrolled are those completing the work. (I.C.8)

Faculty are expected to distinguish between personal conviction and professionally accepted views as evidenced by board policy 4B11 and faculty contract. Students provide data on compliance through evaluation surveys. Additionally, students who feel that their instructors have not treated them in a fair and consistent manner have the right to submit complaints through the published complaint procedure and grade appeal process. (I.C.9)

The college does not require conformity to specific codes of conduct or specific beliefs. (I.C.10) The college does not operate in a foreign location. (I.C.11)

The college communicates regarding educational quality and institutional effectiveness primarily through its website. Accreditation documents, including action letters are published in this location. The college has responded to previous recommendations per expected timelines. Annual reports, special reports, midterm and self-evaluation documents are posted on the website. Requirements for public disclosure have been complied with and are posted on the college website. (I.C.12)

The college has relationships with the following external agencies: Board of Vocational Nursing and Psychiatric Technicians (BVNPT) state of California, California Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST), Bureau of Security and Investigative Services (BSIS) and Kern County Department of Public Health, Emergency Medical Services Division (EMS). Each of these agencies has certified college programs. Additionally, 3 courses are authorized by external agencies. These authorizations are also current. There is an athletics program at the college. The college participates in the Central Valley Conference of the California Community College Athletics Association. The college maintains compliance with the rules of these organizations. The college also demonstrates honesty and integrity in regards the United States Department of Education requirements. Results of audit have been addressed. The college complies with regulations for disclosure and public notifications, maintains a consumer information page, and complies with FERPA rights. (I.C.13)
Conclusions:
The college meets the Standard.
Standard II: Student Learning Programs and Support Services

IIA. Instructional Programs

General Observations:
Cerro Coso College has policies, processes, and informal procedures in place for ensuring student success and the attainment of identified learning outcomes leading to transfer, degrees, certificates, or employment. As noted in the Quality Focus Essay and throughout the ISER, the college recognizes and has plans for addressing student equity gaps and outcomes measurements that are below the State average.

There are three noteworthy themes that relate to instructional programs that the college has clearly articulated through its mission and institutional practices, namely: a commitment to providing exemplary services to a rural community through varied instructional delivery modes; a commitment to build and maintain quality instructional programs with defined competencies, learning outcomes, and clear expectations for student attainment; and regular and systematic evaluations of instructional programs using multiple data sources.

The college culture/structure is such that the faculty seemingly had the sole responsibility for outcomes assessment and program reviews as these functions were the responsibility of Academic Senate sub-committees. Outcomes assessment and program reviews have been moved to sub-committees of the Institutional Effectiveness Committee and, through it, the College Council. Decisions regarding curriculum, learning outcomes, instructional programs, and funding now involve multiple constituent groups through the established participatory governance system. Yet, the faculty remain in a leadership role and they have established and maintained standards for student success that are commensurate with the generally accepted standards for higher education.

Findings and Evidence:
The college reviews its mission and strategic goals on a three year cycle with the most recent revision completed in spring 2018. The evidence - including the Program Review Template - suggests that regardless of location or instructional delivery mode, the college ensures that courses and programs are aligned with its mission. General education requirements are outlined in the catalog for IGETC and CSU certification, and associate degrees including AD-Ts. Cerro Coso College currently offers 16 associate of arts or science degrees, 10 associate degrees for transfer, two local job skills certificates, and 23 certificates of achievement. The college catalog, website, and class schedule contain the requisite information about the programs of study, certificates, and degrees that are offered by the college with adequate clarity/distinction between programs/courses that can be completed fully online versus those that require face-to-face instruction. (II.A.1)
Faculty through the Outcome Assessment and Curriculum Committees have guided the review and approval processes for courses and instructional programs, and the established processes include components related to student learning and student achievement. The college maintains only a few stand-alone courses and the established processes ensure that course content and method of instruction meet academic and professional standards and expectations for higher education. Faculty must complete an extensive training program prior to teaching online courses, and each distance education course includes an addendum that outlines expectations for rigor and instructor-student contact. The evaluation team received access and reviewed a sample of distance education courses in Canvas. In general, the courses that were reviewed by the team meet the minimum expectations for regular and substantive contact. (II.A.1)

Faculty exercise collective ownership of the curriculum through the Curriculum and Instruction Council and the Institutional Effectiveness Committee. As mentioned earlier, multiple data sources are made available so that faculty members are able to review disaggregated information on a variety of student characteristics. The established practices ensure that data analysis and outcomes assessment are part of a program review process that undergoes regular review and updates. All instructional departments are required to report on outcomes assessed, targets missed, and plans for improvements as part of the integrated planning process. Although most course and program proposals are initiated by full-time faculty, part-time faculty are compensated and receive adequate support when asked to initiate course or programmatic changes. The evidence suggests that institutional competencies are discussed in multiple venues and that the ensuing dialog informs decision making and improves instructional effectiveness. (II.A.2)

There is ample evidence of college-wide discussions about learning outcomes, and program level outcomes are published in the catalog. The college maintains approved course outlines of records that include student learning outcomes, and all courses in a given program are mapped to program and applicable institutional outcomes. A review of the outcome assessment evidence from English, Kinesiology, Counseling, Child Development, and the Sociology departments in conjunction with a review of the program review documents indicate that the college processes support outcomes assessment and the use of results to improve instructional practices. (II.A.3)

Cero Coso College has established processes for offering, and distinguishing, pre-collegiate and supplemental courses from college-level courses. In order to comply with recent California legislation the college has initiated processes for revising its pre-collegiate and supplemental course offerings. The team’s review of the pre-collegiate curriculum indicates clear pathways to college-level coursework. Additionally, the college offers the sufficient support services necessary to assure skills for success in advanced courses. (II.A.4)
Cerro Coso College maintains articulation agreements and programs follow practices that meet the expected standards for higher education. The college offers associate degrees and certificates. Each associate degree has a minimum of 60 semester credits and a minimum of 18 credits of general education. Sequencing and time to completion is established for each program and is published in the program pathway matrix. Faculty are provided employee orientation and professional development opportunities. The Curriculum and Instruction Council, and the Pedagogy and Technology Committee maintain procedures and make recommendations that ensure appropriate breadth, depth, and rigor. New courses are initiated by full-time and in some cases part-time faculty who receive adequate training and support to ensure appropriate depth, breadth, and rigor. (II.A.5)

In general, the college schedules courses in a manner that offers students the opportunity to complete their course of study in a timely manner and the college has processes in place to evaluate if course offerings meet the needs of its students. A review of the schedule development process included considerations for student demand, the block schedule at each site, and available resources. In addition, the college uses two-year programs pathway matrices to ensure that each program can be completed at its associated campus. The college has also committed to offering a full range of courses at its sites that are long distances from the primary Indian Wells Valley campus at Ridgecrest. Staff and faculty at the Eastern Sierra College Centers in Mammoth Lakes and Bishop and at the Lake Isabella Kern River Valley site carefully schedule courses in the limited number of available classrooms to maximize the possibility that students can complete all requirements for an associate degree or a certificate program within two years. The Tehachapi site, while using the same methodology, has to supplement with online offerings to keep the two-year commitment. The sites collaborate on the use of distance delivery and faculty availability to ensure that students have access to an array of general education and major preparation courses. A review of the college’s website shows that students may complete fifteen different degree and certificate programs, including eighteen programs, on site at the Lake Isabella location and eleven different degree and certificate programs, including eight different associate degree programs, on site at the Bishop and Lake Mammoth centers. Last year, seventy students earned their associate degrees at the Eastern Sierra College Centers, and another twenty-two students were awarded associate degrees at the Lake Isabella Kern River Valley campus, representing almost twenty percent of the total number of degrees awarded by the college. (II.A.6)

Cerro Coso College uses varied instructional delivery modes and teaching methodologies to offer instructional services to the widely dispersed rural student populations in its service area. Distance education is an important element of the college’s identity and mission. To promote student success in online courses, the college emphasized faculty professional development and all faculty members who teach online have completed online training in Canvas, and have been offered ongoing training opportunities that cover best practices in course design, accessibility,
and pedagogy. The college also identified its incarcerated student population as a group that needed additional support and has offered faculty professional development opportunities while forming a College Council sub-committee charged with supporting inmate education. (II.A.7) Cerro Coso College does not use departmental course or program exams. As outlined in Standard II.C.7, the college evaluates its admissions instruments and practices to ensure their effectiveness and minimize bias. (II.A.8)

Cerro Coso College has adequate policies and procedures for ensuring that the college awards credit consistent with accepted norms for higher education and that credits are awarded based on student attainment of the stated learning outcomes at the course, program, and degree level. Every course is required to have SLOs, which are correlated to program learning outcomes, which are published in the catalog. As outlined in Standard II.A.11, the college is behind on the assessment of institutional learning outcomes. (II.A.9)

The college has policies and procedures for awarding degree, certificate, and transfer credits. These policies are published in the catalog and are available to students via the college website. Students may request an evaluation of credits with a counselor to review the IGETC and CSU general education requirements, and assist.org information when preparing a transfer plan. Transfer policies are reviewed annually when the catalog is updated. There are processes in place for articulation agreements for new courses that involve discipline faculty and the Curriculum Committee. Articulation agreements and the transfer of credits are the same for online and face-to-face courses. (II.A.10)

