EL CAMINO COLLEGE
STUDENT SERVICES
FINANCIAL AID 2014

I. Program Description

1. **Describe the program emphasizing program's objectives and how program supports the college's mission and vision statements, strategic initiatives, and core competencies.**
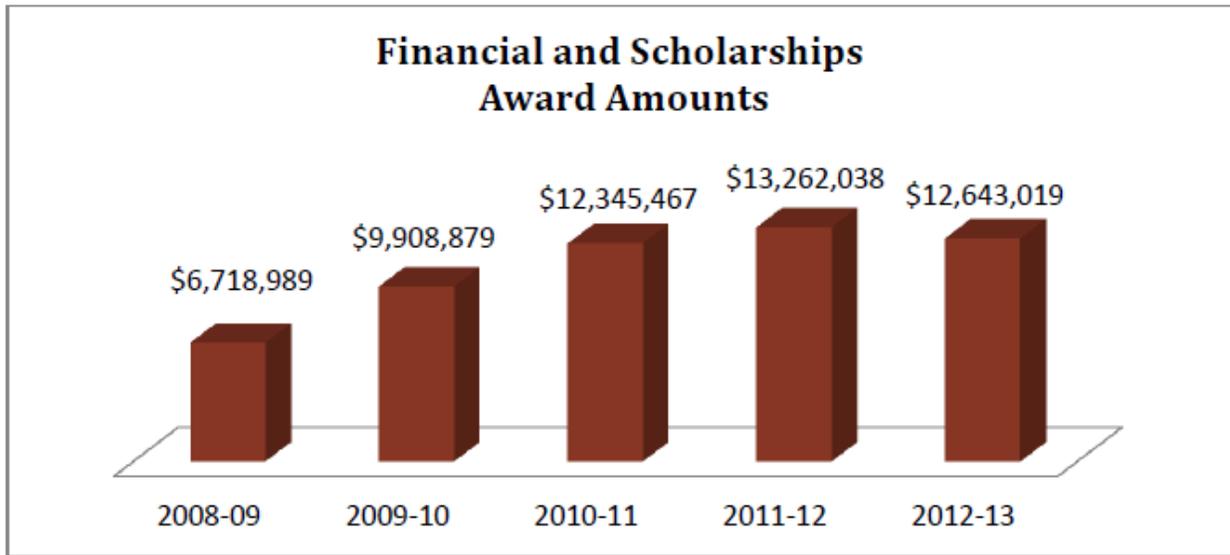
   The mission of the Financial Aid Office is to support student learning opportunities, educational goals and career objectives through access to financial assistance. We facilitate these principles by providing services in support of the mission of El Camino College in alignment with its Strategic Initiatives and Core Competencies as follows:

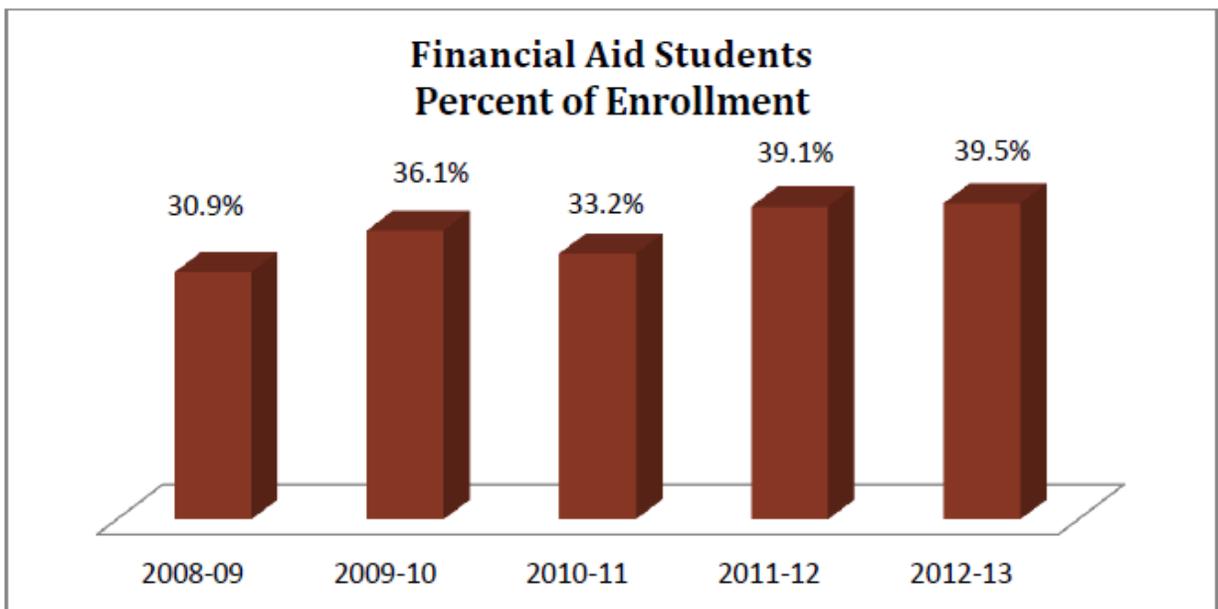   **Financial Aid Program Impact and Support:**

   Mission Statement: "El Camino College offers quality, comprehensive educational programs and services to ensure the educational success of students from our diverse community."

