



# Ventura County Community College District

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DR. JAMILLAH MOORE  
CHANCELLOR

June 10, 2013

The Honorable Brian J. Back  
Presiding Judge, Superior Court of California  
County of Ventura  
800 South Victoria Avenue  
Ventura, CA 93009

Re: 2012-13 Ventura County Grand Jury Report Dated April 17, 2013 –  
“Wasting Education Money: Paying Twice” (Report)

RECEIVED

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VENTURA COUNTY  
GRAND JURY

Dear Honorable Brian J. Back:

The Ventura County Community College District (VCCCD) Board of Trustees received on April 15, 2013, the above-referenced Report prepared and filed by the 2012-13 Ventura County Grand Jury. The Board of Trustees, Chancellor, and College Presidents of Moorpark, Oxnard, and Ventura thoroughly reviewed the Report and have jointly prepared the attached Response to the Findings and Recommendations contained in the Report.

Respectfully submitted,

Bernardo M. Perez,  
Board Chair

Dianne B. McKay,  
Board Vice Chair

Stephen P. Blum, Esq.  
Trustee

Arturo D. Hernández,  
Trustee

Larry Kennedy,  
Trustee

Jamillah Moore, Ed.D.,  
Chancellor

Pam Eddinger, Ph.D.,  
Moorpark College President

Richard Durán, Ed.D.,  
Oxnard College President

Robin Calote, Ed.D.,  
Ventura College President

c: Mr. Jay Whitney, Foreperson, Ventura County Grand Jury

## VCCCD RESPONSE TO GRAND JURY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

**Report Title:** Ventura County Grand Jury 2012-2013 Final Report,  
Wasting Education Money: Paying Twice

**Report Date:** April 17, 2013

**Response By:** VCCCD Board of Trustees, Chancellor, and College Presidents of Moorpark,  
Oxnard, and Ventura

### Findings

- I (we) agree with the findings numbered: None. Statements/explanations attached.
- I (we) agree wholly or partially with the findings numbered: None. Statements/explanations attached.

### Recommendations

- Recommendations numbered \_\_\_\_\_ have been implemented.
- Recommendations numbered R-01, R-02, R-03 have not yet been implemented, but will be implemented in the future.
- Recommendations numbered \_\_\_\_\_ require further analysis.
- Recommendations numbered \_\_\_\_\_ will not be implemented because they are not warranted or are not reasonable.

Date: June 10, 2013 Signed: Signatures/titles provided on previous page.

Number of Pages: Six Pages Total

## VCCCD RESPONSES TO GRAND JURY FINDINGS

**FI-01. The failure of Ventura County K-12 schools to adequately prepare students for college-level classes results in the Ventura County taxpayers paying for the same education two or more times for remedial students, once in K-12 and again in college. (FA-08)**

### **VCCCD Response to F1-01**

VCCCD disagrees with F1-01. Providing remediation for basic skills students is part of the mission of community colleges. Students enter the community college system from various points other than directly from high school.

**FI-02. Students taking remedial, non-transferable courses, drop out of college at a greater rate than students taking transferable courses and thus use resources that college-prepared students could be using. (FA-02-05)**

### **VCCCD Response to F1-02**

VCCCD disagrees with F1-02. Students taking remedial, non-transferable courses do not drop out of college at a greater rate than students taking transferable courses. Students who succeed in remedial courses persist equally, if not in greater numbers, than those entering transferable courses without remedial education. The current student success data points to the contrary.

**FI-03. Students taking remedial, non-transferable courses, use a disproportionate amount of financial aid and other district resources that could otherwise be used by students taking transferable courses. This includes costs for the remedial, non-transferable courses that detract from the total number of courses available for transferring students. (FA-11-14)**

### **VCCCD Response to F1-03**

VCCCD disagrees with F1-03. Financial aid rules allow for assistance for a set number of units in pre-college and college-level courses. There is no evidence that students taking remedial courses use more financial aid than other student groups.

