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LOS ANGELES COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT SUCCESSFULLY SPONSORS PASSAGE OF \$10 MILLION STATE BUDGET ALLOCATION FOR TRAILBLAZING LGBTQ+ PILOT PROGRAMS

Initiative will meet urgent need for safe spaces and greater equity on campuses.

LOS ANGELES—The Los Angeles Community College District (LACCD) successfully advocated for passage of the first-ever California legislative budget earmark that provides \$10 million in funds for LGBTQ+ student support services at community college campuses across the state.

“With California passing the largest and most comprehensive higher education budget in the history of the state—with a distinct focus on making attending community college as affordable and accessible as possible—this initiative meets the needs of LGBTQ+ students and fits with the state’s forward looking and inspiring approach to education equity,” said LACCD Second Vice President and budget sponsor Trustee David Vela.

This one-time request of \$10 million in funding will build long-term supports for LGBTQ+ students, who have been shown to be the least connected to the larger campus community. The funding will be distributed in competitive grants of up to \$500,000 for applying colleges, with allocations determined by the proportional share of students they serve, as well as equity metrics in order to ensure that small rural colleges and large urban community colleges have an equal opportunities to access this transformative funding for LGBTQ+ students.

“LGBTQ+ students are integral to our campuses, and we can and must do more to ensure community colleges are always safe and inclusive,” said LACCD Board President Steve Veres. “This initiative provides the necessary funding to think long-term and build these support systems, which benefits all students.”

As part of the initiative, participating colleges will be able to use their share of the funds for a wide range of authorized purposes that promote mental health, safety and an inclusive academic environment for LGBTQ+ students, including:

- LGBTQ+ Centers
- Development of safe zones and providing safe zone training
- LGBTQ+-focused mental health services
- Housing and basic need services
- LGBTQ+ learning communities
- Support for gay-straight alliance clubs
- LGBTQ+ curriculum development
- Lavender graduation celebrations
- Workshops, professional development or speaker series
- Other initiatives focused on LGBTQ+ community with proven track records of success

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“The California Legislative LGBTQ Caucus recognized early in the pandemic that a full recovery will require a greater commitment to equity. With the help of a historic budget surplus, the LGBTQ Caucus is proud to see its promises fulfilled with landmark investments in our community, specifically for higher education. The \$10 million dollar investment in our LGBTQ+ community college students, who have repeatedly called for more resources, will help create programs and build impactful, sustainable community spaces. These funds are crucial to reminding all California residents that our LGBTQ+ students are valued, they belong, and they deserve our unconditional support,” said Assemblymember Evan Low, Chair of the State Legislative LGBTQ Caucus and Senator Susan Talamantes Eggman, Vice Chair of the Caucus.

“We thank and applaud the California Legislative LGBTQ Caucus for their support of this comprehensive and landmark budget allocation, enabling community colleges across the state to develop innovative model LGBTQ+ programs and services that will serve as proof of concept for possible ongoing funding,” said Trustee Vela.

The Los Angeles Community College District is the nation’s largest and has long been a weathervane for community college districts across the country. This \$10 million in dedicated LGBTQ+ funding sets a strong example and showcases the impact of dedicated resources to meet the needs of students who have traditionally been overlooked.

“Equity and opportunity are our north stars of this district, which is why this initiative is so important,” said LACCD Chancellor Francisco C. Rodriguez, Ph.D. “I have seen firsthand how support centers designed for the individual needs of students build welcoming and inclusive environments that lead to improved outcomes in student retention, support and graduation.”

In 2019, Chancellor Rodriguez established the Chancellor’s Advisory Committee on LGBTQIA+ Affairs, which meets regularly and advises the Chancellor and the Board of Trustees on educational programs and services that support LACCD’s LGBTQIA+ students, staff and faculty. In October 2020, the LACCD Board of Trustees passed a Board Resolution in support of an LGBTQIA+ Bill of Rights that incorporates many of the programs and services that will be funded with this landmark state budget allocation.

The LACCD colleges include: [Los Angeles City College](#); [East Los Angeles College](#); [Los Angeles Harbor College](#); [Los Angeles Mission College](#); [Los Angeles Pierce College](#); [Los Angeles Southwest College](#); [Los Angeles Trade-Technical College](#); [Los Angeles Valley College](#) and [West Los Angeles College](#).

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About the Los Angeles Community College District

We are the Colleges of Los Angeles! LACCD (www.laccd.edu) is the nation’s largest community college district, educating about 250,000 students annually at its nine colleges that serve the residents of more than 36 cities and communities from 900 square miles of Los Angeles County. Since 1969, the District has been providing an important learning pathway for students seeking transfer to four-year colleges or universities while also offering two-year degrees and certificated training programs to Southern California’s diverse workforce in many specialized trades and professions. Follow us on Facebook, [@LACCD](https://www.facebook.com/LACCD), and on Twitter, [@laccd](https://twitter.com/laccd) and Instagram, [@laccd_edu](https://www.instagram.com/laccd_edu).

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