



South  
Orange  
County  
Community  
College District

# LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

# 2026





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# MESSAGE FROM SOCCCD ADVOCACY LEADERS

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Since the South Orange County Community College District (SOCCCD) was founded in 1967, we have been proud of the partnerships maintained over the years with governmental agencies, policy makers, and community organizations because of our shared values to support the greatest needs of Irvine Valley College and Saddleback College students.

Advocacy and the monitoring of emerging and existing legislation are critical to the work we conduct everyday. With the help of our Federal advocates and State advocates (Townsend Public Affairs), we strive to access resources and tools at the local, state, and federal levels to support Saddleback College and Irvine Valley College students and programs. The Board of Trustees establishes annual legislative priorities to help empower staff, faculty, and students when advocating on behalf of the colleges.



**Carolyn Inmon**  
**Board President**



**Dr. Julianna Asperin Barnes**  
**SOCCCD Chancellor**



**Dr. John Hernandez**  
**Irvine Valley College President**



**Dr. Elliot Stern**  
**Saddleback College President**

# ABOUT SOCCCD

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South Orange County Community College District (SOCCCD) encompasses 382 square miles in Orange County serving over 909,000 residents in 26 communities. We know that higher education is directly linked to quality of life and economic vitality. We have helped generations of families achieve their educational and career goals since 1967.

Distinguished faculty from Irvine Valley College and Saddleback College provide students with rigorous academic classes to prepare them for transfer to four-year colleges and universities and career technical training.

Emeritus Institutes and community education programs across the district and on our college campuses in Mission Viejo, Irvine, and the Advanced Technology and Education Park in Tustin, CA offer lifelong learning opportunities for community members of all ages.



## Students

Combined, Irvine Valley College and Saddleback College offer 400 degrees and certificates to a diverse population of students to help them achieve their academic and career goals.



## Employees

SOCCCD employs over 2,500 classified staff, managers, and part-time and full-time faculty members that work to uphold the mission of the District through efficient operations, student support, and instruction.



## Economic Impact

According to a recent economic impact study, the South Orange County Community College District and its two colleges, (Irvine Valley College and Saddleback College) contribute more than \$7.1 billion to the local Orange County economy.

# FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE REPRESENTATIVES

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The following represent SOCCCD in the U.S. House of Representatives:



## **REP. YOUNG KIM** **CA 40TH**

Local Office - 1320 Valley Vista Dr., Suite 205, Diamond Bar, CA 91765  
Capital Office - 1306 Longworth HOB, Washington, DC 20515  
Phone: (714) 984-2440, (202) 225-4111  
Representing SOCCCD service areas of Aliso Viejo, Coto de Caza, Laguna Hills, Laguna Woods, Mission Viejo, Rancho Santa Margarita, and Tustin.



## **REP. DAVE MIN** **CA 47TH**

Local Office - 1370 Adams Ave., Suite A, Costa Mesa, CA 92626  
Capital Office - 1034 Longworth HOB, Washington, DC 20515  
Phone: (949) 668-6600, (202) 225-5611  
Representing SOCCCD service areas of Irvine and Newport Beach.



## **REP. MIKE LEVIN** **CA 49TH**

Local Office - 33282 Golden Lantern, Suite 102, Dana Point, CA 92629  
Capital Office - 2352 Rayburn HOB, Washington, DC 20515  
Phone: (949) 281-2449, (202) 225-3906  
Representing SOCCCD service areas of Dana Point, Ladera Ranch, Las Flores, San Clemente, San Juan Capistrano, and Trabuco Highlands.



# 2026 FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

SOCccd has identified several Federal legislative priorities to include, but not limited to the following:



## Workforce Development & Career Tech Education

Increase federal investment in workforce training programs—including Strengthening Community College Training Grants, Perkins CTE, WIOA, and NSF’s Advanced Technological Education program—and support a National Apprenticeship Act to strengthen community colleges’ leadership in STEM education, workforce development, and apprenticeships. As Workforce Pell is implemented, ensure Department of Education regulations support high-quality, affordable certificate programs at community colleges and do not impose unnecessary administrative burdens that would limit access, innovation, or institutional participation.