Cerro Coso College has institutional learning outcomes (ILOs) for all its programs in the college catalog. A review of the catalog revealed that all degrees and certificates have learning outcomes tied to the following competencies: communication, information competency, critical thinking, and citizenship. The college, has not assessed ILOs, but has a process in place to use eLumen over the next two years to assess ILOs. (II.A.11)

The college’s general education (GE) outcomes are outlined in the catalog and emphasize the requisite breadth of experience and depth of knowledge across disciplines, and focuses on seven areas:

- Natural Sciences
- Social and Behavioral Sciences
- Humanities
- Language and Rationality
- Information Competency
- Diversity
- Health and Wellness

The GE curriculum spans the breath of expected knowledge for a higher education degree. The college has a faculty developed rational for general education in the catalog that serves as the basis for including courses in the GE pattern. Discussions about GE category assignments are
faculty driven and occur in the Curriculum Committee and the Curriculum and Instruction Council. (II.A.12)

At Cerro Coso College, all degree programs include focused study within relevant disciplines as well as general education requirements. In addition, all degrees are packaged using recognized competencies and practices from higher education. Learning outcomes are well written and are specific to each program. (II.A.13)

Cerro Coso College has four programs that require external licensure, namely: Administration of Justice (Police Academy), Emergency Medical Technology, Certificated Nursing Assistant, and Licensed Vocational Nursing. Core employment competencies for program-level learning outcomes are assessed through external certification, portfolios, and capstone projects. All career-technical education (CTE) programs are reviewed biennially at a minimum, but most are evaluated annually as part of the Perkins/VTEA application process. Most CTE programs have an advisory committee that meets bi-annually and offers employers opportunities to provide feedback about graduates and the program. (II.A.14)

Cerro Coso College adheres to District Policy 4B6 for program discontinuance/elimination. The college also relies on an Academic Senate policy for evaluating the viability of programs and addressing the impact of the decision to eliminate or significantly change a program. The Engineering and Industrial Technology programs are the most recent programs to go through the discontinuance process with accommodations made for course substitution and course phase-out that allow students to complete the programs. (II.A.15)

Cerro Coso College has a detailed program review process that is faculty driven and outlined in Standard I.B.5. Instructional programs are reviewed on a five-year cycle with a two-year supplemental review for career education programs. The college uses program review templates that ensure minimum standards are met and that the faculty address the program’s strengths, relevance, and appropriateness; and gaps in outcomes assessment, connection to the mission, resource requests, and action plans and strategies for improvements. The program review results are used in conversations by faculty and staff, which leads to the development of plans for improving the instructional programs and/or courses. Distance education courses are evaluated in the same manner as face-to-face courses. (II.A.16)

Conclusions:
The college meets the Standard.
Commendation 1:
The team commends the college for its thoughtful scheduling of classes at the Bishop, Lake Isabella, Tehachapi, and Mammoth Lakes sites, thereby allowing students to complete the requirements for a degree or certificate within a two-year period. (II.A.6)

Commendation 2
The team commends the college on its usage of technology to connect students and employees with each other at all campuses to maximize access to courses, programs, services, and participatory governance. (II.A.7, II.B.1, II.C.3, III.C.1)

IIB. Library and Learning Support Services

General Observations:
Cerro Coso College provides library and learning support services at multiple sites and via several delivery modes, including face-to-face, online, over the phone, and embedded in classes. The Cerro Coso library houses a collection of print and audiovisual materials with access to e-books and electronic periodical databases at multiple sites. Library and discipline faculty collaborate to develop the library’s collections using two primary methods of activity: the course outline of record and participation in acquisition and de-selection of print materials. Students are supported by the library in their research through multiple platforms on a round-the-clock basis.

The Learning Assistance Center provides on-ground peer tutoring services in drop-in, small group study, and by appointment. Supplemental instruction by faculty in the math and writing labs is also provided. At Bishop, Mammoth Lakes, Lake Isabella, and Tehachapi, and the two prison sites, a combination of peer- and instructor-based tutoring and lab support is provided. Zoom conferencing by peer tutors supports distance education students and students at the other campuses.

The library shows evidence of collaboration with outside entities through their contract with Mono County Office of Education at the Mammoth Lakes site, and the Kern County Law Library. The learning assistance center appears to have no outside collaborations.

Findings and Evidence:
The collections appear sufficient to meet the needs of the institution. A collection age report for print and e-Book materials was available for review during the site visit. While the print collection at the main campus has aged, the e-Book collection provides newer material for students to use, and interlibrary loan is available for print materials from the main campus to other sites. The periodical collection in the electronic databases contains both deep back files (JSTOR) and newer periodical titles and content in the other databases. Approximately seventy computers are available in an open lab at the library for student use, and although there is not a dedicated staff member present to provide oversight and support, the computer screens provide
directions to log in and display a 24/7 help desk phone number. Collections at Bishop and Mammoth Lakes have also aged out, and weeding outdated materials, especially in the science, technology and medical fields, is recommended at both sites. It is also evident from the Chancellor’s Office Library Annual Survey that circulation of print collections has waned while e-resource use has increased. (II.B.1)

Self-help tutorials are available to all students on the library’s website for electronic resource usage. While a librarian is not available for all open hours of the library at the Ridgecrest campus, the “Call a Librarian” service is available to all Cerro Coso students 24/7. Online peer tutoring out of Ridgecrest is available during the open hours of the Learning Assistance Center. A syllabus for the fall 2017 demonstrated that a combined in-person and online training is provided for tutors that contains several elements of the college Reading and Learning Association model. (II.B.1)

For the past year, the Bishop-Mammoth Lakes sites have relied upon a learning assistance faculty member to provide library tutoring and research help to students. At Lake Isabella, there is a dedicated Library and Tutoring Center with a full-time classified director, texts on reserve and for reference, and peer tutoring available. There are eight computers for student use and a printer. A librarian is available there once/week and faculty often hold office hours there to support tutoring efforts. At Tehachapi, there is a similar learning support center, combined with the central office, with computers, texts on reserve, and peer tutoring depending on availability. Interviews with faculty at the site confirm they hold office hours and often conduct the English and Math labs at that site; they are in the process of expanding into two nearby offices to afford students more room and create faculty office space. (II.B.1)

Tutoring and library services are available at two correctional facilities in the Tehachapi area. This site works within the constraints of prison rules regarding prisoners’ access to outside resources. These are the only sites at which librarians are not available to provide research orientations, and computer use is banned for any activity. In those classes, students submit a research request to their instructor, and a librarian at the main campus photocopies relevant sources with a turnaround period of a couple weeks. While this is not ideal, it does provide inmate students with the opportunity to integrate research into their assignments. (II.B.1)

The library’s Collection Development Policy encourages instructional faculty to submit titles to add to the collection; this collaboration is reflected in sample invitations to recommend materials. A “Materials” page linked to the library website informs faculty of recent acquisitions and faculty are informed individually via email as their orders come in. Three editions of the library newsletter illustrated how the library reaches out to the college at large. From Spring 2017 through Spring 2018, the Library Link (or LibLink), covered such topics as OER, textbook reserves, 24-hour library services, social justice titles, banned books, prison reference, new databases, the library as event space, and highlighted a library employee each issue. (II.B.2)
The library and the Learning Assistance Center complete individual program reviews every five years. Administrative unit outcomes and student learning outcomes have been developed and assessed for each area within the last two years. The Tutoring/Learning Assistance program review contains only one year of data that was deemed by the author of the document to be “reliable.” Evaluating a program based on one year’s worth of data is difficult. The unit has plans to move forward and acknowledges its need to redefine measurable student learning outcomes and to find other measurable ways to define the efficacy of services. (II.B.3)

The Library and Learning Assistance Center should have strong data evidence linked to the Institutional Learning Outcome #3 regarding information competency. The library faculty offer LIBR C100 course, which satisfies the information competency requirement for the associate degree. Two perception studies are used to determine the effectiveness of the library’s services from the perspective of faculty and students. Each survey has two questions regarding the library and the learning assistance center. The questions are general in nature and not sufficient to determine basis for improvement. The library uses surveys to determine the effectiveness of direct library services such as one-on-one instruction, classroom research instruction and the question-point survey of online one-on-one instruction. (II.B.3)

Documentation of agreements with the Kern County Law Library and the Mono County Office of Education are documented in the ISER. The Mono County Office of Education contract is currently being evaluated. The College has no other contracts with external service or resource providers. The team suggests that the Library determine criteria for effective performance for contracted services with vendors. (II.B.4)

Conclusions:
The college meets the Standard.

See Commendation 2.

IIC. Student Support Services

General Observations:
The college works at providing comprehensive student support services to all students regardless of location, including those learning through distance education, the campuses, and centers. The college makes a dedicated effort at serving students at all of its sites through its staffing and integration of technology.

The college provided evidence that student success and engagement are a priority for the institution and demonstrated that it uses data and evaluates its student support services. The college evaluates the success of its programs through its Program Review Process, Student Success and Support Program Plan, Student Equity Plan and other college initiatives. The college recently began folding all of its student support services in the unit evaluation process and many have not been through more than one cycle as noted in the ISER. In reviewing the
documentation, the programs identify learning outcomes, assess outcomes and identify implications of the assessment. The college can improve its documentation of how it uses the assessments in its planning for future decision-making.