   The Financial Aid Program at ECC Compton Center supports the mission statement and vision of El Camino College by offering services for students in alignment with the Strategic Initiatives and Core Competencies as follows:

   A. **Strategic Initiative A**: Enhance teaching to support student learning using a variety of instructional methods and services.
   - **Provide financial aid resources**: In the last 5 years, the office of Financial Aid and Scholarships has almost doubled the amount of funds distributed to students. Awards increased from $6 million dollars to more than $13 million dollars for over 5700 students which, in combination with expected contributions from students and their families, enable students to purchase requisite books and supplies, fees, transportation, room and board to achieve their educational goals.
   - **Provide personalized and group assistance: Assisted students in completing Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and Scholarship applications in the Financial Aid Lab.**
   - **Provide group workshops** in the areas of Scholarship Applications, Student Employment/Work Study, Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) and Financial Literacy

Financial and Scholarships Award Amounts

2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13
$6,718,989	$9,908,879	$12,345,467	$13,262,038	$12,643,019

Financial aid awards have almost doubled in the last five years.

Financial Aid Students Percent of Enrollment

2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13
30.9%	36.1%	33.2%	39.1%	39.5%

Financial aid recipients have grown by nearly 10% in the last five years.

Financial Aid Amount Awarded

Financial Aid	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13
Federal Work Study	$83,470	$114,514	$146,498	$146,500	$164,436
Osher Scholarship		$750	$1,250	$7,000	$7,000
Scholarship: institutional source	$25,508	$20,750	$200	$2,500	$0
Scholarship: non-institutional source	$0	$4,319	$8,972	$7,358	$38,796
Scholarship Total	*$25,508*	*$25,819*	*$10,422*	*$16,858*	*$45,796*
Stafford Loan, subsidized	$604,025	$591,909			
Stafford Loan, unsubsidized	$253,501	$87,223			
Federal Direct Student Loan, subsidized			$516,374	$462,782	$300,400
Federal Direct Student Loan, unsubsidized			$122,590	$64,495	$23,281
Loan Total	*$857,526*	*$679,132*	*$638,964*	*$557,277*	*$323,681*
BOGW, Part A	$232,070	$109,921	$171,223	$129,207	$86,549
BOGW, Part B	$791,810	$1,619,478	$1,850,722	$2,670,841	$3,342,245
BOGW, Part C	$218,730	$307,097	$389,296	$493,900	$679,972
Fee Waiver	$560	$728	$1,820	$1,008	$2,208
BOGW Total	*$1,243,170*	*$2,037,224*	*$2,413,061*	*$3,294,956*	*$4,110,974*
Academic Competitiveness Grant	$9,939	$12,965	$14,790		$0
Cal Grant B	$116,452	$200,274	$210,315	$282,614	$280,232
Cal Grant C	$1,008	$3,672	$4,536	$6,840	$6,565
EOPS Grant	$278,942	$18,300	$13,500	$17,040	$11,900
CARE Grant	$250	$0	$0	$0	$0
Chafee Grant	$20,000	$12,500	$35,500	$61,000	$28,750
Pell Grant	$4,000,863	$6,682,679	$8,708,781	$8,726,468	$7,540,185
SEOG (Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant)	$91,800	$121,800	$149,100	$152,485	$152,485
Grant Total	*$4,509,315*	*$7,052,190*	*$9,136,522*	*$9,246,447*	*$7,998,132*
Grand Total	*$6,718,989*	*$9,908,879*	*$12,345,467*	*$13,115,538*	*$12,643,019*

B. **Strategic Initiative B:** Strengthen quality educational and support services to promote student success.

- **Counseling Support/Academic and Career Advisement**: Every first-year Title IV Financial Aid participant receives an educational plan;
- **Guidance and advising:** Expert guidance and academic counseling through the financial aid application process for students and their families;
- **Financial aid education** through individual assistance, campus in-reach and outreach activities, and group presentations to High School Counselors;
- **Life skills through financial aid learning** (e.g., budgeting, money management, problem solving, creative thinking, use of information technology, and media literacy). Training on Financial Literacy assists students in understanding personal finances: How someone earns money, how they will save that money, and how they should spend that money. It refers to the understanding of financial skills needed to make informed and responsible decisions for ECC students' financial futures. Being able to make informed and responsible decisions about personal finances is important both now and down the road. Financial Literacy helps you make the best financial choices for life-changing events like higher education, home ownership, retirement, and life's unplanned events. Financial Literacy helps students create a financial plan for college. With a clear understanding of how their money works, students can properly budget to cut down on spending and reduce overall debt.

Participation in the activities noted above fosters student communication and comprehension skills, and information and technology literacy, as they complete their educational courses, strengthen their advocacy skills, learn to access web information for educational purposes and in the workplace; and navigate program requirements for scholarships and work study job placement processes. (Core Competencies 3 and 6)

C. **Strategic Initiative D:** Develop and enhance partnerships with schools, colleges, universities, businesses, and community-based organizations to respond to the workforce training and economic development needs of the community.

