



SOCCCD is growing workforce opportunities in Orange County with its expansion plan at ATEP

The South Orange County Community College District (SOCCCD) is creating workforce opportunities across Orange County through its Advanced Technology & Education Park (ATEP) expansion plan. The undertaking leverages strong public-private partnerships and close collaboration with industry to create career-aligned learning pathways for students.

The expansion, which follows recent additions including the new 50,000-square-foot facility for the culinary arts and automotive technology programs, will bring the developed area in the 61.4-acre ATEP project to 30 acres. This year will also witness the opening of several corporate partner facilities on-site, including the warehouse and headquarters of industrial computing company Advantech.

These workforce-focused initiatives create more hands-on learning opportunities for students, strengthen regional economic development, and ensure programs are directly connected to the skills employers need now and in the future. The expansion plan aims to prepare students for career success while supporting Orange County's broader economic growth.

"Our central focus is student success—from access and equity to completion, transfer, and workforce readiness," says Dr. Julianna M. Asperin Barnes, chancellor of SOCCCD. "Through Saddleback College and Irvine Valley College, we offer high-quality academic pathways, career education, lifelong learning, and comprehensive student support services designed to help students achieve their goals."

The ATEP expansion plan involves ongoing investment in modernized facilities and emerging technologies, reflecting SOCCCD's commitment to expanding workforce opportunities that meet students' needs today while preparing them for tomorrow's careers. This strategy demonstrates a balance of innovation and responsibility. Strong industry partnerships ensure programs remain relevant and aligned with real-world job opportunities, while data-driven decision-making keeps the focus on student outcomes and community impact.

"Strong governance is at the heart of SOCCCD's success. We work closely with the chancellor and college leadership to ensure accountability, fiscal stewardship, and policies that keep students

at the center of every decision we make," states the Board of Trustees, which includes Board President Carolyn Inmon, Vice-President Ryan Dack, and members Marcia Milchiker, T.J. Prendergast, Lisa Bartlett, Tim Jemal, Terri Rydell, and Student Trustee Blake Leonard.

The District emphasizes clear and well-supported pathways for students, whether they plan to transfer, earn credentials, or develop job-ready skills. Student voices are actively included in conversations and decisions, which strengthens trust and improves the student experience through workforce development initiatives like ATEP.

About South Orange County Community College District

Established in 1967, the [South Orange County Community College District \(SOCCCD\)](#) provides high-quality, innovative, and dynamic learning environments that inspire student success. SOCCCD is comprised of Saddleback College in Mission Viejo, Irvine Valley College in Irvine, and the Advanced Technology & Education Park (ATEP) in Tustin. The district covers 382 square miles and serves almost 1 million residents across 26 communities. SOCCCD is governed by a Board of Trustees who represent seven trustee areas.



Board of Trustees



South Orange County

Community College District