**Findings and Evidence:**
Through its program review process the college reviews its goals against the college’s mission. The number of student services programs who have gone through recent review is limited in the new format, though they are scheduled and thus incomplete. The unit assessments reviewed by the team demonstrate that the college evaluates its student support services. (II.C.1)

The student support services, through their program unit reviews, identify learning support outcomes and assess those outcomes as evidenced in the program review documentation. The program reviews identify the expected outcome and display the assessment measure used and the results of the assessment. Evidence collected through annual unit plans, meeting minutes, and email threads, demonstrate that the results of assessments are used to determine changes and improvements to the services in future decision-making. (II.C.2)

The vast distance between the Ridgecrest campus and the other campuses is challenging for students and staff. However, during the site visit the team verified that the college has utilized human and technological resources to provide equitable services. The college employs full-time support staff off campus and has regular visits from offices that do not maintain staff at the sites. Technology is intentionally used to ensure students at all sites are connected. A dedicated phone at each site connects students to the financial aid office to address complex financial aid questions. The college offers online counseling to students enrolled in distance education or who have access barriers to the college. The webpage to obtain online counseling is clear and informative in its directions and expectations for students. Interviews with students at the sites demonstrate tutoring support as well as general satisfaction with the services provided to assist the students in matriculating and receiving necessary support. Distance education and satellite campus students can purchase their textbooks online through the bookstore and receive free shipping, removing potential barriers to resources. Students enrolled in online courses and at the satellite campuses have access to 24-7 library support services as well as full-time staff at the sites’ Learning Resource Centers. (II.C.3)

There are several clubs that meet student interests and engagement. The clubs are offered at the Ridgecrest and Lake Isabella campuses and allow students to realize the portion of the college mission aimed to develop an ethical and effective citizenry. Evidence of student recruitment for clubs and student government was observed by the site visiting team as well as the level of student engagement and participation in leadership. The college has as student government (SGCC) that participates as part of the shared governance process and club leadership, as
observed by team members, showed leadership development. The college’s website explains how clubs are organized and financed.

The college also offers five intercollegiate athletics sports designed to engage students who wish to compete at that level. The college boasts two men’s teams, baseball and basketball; and three women’s teams, basketball, softball and volleyball. The college’s athletic program participates in program review to remain in line with the college structure. A component of the program is the requirement that each student-athlete commit to time in the study hall and academic planning. The assessment and results of this requirement was reviewed by the team in the programs unit evaluation. The program’s finances are managed by the college’s Business Department under the Foundation Account and used to cover the cost of each program that the general budget is unable to reach. (II.C.4)

To assist students with counseling and advising, the college provides counseling, educational planning and orientation to students at all sites and to online students. Faculty and educational advisors meet the minimum standards as established by the California Community College Chancellor’s Office to ensure their preparation to serve students. Evidence provided and reviewed showed that the program and college regularly review the assessments of services and use the results in planning for improvement. The college provides students orientation in English and Spanish and provides information on academic support resources, degrees, certificates and transfer information, as well as information about graduation and paying for college. The self-paced orientation distinguishes the different sites and offerings available and provides specific information about being an online student. Additionally, the college offers PDEV-52, a one-unit, three-week introductory course for first-time distance education students. The course begins two weeks prior to the start of the semester and ends the first week, allowing students to become oriented to the online learning modality and environment. (II.C.5)

As an open access community college, the college’s admissions policies are consistent with its mission promising to clarify educational pathways, and to provide comprehensive and equitable support services. The college admits and provides services to high school graduates, adults over 18 and concurrently enrolls high school students. As stated in the Cerro Coso Catalog, “Graduates of accredited high schools, holders of a Certificate of Proficiency or GED certificates, or persons 18 years of age or older who are able to profit from the college instructional programs are eligible for admission to Cerro Coso Community College.” The college also provides access to goal planning (certificate, degree and transfer) through its orientation and student educational planning processes as evidenced on the college’s website and in interviews with the director of counseling. Students, as verified in the evidence and interviews, have access to create educational plans and pathways via the college website, in
person with counselors and educational advisors and via electronic communication with counselors. (II.C.6)

The college uses CCCApply as its application instrument, which is consistent with its open access policies. The instrument is used with all student populations and provides the necessary student record information to the college without bias. According to the vice president of student services, the college uses Accuplacer as its placement tool for mathematics and English, and regularly reviews the validated requisites for bias control. The college is in the stages of moving to a new placement process to be in line with the California Community College Chancellor’s Office requirement of using multiple measures for placement, including high school transcripts and self-reported grade point averages. (II.C.7)

At all sites, records are kept in secured locations with access limited to appropriate individuals as verified in an interview with vice president of student services and viewing the log of access. Permanent records kept off-site are in a secured warehouse with only two executive team member having access. Electronic records are kept on secured servers and all employees are required to undergo training for the Federal Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Electronic files are securely backed up off campus. Contracts for third-party vendors requiring access to student records must accept and follow the district’s policy of record security and retention.

Policies and procedures for the release of student information is published in the print and electronic catalogs. Additionally, the same policies and procedures are published on the college’s website informing students through multiple modalities. (II.C.8)

Conclusions:
The college meets the Standard.
See Commendation 2.
Standard III: Resources

IIIA. Human Resources

General Observations:

Comprehensive human resources functions are administered from the KCCD district office with direct on-site HR management support at Cerro Coso Community College. The college maintains a welcoming Human Resource landing page for employment opportunities for classified, management, full-time faculty, adjunct, and student employment. Clear directions are also posted on the web for navigating job posting as well as online brochures supporting Title IX and the college’s commitment to zero tolerance for sexual misconduct. The faculty, staff, and administration of KCCD recognize the value to the campus community of a rich diversity of backgrounds and perspectives among its members, and therefore encourage applications from candidates who might contribute to the prosperity in this regard. The District provides a comprehensive hiring process for all employee groups and classifications based upon KCCD Board Policies for Human Resources. District HR initially verifies minimum qualifications through application documents that include cover letter, resume or curriculum vitae, and transcripts or certificates. The applicants that are moved forward as either meeting minimum qualifications or equivalency are then reviewed by a screening committee. Ratings are completed by committee members and interviewees determined based on overall rankings and qualifications.

The college’s human resources are sufficient to meet the institution’s mission and all employees possess qualifications for their positions. In addition, human resource planning needs are identified during the annual integrated planning process via unit, section, and division plans. An annual staffing resource request analysis (RRA) is developed out of the planning requests which includes all faculty, classified, and management positions. Once a position is considered through the integrated planning process and selected for hire, the hiring committees are then able to tailor the job postings to specific campus and programmatic needs. Position criteria, minimum qualification, and selection processes are defined within pre-drafted job descriptions. Classified job descriptions were last reviewed in fall 2015. Faculty applicants must meet minimum qualifications or equivalent requirements verified through the equivalency process of the Cerro Coso Community College Academic Senate. Faculty evaluations are handled in accordance with the procedures in the collective bargaining agreement between KCCD and the Community College Association. Classified evaluations are completed as per the written agreement between KCCD and California School Employees Association.

Findings and Evidence:
Policies and procedures are well documented. Job descriptions are directly related to the college’s mission and goals based upon evidence identified in the Position Recruitment
Justification form. In addition the position descriptions posted on the KCCD website for faculty, staff, and administrators responsible for educational programs included the requisite education and experience requirements. Prior to employment consideration, HR verifies the applicants educational qualifications and that the foreign degree evaluations are consistent with the requirements of the position. Hiring decisions for faculty and staff are based upon programmatic needs which are identified in the annual integrated planning process and subsequently placed in the annual staffing resource request analysis. The Resource Request Analysis report is shared with the Administrative Cabinet and College Council to fill new or refill existing positions. (III.A.1, III.A.3, III.A.9, III.A.10)

The college provided evidence that full time and adjunct faculty applicants must meet the minimum degree qualifications or be verified through the equivalency process of the academic senate. Job descriptions and position announcements reviewed for faculty, staff, and administrators clearly identified the minimum qualifications required in addition to an example of duties to meet the specific criteria of the position. Faculty job postings notified applicants they would be interviewed as well as complete a teaching demonstration. Degrees from non-U.S. institutions were recognized only if equivalence was established. Applications for open positions are reviewed by HR Technicians first to ensure applicants meet the minimum qualifications and that degrees are from accredited institutions prior to submitting to the selection committee for review. HR further reviews degrees through the solicitation of an official transcript to ensure that degrees held are verified. (III.A.2, III.A.3, III.A.4)

Evidence for how the college demonstrates that performance evaluations are completed on a regular basis was confirmed by reviewing the classified and faculty/adjunct evaluations master list. Some delays occurred due to faculty and adjuncts that were at a distance and waiting for signatures on the documents. Full time faculty and the majority of adjunct evaluations were up to date. Monthly reminders are sent out to all supervisors every 2 months for classified evaluations. There were a number of classified evaluations that were past due even with repeated follow up. It is encouraged that the college develop other systems to ensure that all evaluations are completed in a timely manner based upon the review and the number of classified evaluations that were past due. (III.A.5, III.A.8)

Evidence from an interview with the Director of East Kern, validated that hiring at the Tehachapi Campus was the result of an institutional priority that surfaced during the FY15/16 integrated planning process and resulted in sufficient staffing for the new site. As a result a counselor, faculty, and staff were hired to support that site as well as the prison programs. The decision making process to allocate resources towards human capital should be reviewed. Interviews with other classified staff echoed that staffing levels were sufficient but replacement can be a slow process (III. A.7)
Per article 5.3 in the CCA contract faculty chairs are responsible for recruiting and selecting adjunct faculty as well as coordinating the department or division orientation of adjunct faculty. The college also provides an online faculty handbook called Faculty 411 with guidelines and sample documents for all new faculty. Adjuncts are invited to all faculty flex day activities as well as the annual adjunct professional development day. It is clear that adjuncts are integrated into the institution in multiple ways. Oversight for adjunct instructors is provided formally by a dean and informally by the site directors at the sites and outreach centers. Evaluation of adjunct instructors is detailed in article 7 of the CCA contract. (III.A.8, III.A.14)