- **Partnership with Cal SOAP, Los Angeles County Office of Education and LA Unified School District, and Compton Unified School District:** Financial Aid Staff establish effective partnerships with the State and County Educational Agencies with initiatives to increase FAFSA applications from feeder High Schools and to educate High School counselors regarding successfully assisting High School seniors applying to postsecondary institutions and accessing financial assistance;

- **Cash for College annual FAFSA and Cal Grant Workshops:** Financial Aid staff in collaboration with other community based organizations provide community residents with educational training and one-on-one assistance with completing the state and federal applications for financial assistance;
- **High School Outreach FAFSA Workshops:** Financial Aid staff in collaboration with local feeder High School instructors, college counselors and administrators provides training and assistance with completing state and federal applications for financial assistance.

D. **Strategic Initiative E:** Improve processes, programs and services through the effective use of assessment, program review, planning, and resource allocation.

- **SAOs:** Three Service Area Outcomes are assessed yearly based on agreed upon program needs and identified areas needing improvement by the Financial Aid SAO committees;
- **Student Satisfaction Survey:** The Student Satisfaction/Customer Service Survey is revised and is distributed annually for feedback;
- **Metrics:** Statistics on Financial Aid program applications, awards, disbursements, Satisfactory Academic Progress appeals and academic success are reported three times a year for analysis and review;
- **Monthly Budget Review Meetings:** Meetings with a representative from the Business Office occur a minimum of once monthly;
- **Weekly Staff meetings:** These meetings are used as staff development opportunities for periodic updates and review of Plan Builder goals and objectives, review of SAO assessment data, to report back information on practices to strengthen production activities, and to brainstorm strategies to best utilize financial aid resources in delivering financial aid to students;

E. **Strategic Initiative F:** Support facility and technology improvements to meet the needs of students, employees, and the community.

- **Financial Aid e-services Lab**: Twenty student work stations are maintained with a single server to meet the needs of students in accessing online platforms for financial aid applications and notices, scholarship applications, enrollment and registration access, and student loan applications. The e-services lab has reduced the waiting lines to the financial aid reception as students learn to self-serve. In addition the acquisition of a single server has reduced utility costs while reducing hardware maintenance and maintenance costs;
- **Hershey Scanning:** Scanning capabilities has improved awarding and packaging, quality control and decreased processing time. The transition from moving paper files to imaged documents has improved the communication and paper flow between the Advisors and Technicians. Imaged documents have

eliminated delays with processing due to misplaced documents.   The move toward greater transparency with students as well as among the financial aid staff supports the financial aid goal for staff accountability to students;

- **Automatic-Packaging**: The development of automatic packaging capabilities has reduced processing time and increased volume.

- **Dual Monitors:** The acquisition of dual monitors for each of the financial aid staff members has facilitated the move toward reviewing imaged documents. Dual monitors support accuracy when reviewing imaged documents online while increasing other reference sites when awarding students without the need to print external reference documents.

F.   **Strategic Initiative G:** Promote processes and policies that move the College toward sustainable environmentally sensitive practices.

- **Reduction of Non-Selected Student Supporting Documents and Automatic Packaging:** The greatest impact to the college's move toward sustainable environmentally sensitive practices was the financial aid policy revision to eliminate the requirement of unnecessary documents in determining student financial aid eligibility. This, coupled with auto-packaging, has reduced the student traffic, student documents and the archiving of thousands of documents that was not required to support awards and disbursements made to students;
- **E-Mails and e-Award Letters:** The move toward the policy of providing Electronic e-mail and award letters eliminated staff time and reduced mailing costs;
- **Financial Aid TV:** Acquisition of Financial Aid TV funded through ECC's Graduation Initiate Grant (Title V), provides for online financial aid video presentations and Frequently Asked Questions covering various types of state and federal student aid, increased student participation and reduced the need for paper consumer information collaterals. The reduction in the number of phone inquiries allows the financial aid staff to focus on primary objectives such as accurate awarding and personal attention to exception circumstance warranting one-on-one attention.

In conclusion, the Financial Aid program supports the college's mission to offer quality, comprehensive educational programs and services to ensure the educational success of students from our diverse community by contributing to the above described strategic initiatives and core competencies.

2. Student population Served by the Financial Aid program

Data from the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office Data Mart for the years 2009-2013 reports the Financial Aid student participant demographics by gender, ethnicity, age groups and Day and Evening enrollment:

Financial Aid Participant Demographic Data					
		School Year			
		2009-10	**2010-11**	**2011-12**	**2012-13**
Gender	F	68.8%	67.0%	66.2%	66.7%
	M	31.2%	33.0%	33.7%	33.3%
Ethnicity	African-American	59.4%	57.0%	54.6%	49.4%
	Amer. Ind. or Alask. Native	0.3%	0.1%	0.1%	0.2%
	Asian	2.1%	1.7%	1.7%	1.9%
	Latino	29.9%	34.3%	37.0%	42.3%
	Pacific Islander	1.1%	1.0%	1.0%	1.0%
	White	1.1%	1.2%	1.4%	1.3%
	Two or More	0.9%	2.2%	2.3%	2.8%
	Unknown or Decline	5.2%	2.4%	1.8%	1.1%
Age/ Age Group	<17	0.1%	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%
	17	1.1%	1.5%	0.7%	1.1%
	18	8.7%	7.8%	7.0%	5.7%
	19	10.1%	10.6%	10.1%	11.2%
	20	9.3%	9.9%	10.6%	10.4%
	21	6.6%	7.6%	8.7%	8.9%
	22	5.7%	5.8%	5.8%	7.4%
	23	4.6%	5.1%	5.4%	5.2%
	24	5.0%	4.1%	4.8%	4.6%
	25-29	15.7%	16.8%	16.6%	15.5%
	30-39	17.5%	16.4%	17.2%	16.3%
	40-49	10.5%	9.1%	8.9%	8.7%
	50-64	4.7%	4.9%	4.0%	4.8%
	65+	0.3%	0.3%	0.1%	0.2%
Day/Eve Student	Daytime	72.9%	72.9%	73.2%	72.5%
	Evening	16.3%	15.9%	14.3%	15.4%
	Unknown	10.8%	11.2%	12.5%	12.2%

