



LOS ANGELES SOUTHWEST COLLEGE

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

October 9, 2020

Dr. Dianne Van Hook, Chancellor
College of the Canyons
26455 Rockwell Canyon Road
Santa Clarita, CA 91355

Dear Dr. Van Hook,

Los Angeles Southwest College (LASC) is the only college in South Los Angeles, established in 1967 in response to the Watts Rebellion. As one of nine colleges within the Los Angeles Community College District, LASC has been dedicated to serving the communities of Hawthorne, Gardena, Los Angeles, Inglewood, and unincorporated areas of Los Angeles County; serving the most disadvantaged students within the District. The current student enrollment of the College for our online classes being offered during this global health pandemic is just over 8,000.

Los Angeles Southwest College is a Title V Hispanic Serving Institution and a Historically Black College, serving both populations equitably. In addition, more than 85% of our students receive financial aid. We have worked tirelessly to ensure our students have access to classes and resources to successfully reach their goals.

LASC is a promising educational institution for this community. Through a systematic planning process that places data and research at its core, we have developed and implemented a number of programs that have become hallmarks for our campus and community.

We believe that success begins with planning and have set ambitious and transformative goals for the future. By 2025, we plan to be one of the top five colleges in the state on a number of key student success metrics. Further, we plan to close all equity gaps related to those metrics. These goals are described in detail in our 2021-2025 Educational Master Plan.

Our campus continues to be in a state of transformation and we look forward to support to achieve our ambitious goals. Our areas of focus for Peer Review Team (PRT) assistance include: (1) integrated education master planning; (2) human resources restructuring; (3) develop and expand foundation support; and (4) further develop a comprehensive professional development program.

(1) Integrated Strategic Master Planning:

Our Strategic Education Master Plan (SEMP) is currently being updated for the next five years through a campus-wide effort led by our Strategic Planning Committee. Through surveys and constituency-based open forums, we plan to complete the SEMP by December 2020. LASC is looking for support from the PRT to assist in the development of an integrated strategic education master plan that includes the following plans: Enrollment Management, Technology, and Marketing, with an emphasis on Guided Pathways and the Chancellor's Office Vision for Success by June 30, 2021.



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(2) Human Resources Restructure:

LASC has experienced instability within the administrative team over the past ten years, causing inequitable human resources and staffing levels across the campus. The campus engaged with the Cambridge West Partnership in FY 2019-2020 to develop a Fiscal Recovery and Long-Term Sustainability Report and Recommendations. LASC is looking for support from the PRT to assist us with assessing our human resources infrastructure and staffing to provide recommendations on an infrastructure that supports the LASC's strategic priorities and goals. We would also like to examine best practices on embedding equity and diversity into our hiring committees and processes.

(3) Foundation Support:

The Los Angeles Southwest College Foundation has a legacy of support from the surrounding community. During these transformative times, it is imperative that the Foundation revisit its role, fundraising strategy and capacity to ensure it is in alignment with campus needs. LASC is looking for support from the PRT to assist us with developing a strategic fundraising plan for the Foundation to increase its fundraising capacity to support scholarships, innovation and institutional needs.

(4) Professional Development:

Due to the instability in administrative leadership, there has been a historical gap in investing in professional development within the institution. Specifically, the campus has identified a need for an onboarding and offboarding process, an employee orientation that ingrains new employees into the institution's culture, invests in current employees, and a teaching and learning center. LASC is looking for support from the PRT to assist us with the development of a comprehensive program that provides sustainable professional development experience for all employees.

We truly value and appreciate the support of the IEPI experience and PRT Team expertise. We look forward to engaging in these activities to continue to uplift our students and community. If you should require any additional information, please contact me at (323) 362-3477 or awans@lasc.edu. Thank you for your time and investment in Los Angeles Southwest College.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Seher Awan".

Seher Awan, Ed.D, MBA, MPA
College President

Cc: Dr. Mathew Lee, Special Projects Consultant for Higher Education
Dr. Francisco Rodriguez, Chancellor of Los Angeles Community College District