**FI-04. Providing remedial courses at the community college has put a higher and unnecessary burden on the taxpayer to provide the same education twice (once in K-12 and again in college). This includes the time and energy expended by student and faculty, as well as the cost of facility use. (FA-01-03, 05, 07, 09)**

### **VCCCD Response to F1-04**

VCCCD disagrees with F1-04. The need to educate students for college work is essential to the success of the future workforce. Not assisting students in fulfilling their potential will eventually cost more money, time, and resources in supporting unsuccessful educated citizens.

**FI-05. It is more cost-effective for taxpayers to use alternative methods of remediation, such as on-line programs, adult education, vocational training and private tutorial programs. (FA-10, 11) [Ref-17, 18]**

### **VCCCD Response to F1-05**

VCCCD disagrees with F1-05. It is not necessarily more cost effective to use alternative methods of remediation because there are no large scale structures available to do this work without infrastructure building and additional funding from the State of California.

**FI-06. The overall average public high school graduation rate for San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, and Ventura Counties is 72%, which is lower than the national average. (FA-02, 07, 08) (Att-01) [Ref-06]**

### **VCCCD Response to F1-06**

VCCCD disagrees with F1-06. In April 2013, the data source referenced in the Report indicates Ventura County graduation rates were 83% in 2005; 82.1% in 2006; 82.2% in 2007; 82% in 2008, and 83.1% in 2009. These rates exceeded state average rates during the period of 2005-2009 and were within two percentage points of national graduation rates during the same time period.

**FI-07. The 2008-2009 percentages of Ventura County students that scored at or above the proficiency level in English was 58.4%. (FA-19) (Att-02)**

### **VCCCD Response to F1-07**

VCCCD disagrees with F1-07. The information is outdated. VCOE data for 2011-12 indicates 62.5% of Ventura County high school students are advanced or proficient based on state tests.

**FI-08. The 2008-2009 percentages of Ventura County students that scored at or above the proficiency level in math was 59.4%. (FA-19) (Att-02)**

### **VCCCD Response to F1-08**

VCCCD disagrees with F1-08. The information is outdated. VCOE data for 2011-12 indicates 63.1% of Ventura County high school students are advanced or proficient based on state tests.

**FI-09. Nationwide, community colleges spend more than \$3.7 billion a year, which includes \$1.4 billion for remedial education after graduating from high school, which could provide classes and services for college-prepared students. (FA-03-05) [Ref-23]**

### **VCCCD Response to F1-09**

VCCCD disagrees with F1-09. The 2006 data is outdated information. This is also national data, which is not appropriate for County-wide assessment.

**FI-10. Close to \$2.3 billion is lost to our economy because students who are required to take remedial reading are more likely to drop out of college without having earned a degree, thereby earning less and impacting the local tax base. In California over the last three years, \$809 million was removed from the funding of community colleges, causing reduced class offerings and services. (FA-07, 08, 11, 20) [Ref-22] (Att-05)**

### **VCCCD Response to F1-10**

VCCCD disagrees with F1-10. The information is outdated and non-specific to Ventura County. In addition, the cost of uneducated students and an unprepared workforce is much greater in the long view than the current investment in remediation.

**FI-11. A recent survey of the various community colleges in Ventura County revealed that there were 9,913 remedial students. Of those, 2,067 were taking remedial English and 6,211 were taking remedial math in the Fall of 2011. There may be students taking both English and math which could account for discrepancies in numbers. Therefore, these college resources are not available to college-prepared students. (FA-22) (Att-07)**

### **VCCCD Response to F1-11**

VCCCD disagrees with F1-11. The community college mission includes basic skills remediation.

**FI-12. In the Fall of 2011 there were 354 remedial courses in the various community colleges within the VCCCD. In the Spring of 2012 there were 325 remedial courses offered in the VCCCD. Therefore, these college resources are not available to college-prepared students. (FA-21, 22) (Att-07)**

### **VCCCD Response to F1-12**

VCCCD disagrees with F1-12. The community college mission includes basic skills remediation.