Financial Aid participation measured by the number of recipients compared to enrollment in the last five years is as follows:

Financial Aid Headcount

Financial Aid	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13
Federal Work Study	39	41	49	50	55
Percent of Student Enrollment	*0.4%*	*0.3%*	*0.3%*	*0.3%*	*0.4%*
Osher Scholarship		2	3	7	7
Scholarship: institutional source	12	22	1	2	0
Scholarship: non-institutional source	0	5	8	8	21
Scholarship Total	12	29	12	17	28
Percent of Student Enrollment	*0.1%*	*0.2%*	*0.1%*	*0.1%*	*0.2%*
Stafford Loan, subsidized	174	176			
Stafford Loan, unsubsidized	77	39			
Federal Direct Student Loan, subsidized			171	157	104
Federal Direct Student Loan, unsubsidized			54	28	13
Loan Total	251	215	225	185	117
Percent of Student Enrollment	*2.5%*	*1.7%*	*1.4%*	*1.3%*	*0.8%*
BOGW, Part A	746	364	440	285	145
BOGW, Part B	2,270	4,053	4,529	5,036	4,803
BOGW, Part C	739	989	1,086	1,048	1,143
Fee Waiver	1	2	4	1	2
BOGW Total	3,756	5,408	6,059	6,370	6,093
Percent of Student Enrollment	*37.3%*	*41.9%*	*37.4%*	*43.6%*	*43.7%*
Academic Competitiveness Grant	17	20	25		
Cal Grant B	91	155	181	251	247
Cal Grant C	2	7	11	15	16
EOPS Grant	807	183	90	142	119
CARE Grant	1	0	0	0	0
Chafee Grant	4	3	12	21	14
Pell Grant	1,400	2,060	2,685	2,769	2,241
SEOG (Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant)	165	221	268	345	293
Grant Total	2,470	2,649	3,272	3,543	2,930
Percent of Student Enrollment	*24.6%*	*20.5%*	*20.2%*	*24.3%*	*21.0%*
Grand Total	6,528	8,342	9,617	10,165	9,168
Unduplicated Student Total	3,111	4,660	5,376	5,708	5,513
Percent of Student Enrollment	*30.9%*	*36.1%*	*33.2%*	*39.1%*	*39.5%*

According to the 2013 Annual Fact Book published by the ECC Institutional Research:
An average of 40% of ECC Compton Center students received financial aid in 2012-13. The largest Financial Aid program is the Board of Governor's Fee Waiver (BOGW). There were a

total of 6,093 BOGW recipients in 2012-13. The second largest program is the Federal Pell Grant with 2,930 recipients in 2012-13. For the past 5 years, the number of students who received Federal Work Study has been stable.

In the last three years, there was no Stafford Loan reported. As of 2010-11, Stafford Loans are part of the Direct Loan program and now fall under the category of Federal Direct Student Loans.

Also there are no Academic Competitiveness Grant recipients reported in 2012-13, due to the fact that this federal grant is no longer being awarded.

Overall, from 2008-09 to 2012-13 there was a 77.2% increase of unduplicated number of students served by the program.

3. **What happens after students participate in the program's activities? If applicable, address whether students are successful in meeting their educational goals.**

   Evidenced by the success rates below, students participating in the Financial Aid programs show slightly higher percentage of completing their educational objectives than other Compton Center students who are not Financial Aid participants. The program success rates demonstrate that students receiving some sort of financial assistance improve their ability to meet their educational goals in completing AA or AS or Certificate objectives.

Financial Aid	Term			
	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13
Program Success Rate*	58.9%	60.5%	60.6%	60.0%
Compton Center Success Rate	58.3%	59.1%	59.1%	61.6%
	Award Year			
Award**	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13
AA or AS	129	176	199	230
Certificate	69	48	95	80

4. **List notable achievements that were linked to the College's Strategic Initiatives that have occurred since the last program review.**
   Since the last Program Review in 2008, the following notable achievements occurred:
   - The Financial Aid Lab was fully established and equipped with its own server, a reception area, a walk-in academic counseling area and 20 student work stations.

- The Financial Aid Office was revamped and staffed with 4 FA Advisors adding a bilingual Advisor to serve the growing Hispanic college community, 2 FA Technician, 1 Financial Assistant, 1 Director and 1 Supervisor:
- Financial Aid Peer Advisor Program was developed ensuring a continous succession of continuing student workers.
- Document imaging was established reducing the work-flow and application review and processing time.
- Auto-packaging and reduction of mandatory documents by all students has doubled awarding volume and reduced application processing time from 8 to 4 weeks.
- Electronic Award Letters and Financial Aid TV have reduced student traffic and phone calls.
- Debit Card and Direct Deposit has increased in the last year leading to decreased time tin delivering funds to students.
- Financial Aid TV has increased available consumer information which has reduced phone calls and long lines during peak registration.
- Overall, from 2008-09 to 2012-13 there was a 77.2% increase of unduplicated number of students served by the program.

