Date: August 26, 2025

To: Dr. Jennifer Zellet, Team Chair
Dr. Denise Richardson, Vice Chair
Melynie Schiel, ACCJC Staff Liaison

From: Dr. Brent Calvin, President/Superintendent, College of the Sequoias

CC: Dr. Jesse Wilcoxson, Accreditation Liaison Officer

Re: College Update on Core Inquiries

College of the Sequoias is looking forward to the upcoming Focused Site Visit. In order to facilitate the team's review process, please see below pertinent college developments pertaining to the core inquiries, in addition to evidence the team may find helpful in advance of the visit.

Core Inquiry 1: The Team would like to further understand how the College ensures regular and substantive interaction between students and instructors in distance education courses. The Team would also like to further understand how courses are intentional in their design for ease of student progress and navigability, promoting equitable access and success.
Standards or Policies: Standard 2.6, Policy on Distance Education and Correspondence Education

Briefly describe any institutional improvements, strengthening of processes, documented outcomes, discussions or reflections which have occurred pertaining to Core Inquiry 1. (300 words max.)

The District is confident that it meets the eligibility requirements and standards related to regular and substantive interaction (RSI), course navigability, and equitable access in distance education. Prior to the Core Inquiry, the District had already begun strengthening processes in this area, including updated faculty union agreements in Fall 2024 that formalized RSI training and recertification requirements for online instruction.

The District has implemented a multi-layered approach to ensure compliance and instructional quality. During Spring 2025, internal peer reviews were conducted for online courses using the ACCJC RSI Quality Continuum Rubric. At least one online course per faculty member was reviewed, and a detailed list of faculty requiring additional RSI support was developed. These faculty were enrolled in a targeted Canvas-based RSI course. A second course review was conducted by a faculty-dean team, and any outstanding concerns are scheduled for a third review in Fall 2025. This process is governed by agreements with both full-time (COSTA) and part-time (COSAFA) faculty unions to ensure consistency, support, and non-evaluative use of results.

In addition to RSI monitoring, the District launched course design improvements aligned with ACCJC and CVC-OEI rubric standards. A campus-wide Canvas template was introduced to support accessible, navigable course structures. Online instructors were invited to webinars and given resources on best practices for course layout. Faculty were encouraged to implement simplified navigation, orientation modules, and consistent sidebar organization in their Fall 2025 courses to improve the student experience.

The Fall 2024 union agreements require all faculty teaching online to recertify every three years through either a comprehensive training course or peer review. This ensures continued alignment with RSI expectations, accreditation standards, and student-centered design. In the unlikely event that an instructor does not recertify or fails to provide required RSI, they may be precluded from teaching online classes in the future per the agreements reached with our faculty unions.

Through these efforts, the District affirms that it is in compliance with RSI and course design standards and remains committed to supporting high-quality online instruction.

Evidence: Provide the list of evidentiary documents which will assist the team to better understand college processes, outcomes, and activities pertaining to Core Inquiry 1.

1. COSAFA and COSTA Master Agreement Language on Distance Education Certification and Re-certification
2. COSAFA and COSTA MOU Language on RSI
3. Full-Time Faculty RSI Checks – Summary
4. Part-Time Faculty RSI Checks - Summary
5. Bite-Sized RSI training information

6. [Minimum Course Navigation Requirements](#)
7. [RSI update and support for online course navigation email](#)
8. [Course Navigation Webinar Email](#)
9. [Distance Education Initial and Re-certification Training](#)

Context/additional information (if applicable): Please feel free to provide any additional relevant information that provides context for the college's work.   (300 words max.)

Core Inquiry 2: The team would like to learn more about how the institution ensures that employees are evaluated on a regular basis.

Standards or Policies: Standard 3.3

Briefly describe any institutional improvements, strengthening of processes, documented outcomes, discussions or reflections which have occurred pertaining to Core Inquiry 2. (300 words max.)

The District complies with all contractual and regulatory requirements for employee evaluations. In 2024–25, the District enhanced its processes by adopting the NEOED platform to support more efficient tracking, documentation, and oversight of evaluations for management and classified employees.

Management evaluations follow a structured three-part process with a final component due in June. The NEOED system provides automated reminders to managers and supervisors and allows supervisors to monitor progress through a dedicated dashboard. Documentation confirms completion of the 2024–25 evaluation cycle for managers.