## Veterans

Ensure that active-duty personnel and their dependents can fully participate in community college educational programs. Enact reforms that help veterans choose the educational program that best suits their needs and prevents their exploitation. Advocate for continued benefits that support housing and other basic needs.



## Basic Needs Services

Streamline access to public benefits like SNAP, WIC, Medicaid, TANF, and housing programs for eligible community college students. Expand federal support for essential campus and community-based services, including child care, mental health, and basic needs, while protecting CCAMPIS grants to ensure quality childcare and facility improvements.



## Student Protection and Support-aid Integrity

Support comprehensive immigration reform that expands access to higher education and workforce opportunities by providing undocumented students a pathway to citizenship and access to federal financial aid, while strengthening policies that retain international talent and allow students on temporary visas to complete their education and transition into high-need workforce sectors. Federal efforts should also strengthen education data systems and student-aid integrity to promote accountability, transparency, and equitable access without creating undue administrative barriers for community colleges.



## College Affordability through Pell Grant and Federal Aid

Support and strengthen federal student aid programs that ensure college affordability and workforce access for low-income and working students. Protect and enhance the Pell Grant program by defending it from proposed cuts or eligibility restrictions, increasing the maximum award, and making Pell tax-free even when used for cost-of-attendance components such as housing, food, and other basic living expenses. Additionally, support robust funding for Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSI) and other Minority-Serving Institutions (MSI), along with Federal Work-Study, FSEOG, and TRIO programs, recognizing their critical role in advancing student success, equity, and workforce readiness.

# STATE LEGISLATIVE REPRESENTATIVES

The following represent SOCCCD in the California State Senate:



## **SENATOR TONY STRICKLAND** **36TH DISTRICT**

Local Office – 301 Main Street, Suite 212, Huntington Beach, CA 92648  
Capitol Office – 1021 O Street, Sacramento, CA 95814  
Phone: (714) 374-4000, (916) 651-4036  
Representing SOCCCD service areas of Newport Beach, Laguna Beach, Dana Point and San Clemente.



## **SENATOR STEVEN CHOI** **37TH DISTRICT**

Local Office - 3200 El Camino Real, Suite 230, Irvine CA 92602  
Capitol Office – 1021 O Street, Room 7130 Sacramento, CA 95814  
Phone: (714) 544-1035, (916) 651-4037  
Representing SOCCCD service areas of Aliso Viejo, Irvine, Laguna Beach, Laguna Niguel, Laguna Woods, Lake Mission Viejo, Newport Beach, North Tustin, and Tustin.



## **SENATOR CATHERINE BLAKESPEAR** **38TH DISTRICT**

Local Office – 24031 El Toro Rd., Suite 201A, Laguna Hills, CA 92653  
Capitol Office – 1021 O St., Suite 7130, Sacramento, CA 95814  
Phone: (949) 598-5850, (916) 651-4038  
Representing SOCCCD service areas of Coto de Caza, Ladera Ranch, Laguna Hills, Las Flores, Mission Viejo, Rancho Mission Viejo, Rancho Santa Margarita, and San Juan Capistrano.



# STATE LEGISLATIVE REPRESENTATIVES

The following represent SOCCCD in the California State Assembly:



## **ASSEMBLY MEMBER KATE SANCHEZ 71ST DISTRICT**

Capitol Office – 1021 O St., Suite 4340, Sacramento, CA 95814

Phone: (916) 319.2071

Representing SOCCCD service areas of Mission Viejo and unincorporated areas of Orange County.



## **ASSEMBLY MEMBER DIANE DIXON 72ND DISTRICT**

Capitol Office – 1021 O St., Suite 5330, Sacramento, CA 95814

Phone: (916) 319.2072

Representing SOCCCD service areas of Aliso Viejo, Laguna Beach, Laguna Woods, Lake Forest, and Newport Beach.