5. **What prior program review recommendations were not implemented, if any, and why? What was the impact on the program and the students?**

Since the last Program Review in 2008 the requested facility improvements in the administrative area were not completed due to lack of funding. The Compton Center Financial Aid Office is poorly designed and constructed. The office was designed for a specific number of people instead of determining an adequate amount of workspace for each employee. The financial aid office advising area needs to be renovated and redesigned to ensure privacy when discussing Federal Educational Rights & Privacy Act (FERPA) protected information such as student dependency status, tax information of students and parents that can present potential liabilities to the District. The area needs new carpeting, to give it a clean look and feel, but more importantly address tripping hazards that can pose potential financial liabilities to the District. The improvement to these work spaces can improve staff morale, improve customer service, improve health and air flow system and correct safety hazards. Both FERPA, health and safety issues can become financial liability for the ECC Compton Center if not corrected timely.

The migration to interactive online documents is delayed due to delays in the Information Technology Services (ITS) migration to SQL. The projected implementation of interactive online documents facilitates the financial aid verification process by collecting data from students online and immediately transferring data to Datatel Colleague. Online interactive documents provides ease of

access of forms to students online 24/7, eliminates students physically delivering forms to the financial aid office and eliminates the need for scanning the documents.

What was the impact on the program and the students?
The greatest impact is on students who must deliver forms in person to the Financial Aid Office causing long waiting lines and delays in processing of applications. At the beginning of each semester, the Financial Aid staff is overwhelmed with student traffic to deliver hard copy forms and documents when staff focuses should be on awarding and disbursing.

II.   Service Area Outcomes (SAO)

1. Describe how program personnel are engaged in the creation, discussion, and review of SAO - statements, assessment results, and reports.

Staff is actively involved in the creation of Service Area Outcomes (SAO). Planning meetings and their recommendations are included in planning and implementation. In the past two years, the makeup of the SAO committee has been financial aid advisors and assistants. Managers provide some guidance and focus of the SAO's, but the committee has successfully developed expected student outcomes and surveys to measure progress toward the intended outcomes. The results of these SAOs have been weak (less than 500 student participants). Therefore, the low number of students participating in the surveys leads to flawed conclusions about the program's strengths or weaknesses, and it has not led to major changes in the way we do business.

The financial aid staff meets every Friday at 1:30 p.m. to discuss program services and service area outcomes. The staff and student workers were fully engaged in the development and implementation of the SAO. They provided input and feedback on draft copies of reports, surveys, while a program advisor compiles the information and write the assessment.

2. How does the program ensure that SAOs are assessed consistently?

SAO committee members, in conjunction with the office of Institutional Research, develop student surveys to assess the effect of various Financial Aid service initiatives, such as the Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) workshops, Financial Aid TV, and Financial Aid Customer Service. These survey instruments measure through qualitative and quantitative data the impact to students participating in financial aid activities and online initiatives.

SAO's are assessed on an annual basis and the results are shared with the staff. The SAO process is integrated into the program planning process and the results whenever it is conclusive are used to shape the direction of the program.

3. Have the SAO assessment results indicated the need to change or modify components of the program? If so, were the changes implemented?

Data report for the first year of the Satisfactory Academic Progress SAO reported that 54% of the respondents understand the elements of Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP), qualitative and quantitative, and how to maintain Financial Aid eligibility. In the first year of the SAO we did not meet our goal of 90% of respondents understanding the elements of SAP. The data show that students needed additional support to understand how to calculate their satisfactory academic progress percentage and how SAP affects their financial aid eligibility. The committee concluded that students were relying on SAP information posted online rather than printed brochures and information delivered by financial aid advisors. The conclusion from the committee was to increase opportunities for students to improve their understanding of the SAP policy. Printed brochures were developed and SAP workshops were initiated to improve student understanding of the elements of SAP. In addition, a SAP Bulletin Board with information regarding SAP eligibility was created in the Financial Aid Lab to support students' understanding of SAP policies.

By increasing the number of resources that students are educated on the college's SAP policy, the second year of the survey resulted in 73.68% of the student responding with the correct answer. The changes implemented assisted in increasing the number of respondents understanding the elements of SAP. The conclusion from the committee is to continue with these improve initiatives until the goal of 90% of respondents understand the elements Financial Aid SAP.

III. Program Improvement

1. What activities has the program engaged in to improve services to students?

- Increased on-campus and off-campus visibility and participation: The financial aid office has increased its visibility, availability and participation by offering more opportunities for student contact, student workshops, increasing collaboration with campus and off-campus partners. Annually, financial aid staff participates in over

twenty High School FAFSA workshops and college nights and instituted the annual Cash 4 College workshops in 2008.