Staffing sufficiency is a required section of the comprehensive program review, which is completed on a five year cycle. Evidence was provided to demonstrate that all new and rehiring of faculty, staff, and administrative positions are first presented in the annual unit plan. The requests are further considered through the following layers of planning in order to get to the Budget Development Committee. The recruitment process ensures positions are filled by applicants with necessary qualifications. (III.A.9, III.A.10)

The college has fair and equitably personnel policies that are consistently administered. New employees are given written documentation related to ethical behavior on the Non-Discrimination/ Equal Employment Policy, Drug-Free Workplace, Computer and Network Use, and Sexual Harassment. Faculty and staff are part of either the CCA or CSEA contracts. The contracts are negotiated on three-year alternating terms and are both current. The CCA faculty and adjunct contract runs through June 2020 and the CSEA contract runs through June 2018. (III.A.11)

The college invested in extensive targeted advertising, conducted hiring committee training, and attended job fairs to attract and retain more diverse applicant pools and staff. In addition the Human Resource Manager, attended a training offered by the Institutional Effectiveness Partnership Initiative for Building Diversity. A diligent effort is being put forth to increase the diversity of applicant pools but there are still gaps. The employee compared to the ethnic demographics reveals a gap which has been narrowed from 20% to 10% for Hispanics in the last 4 years. This is due to the transitioning of the community but there remains in the same period of time a 30% gap when considering student to employee diversity. This is a result of the increase in serving incarcerated students. Ethnically diverse individuals have been offered employment at Cerro Coso College but have declined the appointments. The college is encouraged to continuously monitor, analyze, and address equity gaps of the college employees while strengthening the diversity of applicant pools. In addition the Human Resource Manager, provided insight on how personal records are secured that are stored in the college HR office. (III.A.12, III.A.15)
Board Policy (BP) 7E spells out the ethical and professional standards for all persons associated with the District, including employees, Board of Trustee members, students, volunteers, and third parties. Board Policy 7E5 binds employees to the expectations of the policy. The collective bargaining agreements for classified, CSEA Article 10.E, and faculty, CCA Article 4 and Article 4.B.1, contain a written code of ethics for all faculty and classified staff including measures for progressive discipline. In addition the contract for the President has a provision for termination/non-renewal for misconduct or dishonest behavior. EthicsPoint is a third party company that collects anonymous and confidential information regarding ethic violations and crime that is forwarded to the District. (III.A.11, III.A.13)

Professional development is considered one of the five major resources tracked through the annual integrated planning process. Two classified staff in-service days are scheduled each year for the purpose of developing skills and improving uniformity and consistency of institutional knowledge. Stipends are awarded for every 15 units. KCCD offers a Leadership Academy to develop future community college leaders and is an amazing resource to the college. The college has three days of flex a year. Two days in the fall and one day in the spring with a variety of modes being used to provide professional development. (III.A.8, III.A.14)

**Conclusions:**
The college meets the Standard.

**IIIB. Physical Resources**

**General Observations:**
Cerro Coso Community College is one of three colleges in the Kern Community College District and opened in 1973. The college is charged with the responsibility of providing educational opportunities for the widely separated desert, mountain, and valley communities within an 18,000 square mile service area consisting of four counties in eastern California. The college has six campus locations, one of which is online, throughout the service region.

The Kern Community College Safety Repair and Improvement District was formed in 2002 pursuant to California Education Code. The voters approved Measure G in 2002 for a total of $180,000,000 and Measure J in 2016 for a total of $502,821,000 to support the physical infrastructure of KCCD and measure C Mammoth Construction Fund which is currently finishing its last project.

Cerro Coso Community College Maintenance & Operations Department supports the entire college community by providing services to students, administrators, faculty and staff and its buildings, structures, and grounds where instruction is provided. The Kern Community College District Facilities Planning and Construction Department complies with the Americans with Disability Act (ADA) and Division of State Architects requirements for constructing college facilities. The college has structures for addressing both planned and unplanned concerns about
safety and the adequacy of physical resources. Planned facility improvements are determined through the annual planning cycle at the unit, section, and division plan levels. The college needs are gathered in a facilities resource request analysis that examines feasibility, cost, and priorities resource requests for the annual budget process. Unplanned concerns are submitted online or in a cloud-base work order system to Maintenance and Operations, management, or the Safety and Security Committee. The site visiting team noted there are varying standards between sites in terms of the learning and working environments.

The Director of Maintenance and Operations oversees skilled labor, Ground Workers, and Custodians. While the Vice President of Fiscal and Administrative Services and the Director of Maintenance and Operations work with the KCCD District office on capital improvement projects.

Findings and Evidence:
The college has strategies in place to assure safe and sufficient physical resources at all locations where it offers courses, programs, and learning support services. The college is commended for implementing an online and cloud based work order systems that provides faculty and staff an opportunity to report unsafe facility conditions. All college facilities at all locations are constructed and maintained to assure access, safety, security, and a healthful learning and working environment. The federally regulated Clery Report for crime and timely warning notices provided by local law enforcement agencies at the college came back with no findings for the types of crime that are tracked. The bond construction program delivers new building and modernization projects that are constructed to meet or exceed Division of State Architect standards which assure access, safety, and healthful environments. Additional building improvements or modifications are completed using standards for accessibility and safety. (III.B.1, III.B.4)

The Facilities Master Plan will be completed in December 2018 and is renewed every five years as stated in the KCCD Board Policy Manual article 3B3A, Capital Construction. It is being guided by the Educational Master Plan which was completed in 2017. The current master plan matched space needs to the curriculum, and requisite learning and support services, thus facilities are designed for students to succeed in their educational mission. Also on a five year interval long-range plans for physical resources are captured in comprehensive program reviews at the department and unit levels. Among the sites visited, it was noted that standards varied for furniture, fixtures, and equipment in the classrooms. Through further discussion with the Vice President of Administrative Services, and Vice President of Instruction, it was revealed that the plan for new classroom furniture at the Lake Isabella site has been delayed due to the completion of other construction projects. Newer classroom furnishings for Lake Isabella are planned to arrive by the end of the semester. It is encouraged that classrooms standards be developed and maintained for consistency of learning environments. The Facilities and Safety & Security
Committees should play a stronger role in reviewing facility needs and requests to insure that all stakeholders have a voice in facility planning via the annual planning process. Lastly, membership on these committees should be strengthened with cross representation. (III.B.2)

The college assures the feasibility and effectiveness of physical resources in supporting institutional programs and services through two levels of periodic evaluation. The first level of periodic evaluation is an assessment of administrative unit outcomes: student and staff satisfaction, timely completion of work orders, and providing a satisfactory level of safety and security training. The second level of periodic evaluation is completing the annual Maintenance and Operations Plan which is well done. The percent of employees who “agree” or “strongly agree” on the 2016 climate survey with statements regarding safety and facility related issues ranged between 70% and 86%. It was refreshing to note significant improvements in the environment being conducive to productivity and having adequate technology to support work. Overall in 2015, 87% of students felt “safe” or “very safe” at the college and 82% “satisfied” or “very satisfied” with the condition of facilities. (III.B.3)

Conclusions:
The college meets the Standard.

IIIC. Technology Resources

General Observations:
The online program at Cerro Coso Community College is supported by an equally robust Information Technology (IT) Department. The college IT Department has four staff members and a full-time director supporting 725 desktop and laptop computers, 54,000 user accounts, and 46 technology enhanced classrooms that are distributed across six sites.

The college is part of a multi-college district; hence, many services, components, and resources that make up technology resources are a mix of decentralized services provided by the college and centralized services provided by the Kern Community College District (KCCD). While there is inevitably some overlap between the two, this arrangement serves the District and College well. The college Information Technology (IT) Department provides support for computer hardware, software, phones, and technical support for the faculty, staff and students at Cerro Coso. The District IT maintains email, network storage, Banner, and network connectivity for instructional traffic and administrative work flow at all sites, campuses, and colleges in the district. District and College IT work collaboratively on most matters to provide appropriate and adequate support for management and operational functions, academic programs, teaching and learning, and support services. The evidence demonstrated that the technology and IT support services enhance the Institution’s operational and administrative functions to better serve students. The safety, reliability, and privacy of these services are achieved through testing and
monitoring systems, redundancy in a disaster recovery plan, and policies and procedures to ensure student and employee privacy. The college IT planning process provides opportunities for input from participatory governance and advisory committees. Information Technology across the District is woven together through close working relationships and committee structure. The District Information Technology Managers Group enhances the decision-making process by providing a venue for collaboration and centralization of the technology at each college.

The 2017 Educational Master Plan is part of the long-term planning for technology resources. The educational goals provide the context and direction for expanding equitable student and college-wide learning support services. During the comprehensive Program Review individual departments and units also capture longer term technology needs every 5 years through a narrative on the state of the technology resources. Shorter term planning is seen in the annual integrated planning cycle for units, sections, and divisions. A template in the process sets the discussion in the framework of the college mission. All approved technology recommendations for resource reallocation are included in the budget building process that takes place in April and May.

