

NORTH ORANGE COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT

TO:	BOARD OF TRUSTEES	Action	<u> X </u>
		Resolution	<u> </u>
DATE:	July 25, 2023	Information	<u> X </u>
		Enclosure(s)	<u> X </u>
SUBJECT:	Resolution Electing to Maintain and Confirm Neutrality of the North Orange County Community College District Towards its Students, Staff, Faculty, Managers, Administrators, Stakeholders, and Community Members.		

BACKGROUND: The North Orange County Community College District is one of the most diverse Community College Districts in the United States, in which we should proudly promote and embrace its diversity. The District, Fullerton College, Cypress College, and North Orange Continuing Education must serve and treat its students and employees equally, with no discrimination, or special treatment to any group of people. The District and campuses have and will continue to reduce equity gaps by establishing associations, clubs, safe and inclusive spaces, programs, course offerings, activities, and events that celebrate our community's diversity and welcome all stakeholders. However, divides have made many students, employees, and stakeholders feel unwelcome, which has further exacerbated the decline in enrollment. Recent estimates determined, if uncorrected, the enrollment decline will result in \$34 million+ annual deficits beginning in the year 2027.

This needs to be a call to action to get our enrollment up and to retain and attract more students by making our district more politically neutral. Students, Faculty, Staff, Managers, Administrators, Trustees, Stakeholders, and Community Members need to unify behind our commonalities. While our differences will continually be respected, celebrated, and welcomed, it is necessary to establish a policy that unites all groups, to the extent possible, when it comes to the flags and banners that are flown, affixed, or displayed on the district's public properties. By limiting these to the American flag, the flag of the State of California, flags of the United States Armed Forces, the Prisoner of War flag, and any North Orange County Community College District, Fullerton College, Cypress College, or North Orange Continuing Education branded flags or banners containing official names, abbreviations, logos, mascots, or seals, stakeholder satisfaction will be maximized.

When stakeholder satisfaction is maximized and united behind a collective school spirit, enrollment will be optimized over time. The process will be simplified by unifying behind core national and state flags, which have flown over our district properties since Fullerton College's September of 1913 founding, nearly 110 years ago. By not allowing flags or banners of special interest groups, our district will continuously focus on what unites as many stakeholders as possible, while working to close identified equity gaps through existing methods. Religious, ethnic, racial, political, or sexual orientation group flags and banners can make some groups feel validated, while others may feel invalidated, unwelcome, or unrepresented. It will remain the district's goal to make all feel welcome on our campuses and increase the satisfaction of students, employees, and other stakeholders alike by making it known that all will be treated equally and fairly. Encouraging equal treatment will enable our students to thrive in ways that enrich their college

experience, keep them enrolled, foster future student referrals, and strengthen their role in making ours a destination district.

How does this relate to the five District Strategic Directions? This item responds to the following Strategic Directions, which can each be achieved by maintaining and confirming neutrality in ways that can make us a destination district. Taking an apolitical approach to our campus environments, with a goal to maximize appeal to our diverse students and employees, all stakeholders will be enabled to unite behind a collective district and school spirit, where diversity is celebrated, and all feel included and welcome. Each strategic direction below can be impacted by student enrollment, fiscal status related to enrollment, or relationships between feeder districts, stakeholders, and partner organizations, which can be jeopardized by divisive issues:

- District Strategic Direction 1. The District will annually improve the rates of completion for degrees, certificates, diplomas, transfers, transfer-readiness requirements, and courses.
- District Objective 2.1: NOCCCD will foster an environment of equity-mindedness.
- District Objective 2.2: NOCCCD will increase the hiring and retention of faculty and staff of diverse backgrounds.
- District Strategic Direction 4: The District will implement best practices related to planning including transparent decision-making processes.
- District Objective 4.2: NOCCCD will develop and implement best practices for enrollment management.
- District Objective 4.3: NOCCCD will develop and implement best practices for fiscal stewardship.
- District Strategic Direction 5: The District will develop and sustain collaborative projects and partnerships with the community's educational institutions, civic organizations, and businesses. (Relevant KPIs: • % of high school seniors in service area who applied to NOCCCD • % of students enrolled at NOCCCD after application).
- District Objective 5.1: NOCCCD will establish and expand partnerships with local educational institutions.
- District Objective 5.2: NOCCCD will create and expand relationships with local businesses and civic organizations for workforce development.
- District Objective 5.3: NOCCCD will increase the fundraising activities of the Community College Foundation of North Orange.

