

CVPPAC Questionnaire for Candidates for the Board of Trustees of the
State Center Community College District

1. What are your educational qualifications, experience, and training for the position?

I was born and raised in the Central Valley. The product of a farmworker family, I was the first in my family to graduate from college. Immediately after law school, I returned home to serve the communities that raised me.

A civil rights attorney by training, today, I serve as a law professor at San Joaquin College of Law. I also serve on the Fresno Planning Commission, as well as on the boards of California Rural Legal Assistance and the ACLU of Northern California. I hold a BA from Stanford University, an MPA from Harvard Kennedy School, and a JD from Yale Law School.

2. Why do you want to be a trustee on the SCCC Board of Trustees?

Despite not being born with a silver spoon, I have been blessed with opportunity. My two younger brothers currently attend Reedley College, and my mom, who worked in the fields when she was younger, obtained her associate degree from Porterville College at the age of 54. The opportunities our local community colleges have provided my family are not unique. Our neighborhood colleges have afforded tickets to the middle class for countless individuals and families across the Central Valley. I am running for the SCCC Board of Trustees to expand access to these opportunities for all Valley residents.

3. What are your priorities regarding educating the residents of the SCCC so they are prepared for the 21st century?

Expand career technical education (CTE) and vocational programs. Expand dual enrollment programs, which allow high school students to earn college credit and begin their transition to college. Increase partnerships with our local trade and business communities, so that we ensure our students have the skills necessary to meet the demands of the 21st-century economy.

4. What are the biggest challenges facing the residents and students of SCCC?

More than 80 percent of our students come from low-income backgrounds. Thus, our challenges run the gamut from housing and textbook affordability to transportation access in our more rural areas.

5. How would you like the SCCC to address the problem of homeless students in community colleges?

Build significantly more student housing. (Currently, only Reedley College provides student housing.) Increase investment in and expand the Housing Opportunities Promote Education (HOPE) pilot program.

6. Funding for community colleges is based on how many students are enrolled each year. Fresno City College enrollment declined in Fall 2021 and again in Spring 2022. How should the SCCC address falling enrollment?

Expand outreach to and partnerships with local high schools and community-based organizations, particularly those that work with men of color, a demographic which has seen a particularly severe drop in enrollment since the start of the pandemic.

7. How much should it cost students to obtain an education at a community college? Is it financially worthwhile to attend a community college?

I support federal and state funding that would make community college free across the entire country.

Yes, it is financially worthwhile to attend a community college. Both of my brothers attend Reedley College because it has provided them with an affordable option to begin their higher educational journeys. In addition, CTE and vocational programs can provide pathways to well-paying careers.

8. Who are your top 3 financial donors?

State Center Federation of Teachers. Councilmember Tyler Maxwell. Attorney Kevin Little.

9. How should community colleges respond to the ongoing COVID-19 epidemic?

Community colleges should follow the science and recommendations provided by local and state health departments.