- Increased advertising campaigns throughout the year using campus-wide sandwich boards, on-campus and off-campus banners, and posters encouraging students to apply for financial aid and scholarships and to visit the college financial aid website for video presentations in Financial Aid TV.
- Increased the financial aid office walk-in traffic availability to students for students to work with walk-in advisors.
- Increased the number of work-study employees to serve as peer advisors.
- Added customer service surveys online and in the Financial Aid Lab to encourage students to provide feedback on the quality of services provided as well as suggestions on how to best serve students.

2. **How have program personnel used metrics to improve program services? (Provide metrics from the last four years).**

Term-by-term review of metrics assists the financial aid office to determine actions necessary to improve services to students. By monitoring data, we can determine course of actions for improvement. For example, we reviewed the increases number of FAFSA filed in our efforts to increase FAFSA applications from year to year by 5%.

- **Increased number FAFSA Applications received from year to year.**

FAFSA Applicants on File by Award Year						
	Year End Total				As of 01/27/14 (Year to Date)	
Annual	2010 (Year End)	2011 (Year End)	2012 (Year End)	% Change	2012 (As of 1/27/13)	2013 (As of 1/27/14)	% Change
COM	8333	9256	9390	11%	7822	8320	6%

We reviewed the number of awards made each term compared to prior terms. The financial aid office's goal for this metric is to increase the number of awards made and to reduce the turn- around time required for processing.

- **Increased number of awards processed while reducing processing time.**

Compton	AWARDED				
	Spr 11 Awarded	Spr 12 Awarded	Spr 13 Awarded	Sp 14 Awarded	% Change

Award					
PELL	3713	4188	3214	4259	13%
ACG	34	N/A	N/A	N/A	n/a
SEOG	278	357	358	274	28%
FWS	67	59	57	58	1%
Cal Grant	347	460	568	652	33%
BOGW	7711	8540	8775	8045	11%

We monitor the adoption rate and volume throughout the Debit Card implementation period to determine student participation for necessary improvements.

- **Increased participation in Debit Card and ACH deposit**

| History of Debit Card Usage (Combined with ECC)								
Academic Year	ACH		Check		Debit Card		Total	
	#	$	#	$	#	$	#	$
July 2010 - June 2011	0	$ 0	14,603	$16,151,946	11,501	$13,736,019	26,104	$29,887,965
July 2011 - June 2012	0	$ 0	15,627	$16,805,663	14,093	$16,477,698	29,720	$33,283,361
July 2012 - June 2013	5	$ 7,545	17,433	$18,970,184	11,887	$13,656,356	29,325	$32,634,685
July 2013 - October 2013	222	$239,970	5,209	$5,187,171	2,652	$2,763,388	8,083	$ 8,190,529

3. **If applicable, explain any patterns in student success, retention, and persistence in terms of student characteristics and program objectives and discuss planned responses or changes.**

The data below from Institutional Research shows the success rate for Financial Aid participants from Fall 2009 to Fall 2013. The data shows that each Fall semester, Financial Aid students' success rate was between 1.4 and 4.3 percent higher than other students not receiving Financial Aid. Based on data from 2009 to 2013, students receiving financial assistance fare better than a non-financial aid recipient in attaining an AA/AS or certificate.

	Term			
	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13
Program Success Rate*	62.9%	63.4%	59.5%	61.7%
Compton Center Success Rate	58.6%	59.8%	58.1%	63.2%

*Indicates Success rates for students involved in program during selected term.
** Indicates awards for students involved in the indicated program at any time at this location.
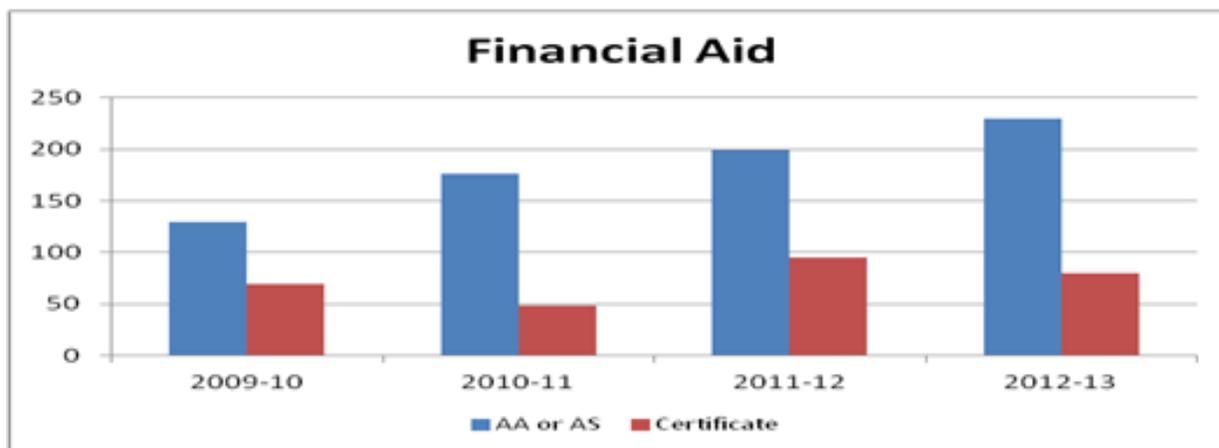
Financial Aid

IV.   Program Environment

1. **Discuss the program environment, including the relationship among program staff and students and involvement with other programs or support areas.**

