



**Rancho Santiago Community College District (RSCCD)  
Community, Student and Staff Evaluation of  
Board of Trustees' Operations and Performance  
(*Respondents Who Regularly Attend BOT Meetings*)**

**October 2013**

**Background**

Since 2009, the RSCCD Board of Trustees has implemented an annual review its internal operations and performance. The Board invites community representatives, faculty/staff and students who interact with them on a regular basis to offer feedback. An online survey instrument is made available to these individuals including (but not limited to) the associated student government presidents, presidents of the academic senates, the college presidents, the chancellor, vice chancellors, representatives of the District's employee unions, and community members who serve on the District bond oversight committees or foundations. The Board reviews the input prior to their own individual assessment using the same survey instrument. At the next meeting, the Board reviews its collective input and develops goals that members want to work on for the year. The following year, the Board asks the community, staff and students to reassess them so they can evaluate the degree to which their goals have been met and to continue to refine the Board's internal operations and performance, if needed.

The survey instrument was disseminated online to eighty-eight individuals; 27 surveys were completed (a 31% response rate). Forty-four percent (n=12) of respondents reported that they regularly attend Board of Trustees meetings: 1 student, 10 faculty and staff, and 1 community member. **Those data are included in this report.**

**Summary of Findings**

The Board is unanimously rated as satisfactory (100% of respondents "agree" or "strongly agree") in 19 of the forty-four areas rated by respondents (43%).

The Board is rated lowest on focusing on policy in Board discussions, and not administrative matters (67%), acting on behalf of the entire community (64%), understanding the colleges' educational programs and services (64%), and following communication procedures with staff (63%)

### ***Comparisons with Prior Years' Findings:***

In making comparisons between 2013 responses and those of prior years, it is important to note that the number of respondents from one survey year to the next varies greatly and that percentages may fluctuate widely due to the low response counts.

The most significant positive changes in ratings compared to the 2012 survey all related to policy roles:

- Giving adequate attention to the mission, goals, and future planning of the district (+40 percentage points),
- Appropriately involved in defining the vision and goals of the district (+35 percentage points),
- Adopting a planning and evaluation process which assures the educational needs of students and community are effectively and efficiently met (+32 percentage points), and
- Regularly developing and reviewing goals for continuous improvement (+31 percentage points).

The most significant drop in ratings since the 2012 survey is in the Board following communication procedures with staff; the downward trend (since 2011) continues with a fifteen percentage point loss (from 78% in 2012 to 63% in 2013).

### ***Other Findings:***

While this core group of respondents who regularly attend Board meetings tended to respond to all items, a significant proportion indicated “not applicable or don’t know” as their responses to questions about board relations with District staff and leadership:

- Keeping the chancellor informed of community contacts (50%),
- Following communication procedures with staff (33%),
- Completing the chancellor evaluation process and using the results to strengthen chancellor’s performance and relationships (33%).

Attention may be needed to develop and/or promote a better understanding of these issues.

Detail data follows.

## Detail of Findings

<b>2013 Results of the Community, Student and Staff's Evaluation of Board of Trustees' Operations and Performance by Respondents who Regularly Attend BOT Meetings</b>							
	<b>Distribution of Valid Responses</b>				<b>Total # Respondents</b>	<b>Average Rating (excluding n/a)</b>	<b>Not applicable or don't know</b>
	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>			
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>			
<b>Board Organization and Operation</b>							
Board meetings are conducted in a manner in which the purposes are achieved effectively and efficiently.	58%	42%	0%	0%	12	1.42	0%
Board members respect each others' opinions.	42%	58%	0%	0%	12	1.58	0%
The board conducts its meetings in compliance with state laws, including The Brown Act.	58%	33%	8%	0%	12	1.50	0%
Board members understand that they have no legal authority beyond board meetings.	30%	50%	10%	10%	10	2.00	17%
Board members regularly seek the opinion of the student trustee.	27%	64%	9%	0%	11	1.82	8%
<b>Policy Role</b>							
Board meetings focus on policy issues that relate to board responsibilities.	27%	64%	9%	0%	11	1.82	8%
The board focuses on policy in board discussion, not administrative matters.	17%	50%	33%	0%	12	2.17	0%
The board is knowledgeable about the mission and purpose of the institution.	58%	25%	8%	8%	12	1.67	0%
The board clearly delegates the administration of the colleges to the chancellor.	27%	55%	18%	0%	11	1.91	8%
The board ensures compliance with federal and state laws and measures for emergency response.	44%	56%	0%	0%	9	1.56	25%
<b>Strategic Planning</b>							
The board understands the budget process.	8%	75%	17%	0%	12	2.08	0%
The board gives adequate attention to the mission, goals, and future planning of the district.	42%	58%	0%	0%	12	1.58	0%
The board regularly develops and reviews goals for continuous improvement.	33%	67%	0%	0%	12	1.67	0%
The board has adopted a planning and evaluation process which assures that the educational needs of students and the community are effectively and efficiently met.	25%	67%	*%	0%	12	1.83	0%
The board understands the colleges' educational programs and services.	18%	46%	18%	18%	11	2.36	8%
The board is appropriately involved in defining the vision and goals of the district.	46%	54%	0%	0%	11	1.55	8%
The board understands the financial audit and accepts responsibility for implementation of its recommendations.	42%	58%	0%	0%	12	1.58	0%
The board understands the fiscal condition of the organization and provides fiscal oversight to assure the financial stability of the district.	33%	58%	8%	0%	12	1.75	0%
The board understands the accreditation process and accepts responsibility for implementation of its recommendations.	17%	67%	8%	8%	12	2.08	0%

