

Dear Achieving the Dream,

My name is Claudia Habib and I am the President of Porterville College. I am happy to write this letter to support Porterville College's application to be a Leader College of Distinction with the *Achieving the Dream* Network.

Porterville College joined *Achieving the Dream* in 2013 and earned Leader College status in 2016. Throughout our tenure with the program, we have participated in the Dream conference each year. Along with the other two colleges in our Kern Community College District, we have organized and participated in a variety of activities, including college and district-wide meetings, deep dives into student success and equity data, courageous conversations about existing practices that affect students, and support practices across the college.

The College has implemented a Success and Equity Committee (recently renamed Pathways to Success and Equity) and a Data Team that examine data and practices across the College that impact student success. Through these efforts, we have implemented a number of changes, including accelerating students through basic skills sequences, encouraging students to take more units (our "15 to Finish" campaign), encouraging students to take English and Math early, and a variety of policy changes that reduce barriers and facilitate completion.

Through *Achieving the Dream*, we have also participated in the Working Students Success Network (WSSN) through which we expanded and reorganized our support systems for education, income, work, asset building, and especially financial literacy.

As the data and analysis contained in this application demonstrate, we have already made substantial progress in a number of student success metrics and are working to continually improve both success and equity. In addition to the metrics *Achieving the Dream* suggests, we track a number of others and disaggregate our success data by a variety of student characteristics in order to track possible achievement gaps. In our adoption of the California Community Colleges' Vision for Success, we are working toward goals that are ambitious, yet, we believe, achievable.

Although I only recently joined Porterville College, I found a college culture already immersed in the student success and equity agenda. But we are not satisfied. On the contrary, we are accelerating our efforts. We are in the midst of implementation of a Guided Pathways framework, making student pathways to completion more clear and achievable while upholding high standards. The progress we have made so far is promising, but insufficient. For Porterville College, this is just a start.

Regards,



Dr. Claudia Habib
President, Porterville College