The mission of the financial aid office is to provide financial aid access information and to ensure timely delivery of funds to optimize student success. The relationship among staff member has improved somewhat in the past year. Staff discontent stemmed from the enrollment growth bringing record number of financial aid applications, IT system failures and delays in student disbursements over the last 3 years and the reaction to quality improvement plans. To promote an environment of mutual respect and understanding, the staff works together as a team from the initial student intake process (Program Assistants and Technicians) through the verification of eligibility (Program Advisors); career advisement and educational planning (Financial Aid Counselor); placement services for Federal work study and community service (Program Advisor). Communication, guidance and training of staff through the ever-changing federal and state regulations are addresses through coaching of staff with step-by-step written procedures by and Director to promote professional excellence while providing for the necessary technical information to maintain program effectiveness and quality assurance. The addition of the financial aid supervisor assisted in the implementation of timely monitoring of staff production and quality outcomes. The Torrance and Compton financial aid managers are collaborating in improving communication of program policies and procedures with the production of an updated reference manual.
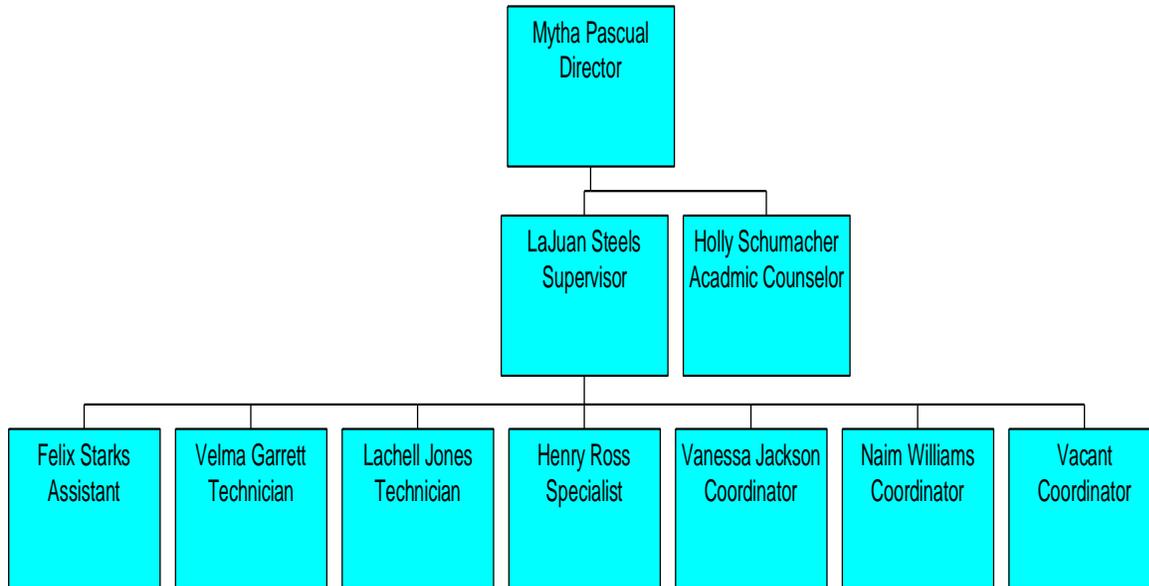
Financial Aid personnel maintain effective and collaborative relationships with all El Camino College and ECC Compton Center departments and support service areas. The program works very closely with EOP&S/CARE and CalWORKs sharing information and financial eligibility criteria; with Admissions and Records regarding BOG Fee Waiver student eligibility for fee waivers and requisite student enrollment status.; with all campus departments for Federal work study placements; the Business Office for processing student work study payroll and departmental budget reconciliations; and General Counseling for academic advisement and educational planning during peak registration periods.

2. **Describe the number and type of staff and faculty (include current organizational chart).**

   The Financial Aid Program consists of 8 full-time classified staff, one part-time counselor and one Director. All Financial Aid staff work directly with students:
   - One Director (Staff and budget oversight/program planning/ reporting)
   - One (academic and career advisement/educational plans)
   - One Supervisor (Staff supervision and Employee Time Sheets)
   - One Program Specialist (Satisfactory Academic Progress, Child Development and Foster Youths)
   - Three Program Coordinators (Awarding, Advising, FA Program Processing)
   - Two Program Technicians (Intake/Eligibility/Disbursement/Special Projects)
   - One Program Assistant (Student Documents/Front Desk)

Financial Aid Office

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                    ┌──────────────────┐
                    │  Mytha Pascual   │
                    │    Director      │
                    └──────────────────┘
              ┌──────────────────┬──────────────────┐
        ┌──────────────────┐ ┌──────────────────┐
        │  LaJuan Steels   │ │ Holly Schumacher │
        │    Supervisor    │ │ Acadmic Counselor│
        └──────────────────┘ └──────────────────┘
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| Felix Starks Assistant | Velma Garrett Technician | Lachell Jones Technician | Henry Ross Specialist | Vanessa Jackson Coordinator | Naim Williams Coordinator | Vacant Coordinator |

3. **Describe facilities or equipment needs for the next four years.**

- Facility needs include addition of work cubicles in the advising area to accommodate larger work space and to ensure privacy when discussing topics that are protected under the Family Educational Rights & Privacy Act (FERPA). Protected information when compromised can become a financial liability to the ECC Compton Center. Worn carpet pose tripping hazards for staff and students that can become a financial liability to the ECC Compton Center. Therefore, attention to these facility improve may lead to a clean and healthy work environment that can improve customer service, improve air flow system and correct safety hazards.
- Annual review of Financial Aid Computer Lab and staff computers to determine requisite hardware and software needs be completed every two years to ensure necessary technology upgrades

4. **Describe   the scheduled hours of availability meet student demand and indicate the specific hours the program operates.**

At the El Camino College Compton Center the majority of Financial Aid students visit the office during the hours of 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. primarily due their morning scheduled classes. Evening hours are available one evening per week. In addition, Financial Office Hours are modified to 6:30 PM and Saturday during peak registration and the first two weeks of each semester to maximize contact hours for late applicants.