**2013 Results of the Community, Student and Staff's Evaluation of  
Board of Trustees' Operations and Performance  
by Respondents who Regularly Attend BOT Meetings**

	Distribution of Valid Responses				Total # Respondents	Average Rating (excluding n/a)	Not applicable or don't know
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree			
	1	2	3	4			
<b>Board Relations with the Chancellor, Presidents, Faculty, and Staff</b>							
The board reaches decisions on the basis of the study of available background data and consideration of the recommendation of the chancellor.	27%	73%	0%	0%	11	1.73	8%
The board keeps the chancellor informed of community contacts.	17%	83%	0%	0%	6	1.83	50%
The board follows a procedure for annual evaluations of the chancellor.	56%	44%	0%	0%	9	1.44	25%
The board understands the difference between its policy and oversight roles and the roles of the chancellor and staff.	64%	36%	0%	0%	11	2.36	8%
The board and chancellor have a positive, cooperative relationship.	55%	45%	0%	0%	11	1.45	8%
The board understands its role and that of the chancellor, presidents, faculty, and staff.	25%	50%	25%	0%	12	2.00	0%
The board sustains a strong board/chancellor partnership and provides ongoing support for the chancellor to foster a strong partnership.	30%	70%	0%	0%	10	1.70	17%
The board completes the chancellor evaluation process and uses the results to strengthen the chancellor's performance and relationships.	38%	50%	13%	0%	8	1.75	33%
The board follows communication procedures with staff.	25%	37%	13%	25%	8	2.38	33%
Trustees work directly with community leaders and elected officials (local, state, national) to address issues/legislation that affect the college district.	55%	45%	0%	0%	11	1.45	8%
<b>Community Relations – Advocacy</b>							
Board members are knowledgeable about community college and state-related issues.	17%	67%	17%	0%	12	2.00	0%
The board acts as an advocate for community colleges.	36%	55%	9%	0%	11	1.73	8%
Board members participate actively in community activities.	33%	58%	8%	0%	12	1.75	0%
Board agendas include legislative and state policy issues that will impact the district.	33%	67%	0%	0%	12	1.67	0%
Board members act on behalf of the entire community.	27%	36%	18%	18%	11	2.27	8%
The board recognizes and celebrates positive accomplishments of the district and colleges.	58%	33%	0%	8%	12	1.58	0%
The board works to build a positive image of the district in the community.	50%	42%	0%	8%	12	1.67	0%
Board members adhere to policies for dealing with college, community citizens, and the media.	50%	30%	10%	10%	10	1.80	17%
The community and district employees are aware of who the elected trustees are and their role in district governance.	2&%	73%	0%	0%	11	1.73	8%

**2013 Results of the Community, Student and Staff's Evaluation of  
Board of Trustees' Operations and Performance**

	Distribution of Valid Responses				Total # Respondents	Average Rating (excluding n/a)	Not applicable or don't know
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree			
	1	2	3	4			
<b>Board Leadership, Ethics, and Standards of Conduct</b>							
The board understands collective bargaining and its role in the process.	46%	54%	0%	0%	11	1.55	8%
The board practices appropriate collegial consultation (participatory governance).	18%	73%	9%	0%	11	1.91	8%
The board maintains confidentiality of privileged information.	30%	60%	0%	10%	10	1.90	17%
The board makes decisions in the best interest of students, the colleges, and the entire district.	33%	50%	8%	8%	12	1.92	0%
The board operates ethically without conflict of interest following established board policies.	36%	36%	27%	0%	11	1.91	8%
Board members participate in trustee development activities.	60%	40%	0%	0%	10	1.40	17%