Findings and Evidence:
It is evident given the large number of online students that technology is a priority at the college. The following services are available at all campus locations and maintained by the college IT department: desktop computers, laptops, printers, tablets, software, phones, wireless and WAN (wide area network) access, ITV (interactive television) classrooms, smart classrooms, and audio-visual services. Professional Support is provided by a helpdesk ticketing system, an outsourced helpdesk system that provides 24x7 phone support for staff, faculty, and students as well as an Online Support Center with a searchable knowledge database. There are provisions for reliability, disaster recovery, privacy, and security. The most recent satisfaction data is over three years old but offers a glimpse at exceptional service, reliability of equipment, and helpful IT staff. Students were asked seven questions on IT service and reliability, availability of computers, and internet access. Over 95% of the 524 students responded to these questions that they were satisfied. (III.C.1)

The annual planning cycle recognizes technology resource requests at the unit, section, and division planning levels. Assessment of the IT needs was matched with available funding. More cost effective methods were identified to address some requests which again extended limited resources to other needs at the college. Much of the assessment for identifying requests to be funded was the result of extensive dialogue. (III.C.2)

There were initial concerns regarding the backup and recovery disaster plan at the district. The current plan has redundancy of data within the district boundaries shared among the three
colleges. After further discussion with the Information Technology Department Director, evidence was provided of a new service to be used for the backup of Banner and college data. The conversion to Ellucian Cloud is well under way and is estimated to be completed by December 31, 2018. The project status is noted as being in progress and on time. The team member was also able to attend a Technology Resource Team meeting using ITV technology for staff at a remote site. It was apparent that the maintenance and operation of the IT equipment is being managed very well by the entire team. (III.C.3)

Training and technical support regarding IT for faculty and staff are coordinated at the district level. The trainings done by college staff were informally evaluated via email and through the monitoring of work tickets. Developing a better feedback loop after IT trainings are completed is encouraged. (III.C.4)

The college has well developed policies and procedures in place that guide the appropriate use of technology for teaching and learning. Before accessing campus computers via assigned credentials all users must read and accept the computer use policies. In addition the site team reviewed the board policies and procedures regarding the appropriate use and distribution of technology resources in the KCCD Board Policy Manual. (III.C.1, III.C.5)

Conclusions:
The college meets the Standard.
See Commendation 2.

IIID. Financial Resources

General Observations:
Kern Community College District (KCCD) has strong fiscal practices as evidenced by the reports from the District’s external auditors, strong reserves, strategies to maximize credit ratings on bond issuances, and documented practices in place to allocate resources sufficient to each college to support student learning programs and services. The District (KCCD) distributes the majority of its unrestricted financial resources based upon an internally developed allocation model. Funds allocated based upon enrollment growth are dispersed in the following year to avoid shortfalls. The colleges are charged back for district-wide expenses based on each college’s proportion of funded FTES generated in the previous year. Conceptually, growth funding is allocated where FTES is generated thus providing resources for program and institutional improvements within KCCD. Continuous unqualified audits demonstrate that financial affairs are managed with integrity and ensure financial stability. The level of financial resources allocated and in reserves provides reasonable expectation of both short and long-term financial solvency. A review of evidence demonstrates that the mission statement is supported by well-managed financial resources at the District and college level. Planning at all levels is closely linked to the mission statement. It was difficult to determine the level of institutional
priorities that went into the annual planning process. Evidence was needed through interviews to determine if there was sufficient linkage of resource requests to college wide goals and priorities in the resource reallocation process. The Cerro Coso Community College Foundation is an auxiliary organization of the college with its own board of directors. The college foundation supports the college mission by providing scholarships and general support for students and programs. The foundation has appropriate checks and balances to ensure the funds are both raised and awarded appropriately.

Findings and Evidence:
With the recent addition of the District-wide Budget Committee (DWBC), the colleges will have an expanded role vetting the budget assumptions used in the KCCD allocation model. The vetting process will enhance the colleges’ ability to ensure continued stable operations and provide for greater input into any future changes to the District’s Budget Allocation Model. This is evidence of the district’s commitment to collaboration in its decision-making process. KCCD is doing exceptionally well financially as evident by the external audits and internally through larger reserves. In addition, detailed budget information, including the fiscal condition, financial planning, and audit results are sufficient in content and timing to support the institutional financial planning and financial management. The annual planning documents focusing on gaps and outcome assessments, as well as initiatives to improve student learning programs and services. The resource reallocation planning process for human, physical, technology, and fiscal requests that go through budget and planning is a work in progress but it does meet the necessary requirements to comply with the standards. There is clear assessment and alignment with the mission for requests on the unit plans. Dialogue during President's cabinet is used to assess the alignment of institutional goals and priorities with each resource request to determine if they are funded or not. Interviews with the Budget Committee and separate conversations with Vice President of Administrative Services and Vice President of Instruction, confirmed the need for the college to be more systematic in assessing the competing resource needs that come through the annual planning process. The Budget Committee has developed a rubric to assist with establishing priorities that will be used during the next annual planning cycle. (III.D.1, III.D.2, III.D.3, III.D.4, III.D.6, III.D.7, III.D.9)

The area budget requests include specific information including: types of increases, frequency, and data supporting the rationale. All requests at the unit level of planning clearly link the college mission to the request. The college Budget Development Committee uses the information that starts in the unit plan and proceeds through the entire annual planning process to make decisions. It was clear how the resource requests were tied to college goals and priorities at the section and division levels by being supported and not supported. It was unclear how the resource request analyses of facilities, information technology, marketing, professional development, and staffing are further integrated with institutional planning to build the tentative budget. It was also difficult to follow the criteria used when considering funding for competing
needs. This is the process used to develop an annual budget to recommend to College Council. The process works but it is recommended that the resources re-allocation model be refined to better align with institutional goals and priorities while addressing competing needs. (III.D.2, III.D.3, III.D.4, III.D.6)

KCCD is commended for establishing and maintaining a culture of fiscal stability as evidenced by unmodified audit reports, funds earmarked toward known liabilities, substantial reserves, clearly defined plans to address potential future uncertainties, and a high degree of financial transparency. The institution has sufficient cash flows and reserves at the college and district level to maintain stability. The District reserves for FY17/18 were 27.7M or 20% of the adopted budget and the college had just under 4M or 17.5% in reserves. The teams are particularly impressed with the overall fiscal stability of the District and the degree to which it plans for known liabilities and future uncertainties made possible by strong leadership from constituency groups and the Board. In FY 15/16 and 16/17 the college budgets were adopted by the board of trustees utilizing college reserves. The college demonstrated considerable fiscal responsibility and restraint through refined planning throughout the year, and in both FY 15/16 and 16/17 the college realized an increase in college reserve rather than a decrease. The strong partnerships with local K-12 school districts have provided no or low cost facilities for college course instruction. The site team was impressed by the collaboration that resulted in a sizable increase of the Tehachapi Campus which was formerly used by a K-12 district. (III.D.4, III.D.9, III.D.11, III.D.16)

Recent audits for FY 2013-14, 2014-15 and 2015-16 have resulted in no findings. These audits provide strong support that the district and college are well run financially. Voters approved Measure G in 2002 and Measure J in 2016 to support the physical infrastructure of KCCD. Annual audits were conducted for both bonds. The measure C Mammoth Construction Fund was passed with more than a two thirds vote so annual audits are not required. (III.D.1, III.D.4, III.D.5, III.D.6, III.D.7, III.D.8)

The financial and internal controls of the college and district are evaluated regularly as evident by the ongoing meetings of the three vice presidents of finance and administrative services with the CFO in addition to the three college accounting managers that also meet with KCCD Director of Accounting Services. These meetings provide coordination in overseeing the institutions’ various financial reporting, management obligations, and resolve business issues. The practice of continuous improvement was also evident in the Budget Development Committee meeting minutes where recommendations are helping improve the decision making process. (III.D.3, III.D.5, III.D.8, III.D.10)

The most recent actuarial study for postretirement benefits was performed in November 2016 and updated in February 2018 to reflect the amount that should be accumulated under the
requirements of GASB 74-75. The District’s long-term liability was estimated at $87.7 million. In order to reduce the overall cost to the District, and to assist with the funding of the obligation, in 2008 the District issued $85,880,000 in OPEB bonds for the partial funding of that liability and established revocable and irrevocable trust funds. The institution fully funds its annual OPEB obligation. (III.D.12)

Bond Measure G, J, and C which is the Mammoth Construction Fund are all repaid through property taxes collected from taxpayers. The district ensures that locally incurred debt repayment schedules do not have an adverse impact on meeting current fiscal obligations. Debt repayment obligations are assessed annually and resources are allocated in a manner that ensures stable finances. Auxiliary activities support the college programs and services. In a brief interview the newly elected President of the Human Services Club shared his enthusiasm about the opportunity to develop the club and his leadership abilities. Fundraising efforts by the Cerro Coso Community College Foundation generate support for student scholarships and is annually audited. The bookstore operates through a district-wide contract with Barnes and Noble. The college ensures that the financial operations of all auxiliary activities are appropriately monitored. (III.D.1, III.D.13, III.D.14)

The college does not offer student loans and thus does not have a student loan default rate. (III.D.15)

Conclusions:
The college meets the Standard.