## **ASSEMBLY MEMBER COTTIE PETRIE NORRIS 73RD DISTRICT**

Local Office – 19712 MacArthur Blvd., Suite 150, Irvine, CA 92612

Capitol Office – 1021 O St., Suite 4230, Sacramento, CA 95814

Phone: (949) 251-0074, (916) 319-2073

Representing SOCCCD service areas of Irvine and Tustin.



## **ASSEMBLY MEMBER LAURIE DAVIES 74TH DISTRICT**

Local Office – 31473 Rancho Viejo Rd., Suite 104, San Juan Cap., CA 92675

Capitol Office – 1021 O St., Suite 4720, Sacramento, CA 95814

Phone: (949) 240-7300, (916) 319-2074

Representing SOCCCD service areas of Dana Point, Laguna Hills, Laguna Niguel, San Clemente, and San Juan Capistrano.

# 2026 STATE LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

SOCCCD has identified several State legislative priorities to include, but not limited to the following:



## Housing and Basic Needs

Propose state grants to fund affordable housing projects on community college campuses, aiming to secure statewide funding for projects in SOCCCD. Advocate for funding per college in flexible funding for short-term homelessness prevention, enabling flexible temporary housing solutions and on-campus support to address the specific needs of students in our communities.



## Veterans Education and Workforce Success

Support state investments that expand and strengthen veteran-serving programs at California community colleges, including dedicated counseling, mental health supports, credit for prior military learning, and accelerated pathways into high-demand careers. Ensuring stable funding for these services is essential to helping veterans successfully transition from military service to higher education and the civilian workforce.



## Infrastructure for Students

Invest in the modernization and expansion of community college facilities through California's capital outlay process, including state-funded bond programs and scheduled maintenance and instructional equipment funding, to ensure campuses can support workforce training, applied learning, and student success aligned with regional and statewide economic needs. Investments should prioritize aging facilities, specialized instructional spaces, climate resiliency, and deferred maintenance that directly impact instructional quality. Ensure community colleges have dedicated and sustainable funding to acquire, upgrade, and maintain instructional and operational technology, including high-speed broadband infrastructure, network security, cloud-based systems, and industry-standard equipment, so students can fully participate in digital learning environments and meet evolving workforce and transfer requirements.



## Expand Access to High-Demand Workforce Education, Baccalaureate Degrees

Provide targeted and sustained funding to California community colleges to address documented workforce shortages—particularly in nursing, allied health, and other high-demand workforce sectors—by expanding program capacity across certificates, associate degrees, and community college baccalaureate degrees. This includes supporting baccalaureate degrees in nursing and other critical workforce areas, modernizing instructional delivery, investing in clinical and instructional infrastructure, strengthening employer and health-system partnerships, and removing structural barriers to student entry, persistence, and completion.

# LEGISLATIVE ACTIVITY

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SOCCCD maintains membership with the following organizations and groups to advocate on behalf of Irvine Valley College and Saddleback College students:

- **Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT)**
- **Community College League of California (CCLC)**
- **Orange County Community Colleges Legislative Task Force (OCCCLTF)**
- **California Community-Funded Coalition (CCFC)**

With your partnership, we can continue the important advocacy work on behalf of Irvine Valley College and Saddleback College students -- the next generation of our community's leaders and workforce. For more information about legislative priorities or legislative activity, please contact Chief Communications Officer, Letitia Clark with SOCCCD Public Affairs.

# LEGISLATIVE CONTACTS

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## **FEDERAL Townsend Public Affairs**

### **Joseph Melo, Senior Associate**

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## **STATE Townsend Public Affairs**

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## **LOCAL South Orange County Community College District**

### **Letitia Clark, Chief Communications Officer**

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South  
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**Board of Trustees:**

Lisa A. Bartlett, Ryan Dack, Carolyn Inmon, Timothy Jemal, Marcia Milchiker, T.J. Prendergast III, Terri Rydell, EdD

**Chancellor:**

Julianna M. Asperin Barnes, EdD