How does this relate to Board Policy: This item is in accordance with Board Policy 2200, Board Duties and Responsibilities: 1.0 The Board of Trustees governs the community colleges and education centers of the North Orange County Community College District on behalf of the residents of the District in accordance with the authority granted and duties defined in Education Code Section 70902; 1.1 The Board of Trustees may initiate and carry on any lawful program or activity that is not in conflict with the purposes for which community college districts are established; 1.2 The Board of Trustees shall represent the public interest and establish rules and policies consistent with applicable laws and regulations for the governance and operation of the District's community colleges and education centers; 2.0 The Board of Trustees is committed to fulfilling its responsibilities to: 2.1 Adopt policies that define the institutional mission and set prudent, ethical, and legal standards for campus operations; and, 2.7 Hold and convey property for the use and benefit of the District and manage and control District property.

FUNDING SOURCE AND FINANCIAL IMPACT: Not applicable. The resolution is, however, expected to attract more students over time, which could improve the financial status of the district and future outlook for all stakeholders.

RECOMMENDATION: It is recommended that the Board adopt Resolution No. 23/24-02, electing to maintain and confirm neutrality of the North Orange County Community College District towards its students, staff, faculty, managers, administrators, stakeholders, and community members.

Ryan Bent

Recommended by

Approved for Submittal

6.a.3

Item No.

**RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE
NORTH ORANGE COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT**



Resolution 23/24-02, Electing to Adopt to Maintain and Confirm the Neutrality of the North Orange County Community College District Towards its Students, Staff, Faculty, Managers, Administrators, Stakeholders, and Community Members

WHEREAS, the North Orange County Community College District is one of the most diverse Community College Districts in the United States, in which we should proudly promote and embrace its diversity; and

WHEREAS, the district, Fullerton College, Cypress College, and North Orange Continuing Education must serve and treat its students and employees equally, with no discrimination, or special treatment to any group of people; and

WHEREAS, the district has established associations, clubs, safe and inclusive spaces, programs, course offerings, activities, and events that celebrate our community's diversity and welcome all stakeholders; and

WHEREAS, each religious, ethnic, racial, political, or sexually oriented group are already united by the country and state we call home, and the educational institutions we attend, are employed by, or are stakeholders of; and

WHEREAS, the district does not want to open the door for partisan, controversial, radical, or racist groups to ask for their flags and banners to be flown; and

WHEREAS, this resolution does not in any way, shape, or form, infringe upon the fundamental right of an individual stakeholder or stakeholder group to engage in free speech. Nor does this resolution limit speech by public employees provided that such employees engage in such speech in a protected time, manner, and place.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Board of Trustees that the North Orange County Community College District does not allow any religious, ethnic, racial, political, or sexual orientation group flags and banners to be flown, affixed, or displayed on the district's public properties, and that only, the American flag, the flag of the State of California, Flags of the United States Armed Forces, the Prisoner of War flag, and any North Orange County Community College District, Fullerton College, Cypress College, or North Orange Continuing Education branded flags or banners containing official names, abbreviations, logos, mascots, or seals, in their traditional colors, shall be flown, affixed, or displayed; and

IT IS FURTHER RESOLVED, that permitted flags and banners flown, affixed, or displayed on the district's public properties will continue to comply with any and all applicable federal and state laws, rules, regulations and guidelines.

APPROVED, PASSED, AND ADOPTED by the Governing Board of the North Orange County Community College District this twenty-fifth Day of July 2023, by the following vote:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

ABSTAINING:

I, Ed Lopez, President of the Governing Board of the North Orange County Community College District, do hereby certify that the foregoing is full, true, and correct copy of the Resolution passed and adopted by said Board at a regularly scheduled and conducted meeting held on said date, which Resolution is on file in office of said Board.

Signed: _____
President of the Board of Trustees
North Orange County Community College District

Attested: _____
Executive Secretary of the Board of Trustees
North Orange County Community College District