Classified evaluations are also managed through NEOED. The system has improved transparency and consistency by centralizing tracking and notifications. Evidence demonstrates timely completion of evaluations for classified staff during the current cycle.

Full-time faculty evaluations remain governed by the established timelines outlined in the collective bargaining agreement. Faculty are evaluated annually during their probationary period and every three years after tenure is granted. The Office of Academic Services monitors this schedule and maintains internal tracking records. Supporting documents include the evaluation process and tracking logs.

Part-time faculty are evaluated in their first semester and every three years thereafter. These evaluations are tracked in Banner by Human Resources. HR notifies deans at the start of each semester of faculty scheduled for evaluation. Upon completion, results are submitted to HR and logged in Banner.

The District remains confident in the integrity of its evaluation processes and is committed to continuous improvement through the integration of technology to enhance consistency, accountability, and ease of use.

Evidence: Provide the list of evidentiary documents pertaining to Core Inquiry 2 which will assist the team to better understand current college processes and outcomes.

10. Full-time Faculty Evaluation Process and Flowchart
11. Full-time Faculty Tracking 2024-25
12. Part-time Faculty Evaluation and Tracking Process
13. Part-time Faculty Tracking 2024-25
14. Management and Classified Evaluation Process
15. Management and Confidential Evaluation Tracking 2024-25
16. Classified Tracking 2024-25

Context/additional information (if applicable): Please feel free to provide any additional relevant information that provides context for the college's work.   (300 words max.)

Core Inquiry 3: The Team is eager to review further documentation and evidence that offers exemplars of the planning documents and processes in action. Specific elements like Institutional Goals, Program Review, the robust communication and feedback, and overall structure of the decision-making and planning documents indicate institutionalized, integrated and comprehensive planning.

Standards or Policies: Standards 1.2, 2.2, 3.5, and 4.3

Briefly describe any institutional improvements, strengthening of processes, documented outcomes, discussions or reflections which have occurred pertaining to Core Inquiry 3. (300 words max.)

The District takes great pride in its culture of continuous improvement and strong integration of planning, governance, and resource allocation. These processes are consistent and highly participatory, supported by broad engagement across the institution. The recent adoption of the COS 2025–2035 Master Plan and 2025–2028 Strategic Plan reflects the District's long-standing commitment to thoughtful, data-informed planning that drives institutional effectiveness and student success.

The District's integrated planning model ensures alignment across program review, strategic initiatives, and resource allocation. Clear connections between evaluation, planning, and improvement are visible throughout our governance structure. As examples, the provided 2024–25 program review narratives document how analysis of disaggregated data has informed assessment strategies and driven targeted changes. The EMT program review report

illustrates how direct links between evaluation and resource planning lead to strengthened student outcomes.

The Institutional Program Review Committee minutes from April 2025 provide an exemplar of robust cross-functional communication that supports participatory decision-making. This meeting, which occurs annually, invites representatives of stakeholder groups to attend the committee meeting and provide feedback on the program review process. The "Closing the Feedback Loop" document outlines how the District uses program review outcomes and institutional assessment results to guide decisions and communicate improvements across the college community.

Student learning outcomes and assessment results are systematically used to refine instruction and improve engagement. Provided examples of faculty-driven change based on learning assessment data demonstrate the District's commitment to meaningful, actionable evaluation.

The ZTC/AI program, developed in partnership with Stanford University, is a clear example of how resource allocation rooted in strategic planning enhances teaching and learning. Stories of individual student achievement, such as those of Isac Burris and Nicholas Elizondo, bring these institutional efforts to life.

The District's planning and evaluation practices are comprehensive, collaborative, and effective, serving as a model of excellence in linking planning, assessment, and student-centered improvement.

Evidence: Provide the list of evidentiary documents pertaining to Core Inquiry 3 which will assist the team to better understand current college processes and outcomes.

17. 2025-2035 Master Plan
18. 2025-2028 Strategic Plan
19. 2024-25 Program Review Narratives w/Actions Based on Disaggregated Data Analysis
20. EMT program review report
21. Institutional Program Review Committee Meeting Minutes April 29, 2025
22. Closing the Feedback Loop through the COS Integrated Planning Model
23. Curious Giant – Graduating Students
24. Student Success Stories: Isac Burris and Nicholas Elizondo
25. ZTC/AI Program with Stanford University
26. Examples of Instructional Improvement from SLO Assessment

---

Context/additional information (if applicable): Please feel free to provide any additional relevant information that provides context for the college's work.   (300 words max.)