<b>Comparison of Results of the Community, Student and Staff's Evaluation of Board of Trustees' Operations and Performance, 2011-2013</b> <i>(Respondents Who Regularly Attend Meetings)</i>				
	% "strongly agree" or "agree"			% change from 2012
	2013	2012	2011	
	n=12	n=20	n=17	
<b>Board Organization and Operation</b>				
Board meetings are conducted in a manner in which the purposes are achieved effectively and efficiently.	100%	70%	93%	30%
Board members respect each others' opinions.	100%	75%	93%	25%
The board conducts its meetings in compliance with state laws, including The Brown Act.	92%	85%	94%	7%
Board members understand that they have no legal authority beyond board meetings.	80%	85%	86%	-5%
Board members regularly seek the opinion of the student trustee.	91%	79%	79%	12%
<b>Policy Roles</b>				
Board meetings focus on policy issues that relate to board responsibilities.	91%	90%	94%	1%
The board focuses on policy in board discussion, not administrative matters.	67%	75%	85%	-8%
The board is knowledgeable about the mission and purpose of the institution.	83%	80%	93%	3%
The board clearly delegates the administration of the colleges to the chancellor.	82%	90%	94%	-8%
The board ensures compliance with federal and state laws and measures for emergency response.	100%	94%	100%	6%
<b>Strategic Planning</b>				
The board understands the budget process.	83%	70%	66%	13%
The board gives adequate attention to the mission, goals, and future planning of the district.	100%	60%	80%	40%
The board regularly develops and reviews goals for continuous improvement.	100%	69%	78%	31%
The board has adopted a planning and evaluation process which assures that the educational needs of students and the community are effectively and efficiently met.	92%	60%	73%	32%
The board understands the colleges' educational programs and services.	64%	55%	80%	9%
The board is appropriately involved in defining the vision and goals of the district.	100%	65%	93%	35%
The board understands the financial audit and accepts responsibility for implementation of its recommendations.	100%	90%	94%	10%
The board understands the fiscal condition of the organization and provides fiscal oversight to assure the financial stability of the district.	92%	80%	80%	12%
The board understands the accreditation process and accepts responsibility for implementation of its recommendations.	83%	65%	74%	18%

<b>Results of the Community, Student and Staff's Evaluation of Board of Trustees' Operations and Performance, 2011-2013 (ADD COLUMN) (Respondents Who Regularly Attend Meetings)</b>				
	% "strongly agree" or "agree"			% change from 2012
	2013	2012	2011	
	n=12	n=20	n=17	
<b>Board Relations with the Chancellor, Presidents, Faculty, and Staff</b>				
The board reaches decisions on the basis of the study of available background data and consideration of the recommendation of the chancellor.	100%	95%	100%	5%
The board keeps the chancellor informed of community contacts.	100%	100%	100%	0%
The board follows a procedure for annual evaluations of the chancellor.	100%	100%	100%	0%
The board understands the difference between its policy and oversight roles and the roles of the chancellor and staff.	100%	73%	93%	27%
The board and chancellor have a positive, cooperative relationship.	100%	94%	100%	6%
The board understands its role and that of the chancellor, presidents, faculty, and staff.	75%	63%	93%	12%
The board sustains a strong board/chancellor partnership and provides ongoing support for the chancellor to foster a strong partnership.	100%	100%	100%	0%
The board completes the chancellor evaluation process and uses the results to strengthen the chancellor's performance and relationships.	88%	85%	92%	3%
The board follows communication procedures with staff.	63%	78%	89%	-15%
Trustees work directly with community leaders and elected officials (local, state, national) to address issues/legislation that affect the college district.	100%	88%	98%	12%
<b>Community Relations – Advocacy</b>				
Board members are knowledgeable about community college and state-related issues.	100%	80%	94%	20%
The board acts as an advocate for community colleges.	91%	70%	100%	21%
Board members participate actively in community activities.	92%	88%	86%	4%
Board agendas include legislative and state policy issues that will impact the district.	100%	79%	93%	21%
Board members act on behalf of the entire community.	64%	63%	78%	1%
The board recognizes and celebrates positive accomplishments of the district and colleges.	92%	85%	93%	7%
The board works to build a positive image of the district in the community.	92%	74%	85%	18%
Board members adhere to policies for dealing with college, community citizens, and the media.	80%	90%	100%	-10%
The community and district employees are aware of who the elected trustees are and their role in district governance.	100%	65%	71%	35%
<b>Board Leadership, Ethics, and Standards of Conduct</b>				
The board understands collective bargaining and its role in the process.	100%	78%	100%	22%
The board practices appropriate collegial consultation (participatory governance).	91%	74%	86%	17%
The board maintains confidentiality of privileged information.	90%	100%	97%	-10%
The board makes decisions in the best interest of students, the colleges, and the entire district	83%	63%	79%	20%
The board operates ethically without conflict of interest following established board policies.	73%	61%	91%	12%
Board members participate in trustee development activities.	100%	91%	96%	9%