District Commendation 1:
The teams commend the District for establishing and maintaining a culture of fiscal stability as evidenced by unmodified audit reports, funds earmarked toward known liabilities, substantial reserves, clearly defined plans to address potential future uncertainties, and a high degree of financial transparency. With the establishment of the District-wide Budget Committee, the District has demonstrated its commitment to collaborative decision-making and continuous improvement. (III.D.1, III.D.9)

See College Recommendation 1.
Standard IV: Leadership and Governance

IVA. Decision-Making Roles & Processes

General Observations:
Cerro Coso College provides education to the largest service area of the three colleges within the Kern Community College District (KCCD). The main campus is located in Ridgecrest, CA with 5 satellite sites located in Lake Isabella, Mammoth Lakes, Edwards Air Force Base, Bishop, and Tehachapi, with a comprehensive virtual campus referred to as CCOnline. Coordination between the campus and satellites presents opportunities and challenges for college leaders to ensure that all members of the college community have a voice in institutional decision-making. With the use of technology, Cerro Coso can be inclusive in decision making from faculty, staff, and students.

There are sufficient district policies codifying decision-making processes at the college and district levels, and that ensures participation from various constituency groups. The KCCD document entitled Elements of Decision Making clarifies these roles and responsibilities. At the college level, the Participatory Governance Model Handbook (PGMH) further defines the roles and responsibilities of college stakeholders and is reviewed every three years by the college Council. In practice, a fair amount of dialog that informs decision-making at Cerro Coso is conducted via iTV and Zoom, for which the college is technologically equipped. SharePoint software enables all constituencies to access evidence, data and research related to the governance of the main campus and satellites.

Findings and Evidence:
Cerro Coso College is making concerted, innovative efforts to encourage input from all stakeholders in the campus community, at the most basic level by bringing meetings to participants in remote areas via video- and teleconferencing. Cover sheets for meeting minutes for three leadership committees (Cabinet, College Council, and SSSP) attest to the multilayered broadcast using CCC Confer, listing multiple campuses for the meeting’s location. Attendance at meetings of these groups confirmed both participatory and communication elements described in the ISER and presented as written evidence. For full representation of voices, the Cerro Coso Academic Senate Bylaws and the Participatory Governance Model Handbook (PGMH) dictate that some committees must have representatives from one of the “extension” campuses. Site directors at the outlying center each participate in several college committees; an interview with the East Kern Center and Kern River Valley Campus director revealed she is currently sitting on Professional Development, Deans and Directors, Administrative Cabinet, Safety and Security, Facilities, Institutional Effectiveness, SSSP, and College Council. As evidence of further innovation and effort, faculty inquiry groups were formed in the spring of 2017 to help students feel better connected. Minutes from these meetings and the project report indicate the effort was fruitful. (IVA.1)
Further illustrating cross-constituency dialog and institutional support at Cerro Coso is the newly revived Classified Senate, which works to make sure that classified voices are heard on governance committees at the college and in the district. The Classified Senate President participates on multiple college committees, including College Council and the District Consultation Council. KCCD’s annual leadership training and integrated planning processes for units, sections, and division levels provide further evidence of systematic participative processes. These processes allow all employees and students to be represented through their governance councils. (IV.A.1)

Student engagement and governance at Cerro Coso is highly coordinated and enjoys a robust level of involvement, as evidenced by meetings of the Student Government and Umoja observed by the visiting team, along with interviews with peer tutors, SGSS executive board members, and other students. Both meeting agendas were clear and professional, and the SGCC General Session illustrated how levels of participation in that group operate, including the Executive Board, Senators, and Club Representatives, who reported out along with senators on college participatory committees. The SGCC General Session is held monthly and open to all students while senators and the executive board meet weekly. Minutes are posted on the college website and the SGCC also communicates out to students via flyers, Facebook, and Instagram. Executive Board members report a high level of support from the college in general, and specifically from their advisor in reaching out to graduating local high school students to promote student government, which has swelled their ranks in recent years. New student senators are groomed for positions on executive board in their second year, maximizing individual skill sets and interests and contributing to organizational continuity. (IV.A.1)

Multiple policies at Cerro Coso/KCCD spell out the role of faculty in decision-making processes, specifically policies 5A-5C (Recognition of Academic Senates, Responsibilities of the college Academic Senates, and Recommendation and Consultation), which are further bolstered by 5D-5F (Scope, Implementation, and Review and Revision). KCCD BP 4F2 recognizes associated student bodies as “advisory bodies to the Board of Trustees,” and a meeting of the Student Government of Cerro Coso confirmed that a majority of participatory governance committees currently have active student representatives. (IV.A.2)

The Cerro Coso Participatory Governance Model Handbook defines campus decision-making processes and the roles of all college stakeholders and constituents, including: the Academic Senate and CCA representing faculty, Administrative Cabinet (management), the CSEA and Classified Senate on behalf of classified staff, and the Student Government of Cerro Coso. The PGMH is reviewed every three years by the college Council, a participatory governance committee designated by the PGMH to head up decision-making at Cerro Coso. (IV.A.2)
Multiple KCCD policies (5A-5F) were identified to illustrate that policy ensures faculty a role and voice in policies, planning and budget related to their expertise. The KCCD District Consultation Council members include each college president and academic senate president; at Cerro Coso, interviews verified that the Classified Senate President and Student Trustee also attend. The group’s purview is defined in a separate *Elements of Decision-Making* document linked to the district chancellor’s office webpage, which also describes the role of the academic senates. (IV.A.3)

Also in the *Elements of Decision-Making*, full participation in formulating and revising board policy is mandated: “Amendments to board policies and procedures, or the creation of new policies or procedures, may be originated by the Chancellor’s Administrative Council, District-wide Committees, and Councils of the colleges, Academic Senates, Associated Student Organizations, and other recognized groups, as well as administrators working under the direction of the Chancellor.” (IV.A.3)

At Cerro Coso, the PGMH designates that College Council and several other policy-setting committees have representation from faculty and administrators (Institutional Effectiveness, Budget Development, Safety and Security). Minutes of the Consultation Council, IEC and Budget Development committees demonstrate attendance by faculty and administrators. (IV.A.3)

Policies 4B1-4B7 at Cerro Coso/KCCD spell out the role of faculty as it relates to curriculum and student learning programs and services. Cerro Coso’s Curriculum and Instruction Council, which is driven by faculty and advised by the VP Instruction and college president, follows the college Curriculum Handbook’s rules on membership, which includes faculty, administrators, and at least one classified and one student member. (IV.A.4)

The District document the *Elements of Decision Making* outlines the KCCD system of board and institutional governance primarily on pages 3-6, where it lays out the roles of the Chancellor’s Administrative Council and Cabinet, the District’s Consultation Council, the Academic Senates, District-wide Committees, and Collective Bargaining in Decision Making. (IV.A.5)

The Participatory Governance homepage at Cerro Coso collects all college committee information on one page, including meeting dates/times, agendas and minutes, as well as chair and other contact information. Minutes from College Council confirm that college leaders are actively soliciting input from all constituencies on specific information items related to communication and transparency at the college. Interviews with the Academic Senate and Classified Senate presidents and with union faculty and staff further illustrate that their constituents are informed of decisions taken and reported in that body by email and in Canvas. Additionally, the college sends out the college *Chronicle* weekly, which includes a President’s brief and informs the college of initiatives and changes at the local, district, and state levels, and
the Public Information Office puts out a regular newsletter called the *Campus Connection*. (IV.A.6)

Cerro Coso College regularly assesses its leadership structure. The PGMH specifies on page 7 that the college Council is to evaluate college participatory processes, “through surveying the college Council representatives of all constituent groups as well as the college community as a whole.” College Council also evaluates itself using a survey instrument with five questions related to the member’s own participation and fifteen about the council’s collective efforts. Minutes from College Council demonstrate that survey results were sent out and input solicited in a timely manner. 2017 survey results, and minutes from the college Council’s September 2017 discussion of them, illustrate the process. Finally, the new Participatory Governance homepage is held up as an example of a concrete response to interest expressed in that survey for better access to governance groups. (IV.A.7)

**Conclusions:**
The college meets the Standard.

**Commendation 3:**
The team commends the college on the level of student engagement and leadership. It is evident that student voices are actively solicited and have an impact on the institution’s continual process for improvement of services. (IV.A.1)

**IVB. Chief Executive Officer**

**General Observations:**
The Cerro Coso College President/CEO has an active presence at the college and in the broader community. In venues such as the Cerro Coso President’s Cabinet and Administrative Cabinet, College Council, District Administrative Council and Consultation Council, and in an advisory capacity to campus governance committees such as the Institutional Effectiveness Committee, the President/CEO fulfills her leadership responsibilities to the college and district. Those duties are codified in KCCD board policy and in the college’s *Participatory Governance Model Handbook (PGMH)*, which “strives to demonstrate how those constituent groups’ items and issues of concern are brought forward to the college president to ensure that all parties are heard and represented.”