**FI-13. There is no evidence that there is a task force with the VCCCD and the Superintendent of Schools. (FA-26)**

### **VCCCD Response to F1-13**

VCCCD disagrees with F1-13. No contact was made by the Grand Jury with VCCCD or the Chancellor to ascertain whether there is collaboration. The Ventura County Regional P-16 Council exists as a deliberative and policy-recommendation body for this work. The P-16 Council, formed in 2007, addresses preschool through college support to reduce achievement gaps, high school students' college preparation, increased college completion for Ventura County students, and educational support/awareness to improve academic excellence. Common Core State Standards of the K-12 System are discussed and contextualized with Community College Curriculum. This work is constantly being performed by VCCCD faculty in the field, and via Transitions and Tech Prep Career Pathway work as well. The P-16 Council is comprised of approximately 40 key decision-makers in education, business, parent groups, and community agencies and has initiated linkages between higher education institutions to provide mentoring and tutoring to students in identified area high schools. The Council facilitates partnerships, develops broad-based collaboration, and increases awareness of the important of education in Ventura County.

The VCCCD Chancellor and VCOE Superintendent communicate on an ongoing basis. VCOE also participates as a member of VCCCD's Citizens Advisory Body, a group of Ventura County community leaders who provide community input in educational planning. Input includes instructional alignment and services between VCCCD and local high schools.

## VCCCD RESPONSES TO GRAND JURY RECOMMENDATIONS

**R-01. That the Ventura County Superintendent of Schools, in conjunction with the Chancellor of Ventura County Community College District, shall meet and discuss a set of learning outcomes and curriculum expectations that are consistent with students' entry to the VCCCD. (FI-03, 05, 06, 08, 10)**

### VCCCD Response to R-01

Recommendation 01 will be implemented in the future as part of California's recent adoption of Common Core State Standards. The new standards identify learning outcomes and curriculum expectations to ensure students are college and career ready. Implementation of the new standards and assessments will begin in 2014-15. Please see Common Core State Standards Systems Implementation Plan for California (DOC; 9MB; Revised 11-Oct-2012) | PDF (Revised 11-Oct-2012) for the full implementation plan.

In addition, California is part of the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium, which is developing the Common Core State Standards assessments. To increase connections to college readiness, the governing states of the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium have approved the initial College Content Readiness Policy. The College Content Readiness Policy will guide the interpretation of test scores from the Grade 11 Smarter Balanced assessments for course placement in Grade 12 and in higher education. Smarter Balanced state representatives, including those from K-12 and higher education, worked to develop College Content Readiness Policy to determine levels of high school students' readiness for entry-level, credit-bearing coursework at a college or university or entry into the high-skill workforce. The complete English-language arts/literacy and mathematics initial ALDs and revised college content readiness policy are available on the Smarter Balanced Achievement Level Descriptors and College Content Readiness Web page at <http://www.smarterbalanced.org/achievement-level-descriptors-and-college-readiness/>.

The Ventura County Regional P-16 Council will continue to focus on a continuum of learning for all Ventura County students. P-16 Council meetings will include on the agenda discussion of the Common Core State Standards and new assessment system. This will strengthen aligned learning outcomes and curriculum expectations in Ventura County.

Also see VCCCD Response to F1-13.

**R-02. That the County Superintendent of Schools, in conjunction with the Chancellor of Ventura County Community College District, create a taskforce to develop a partnership that will prepare a set of learning outcomes and curriculum expectations in the areas of English, reading and math. (FI-03, 05, 06, 08, 09, 10)**

Please see VCCCD Response to R-01.

**R-03. That the VCCCD consider a policy that each college in the VCCCD develops an assessment for English, reading and math with the same placement outcomes. (FI-01-14)**

### VCCCD Response to R-03

The Community College System of California is developing state-level standards for assessment. Evidence includes the current issue of the Student Success Scorecard and the mandates of the Student Success Task Force. The Colleges' assessment systems also meet the accrediting standards of the Western Association of Schools and College, Accrediting Commission of Community and Junior Colleges.