## 2013 Respondents' Comments

### **Board's greatest strengths:**

- 1) The Board has a respectful relationship internally among its members. For this reason, meetings run smoothly. 2) The Board delegates responsibility to the Chancellor appropriately. In addition, experts within the district (e.g., related to accreditation, planning, budget, facilities, technology), and without (e.g., HMC Architectural Firm) are sought to inform the Board so decisions may be made with the best information possible.
- Board members demonstrate respect for each other. Board meetings are run with decorum. Differences of opinions are expressed appropriately and respectfully.
- It is clear that board members are invested in the success of students. Board meetings over the last year have had an enhanced positive tone. The recognition of faculty in addition to classified and administrative staff has been much appreciated. Furthermore, the relaxed yet professional environment of the meetings has made them more enjoyable. I commend current President Barrios for her leadership with this change in tone and appreciate the collegiality among board members during the meetings.
- The board appears to genuinely care about the needs of the students expressed by each of the ASG presidents.
- Very positive energy and attitudes in the meetings. They seem to get along well.
- Very professional and to the point
- Willingness
- Meetings are run professionally.
- Relationship with community and communication.

### **Major accomplishments of the Board in the past year:**

- 1) The Board has taken seriously the need to be in compliance with USDE Regulations as well as ACCJC standards and policies. To that end, the Board has developed this evaluation of itself and has developed a planning mechanism that is more profound than it was in the past, in answer to an accreditation recommendation of 2008. 2) The Board also delegates responsibility to the Chancellor, who has created a district governance structure which amplifies the planning-budget alignment issue. This structure has made possible the development of a Comprehensive Master Plan and Strategic Plan with clear direction for the district. This is a major accomplishment.
- Effective advocacy for positive legislation regarding community colleges. Maintained and facilitated good relationships with the community that our district serves. Effective oversight of facilities related items.
- Major gifts received.
- The Board has transitioned the new members well. The Board has participated in a number of training activities that have helped to inform the Board about their roles and expectations. The Board has embraced the training. This is helping the Board to be more cohesive.



### *Areas in which the Board could improve:*

- 1) The board needs to remember that each of the trustees is there to represent RSCCD not just their small part of the district. Board members have seemed more dedicated to the area they represent than maintaining a strong district. Board members' acting like this destroys morale at the college that isn't currently in favor. 2) It is always wonderful to recognize the accomplishments of faculty, staff, and students. Ideally, you want to recognize one member from each of the campuses but that isn't always possible. The board has recognized the FT Classified Staff Member of the Year from both colleges and the SAC Distinguished Faculty Member this year. The board did recognize the 2014 Orange County Teacher of the Year (Alex Taber, SCC) but not the SCC Faculty Excellence Award Winner. Dr. Taber deserves recognition for his external award but the way the board handled the situation was extremely disrespectful to SCC's Faculty Excellence Award winner. Just because Dr. Taber was recognized by Orange County does not mean the year's SCC winner should not be recognized just because you want to recognize one member from each campus. 3.) It is extremely inappropriate for board members to become involved in disputes between the academic senate and FARSCCD. It has the appearance of board members taking sides in a dispute that they shouldn't even know about. Internal disputes happen all of the time but the board should never get involved in them from their policy making role.
- Better participation from other Board Members.
- Rather than seeming to support a particular area in or college of the district, board members ought to advocate as representatives for the entire district rather than a portion of it. It seems that some board members do not follow RSCCD board policies regarding communication outside of board meetings, which could prove problematic with accreditation. It would prove beneficial if board members focused more on the work of the district and the workings of community colleges than on seemingly posturing for future political endeavors.
- The Board needs to continue to work on representing the interests of the District as a whole and not become overly focused on representing their area of election. The students that attend our colleges should be the focus and not the college that the Board perceives that it represents. This is critical to moving our students forward and to not creating unnecessary and divisive competition between the colleges. The issue of Board members inappropriately communicating with faculty continues to create problems. There is still a perception that some faculty have ""special"" relationships with board members and that board members have ""pet"" programs at the college and as such, violate and interfere with college processes.
- There is a learning curve for anyone in a new position. New Board members do have some training, but more is needed related to accreditation issues and perhaps other issues. Also, even though Board members are elected from an area of the district, once on the Board, it is one Board. Votes affect all the students of the district. It is not always clear that there isn't a bias to one area. (This is different from representing the community of an area, which is clearly needed. However, representing the community must be measured with the effect it will have district-wide.) In other words, one must keep in mind that SCC and SAC are part of one district: they are not two districts pasted together!
- Understand more about faculty roles in shared governance and how they relate to the ""10+1.
- With the redistricting has come an attitude that particular board members are representing those slices of the district rather than the district as a whole.