**Findings and Evidence:**
The duties of President of Cerro Coso College are codified in KCCD Board Policy 6A5B (College President), which is available to the public from the District homepage, and they are comprehensive. The President/CEO’s responsibilities are also encapsulated in the current job description for the position, which was last filled in 2010 by the current President. Additionally,
the PGMH also spells out the president’s role in relation to various college governance groups and committees. The president co-chairs both the college Council and Cerro Coso Foundation and serves on the college Institutional Effectiveness Committee (IEC), where institutional review of the college mission, vision, values, goals, institutional set standards, and accreditation takes place. (IV.B.1)

Cerro Coso’s president meets monthly with her Cabinet, which includes the three vice presidents, the human resources manager, the director of information technology, and the director of public relations and institutional advancement. A visit to the Cabinet’s meeting verified the roles that each member plays in relation to the district and the college, bringing information back and forth to share for the group, and the President in particular, to consider. The President’s Cabinet also dialogues regularly on texts they are collectively reading (currently The Advantage: Why Organizational Health Trumps Everything Else in Business) in part as professional development but also to enhance current decision-making and planning by these top administrators. (IV.B.2)

The president meets monthly with the full Administrative Cabinet (all managers and directors, including site directors), for which three different meeting agendas show a wide range of participants assigned to facilitate topics at each meeting, either actively presenting or presiding over discussion on topics related to their areas. This approach demonstrates a collaborative approach to agenda building and problem solving. Between the more global discussion in the President’s Cabinet and the implementation talks that occur at Administrative Cabinet, the administrative team at Cerro Coso appears comprehensive. The Cerro Coso President, in consultation with vice presidents and College Council, also develops the annual college staffing request from the District. Seven staffing “reorganizations” have occurred so far since 2015, as an example of how outsized a role human resources management is among responsibilities w/in the President’s purview. (IV.B.1, IV.B.2)

The president is described as central in launching the latest three-year strategic planning process at Cerro Coso; meeting minutes of the Strategic Plan Task Force and the college Council illustrate the process from its initiation in fall 2017 through its approval by the Board of Trustees in April 2018. The president demonstrates a strong appreciation for the contributions that data can make in institutional planning and improvement, particularly as colleges race to close equity and achievement gaps. ACCJC Accreditation Basics training was on the March 19, 2018 Administrative Cabinet agenda, with the president as facilitator, and she has personally served on and chaired ACCJC visiting teams. (IV.B.3, IV.B.4)

The President implements the statutes, regulations, and governing board policies. The duties of the college president as listed in Board Policy 6A5B is the responsibility for “maintaining the policies, procedures, rules, and regulations as set forth by the Chancellor, the Board of Trustees,
the California Education Code, the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges, and the general laws of California and of the United States of America. The President shall have the authority to delegate areas of responsibility as permitted by law.” (IV.B.5)

Internally, as co-chair of the college Council, the President assures alignment in planning of institutional policy, mission, and practices, by enacting the participatory governance structure and processes described in the PGMH. In both President’s and Administrative Cabinets, vice presidents of finance, student services, and instruction; Cerro Coso’s institutional researcher; the director of human resources; and the faculty senate president, among others, advise the CEO. Evidence for budget planning is a calendar item from March 14, 2018 indicating the annual Labor Budget Review. (IV.B.5)

Cerro Coso’s President/CEO is actively involved in the local community as a member of community organizations and partner to area schools, government, and business organizations in four counties. In Ridgecrest, she has a strong business presence as a member of the Chamber of Commerce, the China Lake Alliance, and the Ridgecrest Economic Development Committee, and by serving as a board member of the Desert Valley Credit Union. For example, a snapshot of the president’s calendar the first week of October 2017, has her at a college basketball game versus Reedley in Ridgecrest on Tuesday night and in Tehachapi at 7:30 Wednesday morning for a Chamber of Commerce breakfast. Receipts for her membership fees in above organization were also presented. (IV.B.6)

An evening community forum at Cerro Coso during the accreditation team visit was well-attended by community members who were resoundingly positive in their appreciation for the quality of the college’s programs, its effectiveness in preparing students for transfer and the workforce, its safe and welcoming atmosphere for students, its responsiveness to local concerns and availability to area residents, and its role in the community as a cultural and events center. Participants included the local K-12 district superintendent business leaders from Ridgecrest Regional Hospital, the US Naval Air Weapons Station China Lake, and the Chamber of Commerce; college alumni; and parents of current Cerro Coso students. It was apparent their collective good will was a result of strong relationships with college administrators, faculty, and staff, cultivated at the highest levels of the institution. (IV.B.6)

Conclusions:
The college meets the Standard.

Commendation 4:
The team commends the college president on empowering a leadership team at all campuses that works cooperatively and consistently to organize the college and engage with the community in
keeping with its unique geography and diversity in support of the college mission. (IV.B.2, IV.B.6)

IVC. Governing Board

General Observations:
The Kern Community College District Board of Trustees, which encompasses Cerro Coso in its responsibilities and authority, has established policies to act collectively and ethically. The board is responsible for selecting the district CEO/Chancellor and trustees participate in hiring college presidents. Trustees are elected by voters from their area and serve four-year, staggered terms. They receive initial orientation training and attend ongoing in-service training. The board delegate’s authority for KCCD’s general functions to the Chancellor, practices oversight in matters of general operations, and participates in the accreditation process.

Findings and Evidence:
The Kern Community College District Board of Trustees is accountable for the District’s policies on academics and finances by policies 2A1 (Authority), 4B1 (Educational Programs), and 3A2 (Fiscal Management). Board agendas, minutes, calendars attest that Trustees are apprised of the financial health of Cerro Coso and its two sister colleges as well as its academic curriculum and services. Board policy 2G1 (Standards of Good Practice) and 2H1 (Statement of Ethics) dictate that individual trustees act based on facts and speak as one body after a decision is made. KCCD trustees are responsible for selecting and evaluating the district’s Chancellor, in keeping with policies 2A2 (Management of the District) and (6A5A Chancellor). (IV.C.1, IV.C.2, IV.C.3)

KCCD trustees are independently elected to staggered terms by voters in five areas across four counties, and they must reside and vote within their designated area, according to policies 2B1 (Board Composition) & 2B2 (Board Election). All board meetings must include an opportunity for citizens to be heard, according to BP 2C4 (Order of Business). Policy 2G1 (Standards of Good Practice) includes statements about the board’s role as an advocate for and accountability to the local community. (IV.C.4)

In policy 2A1, authority ascribes three primary responsibilities of the Board of Trustees: “(1) approving and adopting the policies for the operation of the District, (2) determining that adequate funds are available to enable the staff to execute these policies, and (3) acting as a board of appeals.” The KCCD Strategic Plan provides the District with a blueprint for the Chancellor to enact, in consultation with the board, policies and procedures consistent with its vision, values, and mission. The priorities of the current plan, approved in 2015, reflect goals for student achievement as well as for improving the effectiveness of the organization, encompassing student learning programs, community connections, and employee professional
development. All board policies are published on the district’s website and easily accessed by anyone on- or off-campus. (IV.C.5, IV.C.6)

Minutes from board meetings reflect a body in keeping with its own policies and by-laws, which are regularly assessed every two years as evidenced its commitment in its 2013 accreditation follow-up report, posted on the college accreditation webpage (pages 18-20). Minutes from the District Consultation Council from March 28, 2017 confirm that work has progressed on reviewing college policies and instituting the Community College League of California’s model policy format. (IV.C.7)

Minutes of the board’s Nov. 9, 2017 meeting reflect a deep dive into both the institution’s Student Success Scorecard for that year and a report on dual enrollment provided by its local Office of Institutional Research and Reporting. Minutes of other board meetings reflect review and discussion on the Institutional Effectiveness Partnership Initiative Indicator Report, local research and reporting on distance education trends and student success, and other reports and data in the process of strategic planning. (IV.C.8)

In response to recommendations from its 2012 visit, policy 2F (Board In-Service Development Evidence) was created to further clarify and require orientation for new trustees, regular in-service training, and a defined, two-year program for trustees based on their self-evaluations. Minutes from the board’s January 22, 2018 retreat, provide evidence of a regular board retreat, at which college presidents made state-of-the-college presentations, District Office AUO reviews were reported out, and in-depth training was provided on the Brown Act/Code of Ethics and sexual harassment. The 2013-2015 KCCD Board Development Plan can be found linked to the college’s 2015 Mid-Term report. (IV.C.9)

KCCD’s board self-evaluation process is defined in policy 2E: Board Self Evaluation. The instrument of the board’s self-evaluation, in which they assess their own individual participation and that of the group as a whole, can be found linked to page 30 of the 2015 mid-term report. Minutes from their March 8, 2018 meeting confirm that board evaluations were discussed in closed session and reported out in an open session. The board follow policies 2H (Statement of Ethics) and 2I (Conflict of Interest Statement). (IV.C.10, IV.C.11)

KCCD policy 2A (General Functions) clearly delineates the role of District Chancellor/CEO as the sole employee of the district, in relation to its board of trustees: “The Board shall hold the Chancellor responsible for the efficient administration and supervision of the entire system and shall evaluate the Chancellor.” Further reinforcement of this supervisory relationship is outlined in policy 6A5A, including the Chancellor’s responsibility to attend board meetings and keep the board apprised of district health in terms of staffing, finances, facilities, the development of instructional programs and services, and other general operations matters. (IV.C.12)
Minutes of a KCCD Work Study item on Accreditation at its September 9, 2017 meeting show that trustees were presented with an overview of the accreditation process and the board’s role in that process, in preparation for an ACCJC coordinated review of all three colleges in the district. Following that, it appears from BoardDocs minutes that the board’s Accreditation Committee conducted a review of the entire 2018 ISER, including IV.C, and provided monthly reports back to the board at their meetings on 1/18, 2/8, 2/26, 4/23, 5/3, 6/14, 7/12 of 2018. (IV.C.13)

Conclusions:
The college meets the Standard.

