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## California Community Colleges

*The Colleges Reviewed Are Not Adequately Monitoring Services for Technology Accessibility, and Districts and Colleges Should Formalize Procedures for Upgrading Technology*

### Background

Serving more than 2 million students in over one hundred community colleges organized into 72 community college districts, the State's system of community colleges is led by a Chancellor appointed by the Board of Governors (board) for the California Community Colleges. The board sets policy and provides guidance to its colleges which by law must be accredited institutions. The accrediting agency for the State's community colleges has standards that cover a variety of college activities including several related to acquiring and updating information technology (IT). Also, community colleges must comply with federal and state requirements relating to student accessibility to websites and instructional materials. Our audit focused on colleges' monitoring of compliance with accessibility requirements and their processes for upgrading and replacing IT equipment.

### Our Key Recommendations

- The Chancellor's Office should establish or issue guidance for the following:
  - » For colleges to monitor how quickly they respond to students' requests for instructional materials in alternate formats and to periodically monitor the accessibility of instructional materials.
  - » For the districts and community colleges to establish written protocols for upgrading and maintaining IT equipment and to document input received when considering IT equipment requests.
- Community colleges should do the following:
  - » Establish and monitor timelines in responding to requests for alternate media services from students with disabilities and periodically review their performance in completing the requests.
  - » Set procedures to monitor and periodically review the accessibility of instructional materials to ensure students with disabilities have equal access to them.
- Community colleges and districts should develop procedures for consistently upgrading and replacing IT equipment and ensure that technology master plans are current and contain detailed steps for achieving goals.

### Key Findings

- Although the Chancellor's Office developed guidelines for community colleges to both promptly provide instructional materials in alternate media when requested and to ensure instructional materials are accessible to persons with disabilities, the guidance does not address monitoring to verify such guidance is followed, and none of the three colleges we reviewed track how quickly they address requests for alternate media.
  - » All three colleges could not demonstrate that they comply with monitoring standards relating to students' accessibility to instructional material.
  - » One college records the dates the requests are made and when completed, but doesn't use the data to track the time it takes to complete the request. The two other colleges did not record enough information to know how long it took to respond to requests.
  - » Though colleges offer training on the accessibility of instructional materials, instructors are not required to attend.
  - » Two colleges have inadequate processes for monitoring to ensure their websites are accessible.
- The three community college districts we reviewed plan for and fund IT needs, but they do not have formalized processes to ensure consistency and continuity in the future.
  - » The three districts rely upon institutional knowledge to guide the implementation process when replacing or upgrading IT.
  - » While each college indicated it received and documented input from stakeholders when considering IT resource requests, none could consistently demonstrate that they did so.