IVD. Multi-College Districts or Systems

General Observations:
KCCD policy and the district’s document, “Elements of Decision-making” explain the Chancellor’s responsibilities and role in decision-making in relation to trustees, other district management, the college and the community. The KCCD Chancellor remains in regular touch with college presidents and solicits annual “state of the college” reports, staffing requests, and biannual climate surveys. College CEO responsibilities and roles in decision-making, and provisions for their accountability, are similarly provided for in board policy and regular reporting to the district Chancellor and Board of Trustees. District strategic planning, done in collaboration with college representatives, resulted in a KCCD Strategic Plan in 2015 that provides a consistent direction and mission for all three colleges. Climate survey feedback on Communication between the district and the colleges is targeted as an area for continuous improvement, and the Chancellor has followed up personally on communicating with the District by launching a biannual district publication called (“What’s New”) and adding the college vice presidents to his Cabinet. Additionally, he has personally visited Cerro Coso at its March, 2017 board meeting, the May, 2017 Honors Brunch, and the Denim and Diamonds event in March 2018.

Findings and Evidence:
KCCD policy 6A5 defines the responsibilities of the district Chancellor/CEO, as well as college presidents and management staff. The regularly reviewed KCCD document, “Elements of Decision-making” further elaborates on the Chancellor’s role in decision-making and on the distinctions between the advisory and administrative responsibilities and roles of the Chancellor’s Cabinet, Chancellor’s Administrative Council, Academic Senate, district standing and ad-hoc committees, and collective bargaining. (IV.D.1)

Human, physical, technology and financial resources are all operated through the central District office (DO), which works with the colleges to manage and maintain those resources, in part by bringing college staff in those areas together for regular debriefing and planning. Meeting minutes of IT Managers in November 2017 and Accounting Managers in January 2018 illustrate
this inter-college coordination under the district umbrella. The Chancellor not only hears from college presidents annually on the state of their colleges but also communicates regularly and visits the colleges. The Cerro Coso Chronicle (February 2017) documents an early visit by then newly hired Chancellor Burke and indicates his intent to return for an employee forum. (IV.D.1)

Notes on a spring 2015 KCCD Climate Survey on Trust generally summarize concerns by employees around regular contact and meetings, appropriate tone and clear avenues for communication, and college employee and student morale. A 2016 Climate Survey Report suggests some areas of improvement, but generally lower scores on morale, atmosphere, and employee trust at the district level rather than in the employee’s immediate work place. In addition, a 2016 budget allocation model subcommittee recommended that District AUR’s could use re-evaluation in both forms and processes as evidenced in IV.D.12. (IV.D.2)

The Chancellor implements KCCD board policy section 3A, which covers all fiscal policies, including BP 3A1: Budget Development. The policy includes budget planning, preparation, and management. Board Procedure 3A1 stipulates that budget-planning guidelines will link planning to institutional goals. KCCD’s Budget Allocation Model is reviewed every six years, most recently in 2016. At that time, recommendations from the third District-side Budget Allocation Model Evaluation Committee were made in a report to the Chancellor and Consultation Council, provided as evidence in the ISER. One immediate outcome of that report was the formation of a district Budget Committee to channel requests for changes to the budget development process and make recommendations for a new AUR process. (IV.D.3)

Board policy 6A5B defines the authority of each college president/CEO as chief administrator of the college, responsible for a wide range of advisory reporting and other management duties on behalf of the college and reporting primarily to the district chancellor. The Chancellor conducts an annual evaluation, as stipulated in the current Cerro Coso President’s contract language under “President’s Duties and Responsibilities.” Board retreat minutes from January, 2018 are reintroduced to illustrate how each College President is directly accountable to the college board of trustees in an annual “state of the college” board retreat presentation. (IV.D.4)

KCCD has undergone a district-wide strategic-planning process twice in the last accreditation cycle, with the first plan approved in July 2015 and the current cycle nearing completion. KCCD board objectives/work plan and timeline 2017-2019 is available from BoardDocs and revolves around six major criteria categories: student access, student success, and professional development for district employees, capital infrastructure improvements, fiscal stability, and district organizational review. Strategic planning and evaluation at the district and college levels are aligned and informed by data collected by the Office of Institutional Research and Reports. (IV.D.5)
The board document Elements of Decision-Making crystalizes the district and college processes decision-making, including responsibilities for communication and consultation between the district Chancellor and the college Presidents and college faculty. A recent climate survey with questions addressing district-wide communication indicate that there is a gap between district and college perceptions. On page 24 of that report, Cerro Coso’s results indicated that while an improvement over 2013, only 56% of respondents felt that “Information flows well downward through the organizational structure and 48% that the district-wide decision making process is effective.” (IV.D.6)

At KCCD, Climate Surveys are conducted every three years to provide feedback to the district; the processes stipulated in Elements of Decision Making is also reviewed every three years. District AUR’s and consultation with college presidents and other district cabinet and committee members inform directions and decisions taken by the Chancellor. As a result, the ISER points to recent improvements: a revised Elements flowchart building in new feedback loops in 2016 and the addition of college vice presidents to the Chancellor’s Cabinet in 2017 to “broaden the expertise of college-level operations at the table” (ISER p. 253). Climate Survey and District AUR results are posted on the district website, and the college has identified as a future action plan to “reform and renovate the district annual unit review process” with a 2018-2019 timeline and the Chancellor as lead. (IV.D.7)

Conclusions:
The college meets the Standard.
Team Suggestions and Comments on the College’s Quality Focus Essay

The Cerro Coso Quality Focus Essay (QFE) is a comprehensive document guiding the reader through the process by which the college identified problem areas by examining supportive data, and developed two Action Plans (AP), with several goals defined for each. Each action plan is aligned with subsections of each standard and detailed under each action plan.

**Action Plan 1 (Improve Onboarding of Students):**
The major focus of this action plan is retaining students from pre-enrollment to census day. The college wants to assure they are not the reason for students walking away from campus. To complete the task, the college wants to remove any remaining barriers, streamline processes, provide areas of interests, connect students early to programs, and be a welcoming environment for a strong start to educational plans. In conclusion, it focuses on the student experience from first contact to successfully starting the students’ first semester.

Aligned standards - I.B, II.A, II.C, and III.A

- Tasks to be completed:
  o Development of a well-mapped student experience.
  o Identification of gaps and improvements that are student informed.
  o Revised meta-majors mapped to active degrees and certificates.
  o Development of a comprehensive communication plan.
  o Identification of general education pathways onsite, online, and in the prisons.
  o Professional development activities planned and run for culturally sensitivity training.
  o Professional development activities planned and run for culturally responsive teaching and learning.
  o Development of baseline performance data and usage data.
  o Automation of the application of multiple-measures according to the Multiple Measures Assessment Project (MMAP) and decisions trees.
  o Completion of data tracking to evaluate multiple-measures placement process.

**Action Plan 2 (Completion of Students’ End Goals):**
The major focus of this action plan extends the first one. It focuses on the completion of the student’s education plan from a short-term certificate to a 60 unit transfer. The college understands its vast diverse student population from its large part-time student population to incarceration population. There is an understanding to develop further research surrounding the needs of the diverse student population the institution serves. The additional research shall assist in the increase in the completion of the students’ education goals.
Aligned standards - I.B, II.A, II.B, II.C, and III.A

- Tasks to be completed:
  - Implementation of curriculum to allow students to enter directly into the college level math and English at the main campus and online.
  - Offering Co-requisite English at scale in spring 2019.
  - Focus group results of part-time student needs for services onsite and online.
  - Increased adoption of Online Educational Resources.
  - Professional development activities planned and run for cultural sensitivity training.
  - Professional development activities planned and run for culturally responsive teaching and learning.
  - Development of baseline performance data and usage data.
  - Milestone recognitions/implementation of a recognition system.
  - Development of an online student center.
  - Development of a detailed set of offboarding strategies for 1) students who gained employment in their field, 2) students who gained employment not in their field, 3) transfer students.

Overall, the QFEs are data informed and relevant to improving outcomes at Cerro Coso College; the first one focuses on on-boarding for the students and the second one continues to assists students on completing their education goal. The college focuses on key metrics to assess each action plan. For the first action plan, the metrics focus on students applying to the school, then being enrolled in course at census day. From there, the second action plan focuses on the attempt of units and completion units. Further, the second action plan focuses on the completion of transfer English and math. A majority of the metrics under the ‘sample key performance indicators’ are aligned with the Guided Pathways framework.

The action plans are great natural next steps for the institution. The plans are aligned with accreditation standards and embedded in the institutional governance structure by relying on the SSSP committee.

There is a lack of a procedure in coming to an agreed upon target for each indicator detailed in the two plans. Without a clear understanding of shared metrics, there is a concern the shared ownership will not resonate with the institution. Given the vast area the college serves, there could be a breakdown by site to get a better understanding at each location.

To address this concern, the institution may lean on the recently established Institutional Research Office. The office will be an essential resource in helping with the shared metrics. The addition of agreed upon metrics versus ‘sample’ will be an excellent progression of each plan.
with clear benchmarks. The metrics are defined in each plan, however the office may help with the embedding of these metrics to the program review and planning at the institution. The office will be able to continue with its data facilitation started in fall 2018 and move into a role as an Office of Institutional Effectiveness. This adoption will also assist in helping lead the research priorities at the college.

Further, the college should continue with its formal development of a timeline matrix for the action items. Additionally, the action plans should be adjusted and included into the long-term planning at Cerro Coso College.

In conclusion, the action plans are detailed and excellent student-centered action plans to assist the college in improving student outcomes at Cerro Coso College. With the intentional inclusion of the Institutional Research Office in facilitating the data story, the college should realize demonstrable improvements in its onboarding and completion of student education goals.