Financial Aid Office Hours

Day	Time
Sunday	Closed
Monday	8:00 a.m. – 04:30 p.m.
Tuesday	8:00 a.m. – 04:30 p.m.
Wednesday	8:00 a.m. – 06:30 p.m.
Thursday	8:00 a.m. – 04:30 p.m.
Friday	8:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
Saturday	Closed

Current office hours as shown above accommodate for day students. Continued monitoring of student traffic during the evening hours to determine if additional office hours are needed is being monitored and considered for increasing available office hours.

5. **Describe the influences that external factors such as state laws, changing demographics, and the characteristics of the students served have on the program and services and how the program addresses these factors.**

- The Financial Aid Office at El Camino College Compton Center continues to be challenged with balancing the regulatory revisions and new legislation such as the implementation of the California Dream Act that opened access to state grants and scholarships for AB540 students and The Cal Dream Act has forced the return to manual processing of Board of Governor Fee Waivers (BOG). California Dream Financial aid applications are not readily imported into DATATEL COLLEGUE. Therefore, manually processed applications will add volume to the staff's current workloads. Attention must be made for the colleges to import Dream Act application data to facilitate automatic packaging of Dream Act BOG fee waivers. The financial aid office will need to increase communications to AB540 students to encourage applications as well as workshops to assist in the completion of California Dream Act financial Aid applications.

- The Student Success Act of 2012 (SB1456) will have a variety of impact for the Financial Aid Office. Beginning with 2016, student is subject to loss of eligibility for the BOG fee waivers. An appeal process and timely notification of loss of BOG fee waivers can assist students in understanding financial obligations early. In addition, all matriculating students will need an educational plan that will necessitate the need for additional academic counselors for the creation and modifications of educational plans as students solidify their educational and career goals.

- Compton Center Financial Aid applicants continue to lag behind early college applicants by initiating the financial aid process in early summer. USDE data shows that a majority of applicants from our feeder High Schools apply in June or July. This practice creates a heavy application volume in the first month of fall semester. Financial assistance for students entering college directly from High School is essential for success.

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Therefore, increasing early in-reach and outreach efforts while improving student skills and comfort levels in using the student portal and using online applications is a continuing overarching goal for the financial aid office.

Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) Submissions by High School Applications processed through March 28 of the first year of each 18-month cycle					
		2013/2014 Cycle			
		Through June 2013		Through December 2013	
Name	City	Applications Submitted Jun 2013	Applications Complete Jun 2013	Applications Submitted Dec 2013	Applications Complete Dec 2013
CENTENNIAL HIGH	COMPTON	166	136	180	154
CESAR CHAVEZ CONTINUATION HIGH	COMPTON	41	31	70	56
COMPTON HIGH	COMPTON	300	256	312	275
DOMINGUEZ HIGH	COMPTON	254	216	295	257
LIFELINE EDUCATION CHARTER	COMPTON	11	11	15	14
LYNWOOD HIGH	LYNWOOD	298	272	347	319
MARCO ANTONIO FIREBAUGH HIGH	LYNWOOD	242	210	281	260
OPPORTUNITIES FOR LEARNING	COMPTON	<5	<5	10	8
VISTA HIGH (CONTINUATION)	LYNWOOD	19	13	29	25

- Since the MOU with El Camino College, the Compton Educational Center accelerated the implementation of technological innovations to keep up with the pace of state of the art financial aid delivery. In the past two years, the adoption of El Camino College policies and procedures as well as migration to the DatatelColleague database continues to be the major challenge. Although the Compton Educational Center financial aid staff participates in the training and in the development of policies and procedures in a collegial fashion with the El Camino financial aid office. Training opportunities will need to continue as staff acquires necessary skills, acceptable performance levels and familiarity with Datatel/Colleague to produce quality and acceptable awarding and

packaging production levels that is monitored closely by student applicants. All of the financial aid office processes need to be clearly transparent to students making all staff and student transactions visible on the student portal MyECC.

- The trend for customized verification instituted by the USDE will necessitate The Compton Educational Center to implement student financial aid delivery enhancements such as interactive forms that can eliminate the need for submitting hardcopy forms and the requisite scanning. Introducing interactive forms where edits can be performed prior to submission provide data elements to facilitate the verification process can improve student satisfaction and increase effectiveness in the Financial Aid Office. Therefore, introducing technology and necessary software to assist with application processing will be necessary to meet current industry standards.

V. Conclusions and Recommendations

Present a brief summary of the program's strengths and areas for improvement. List all recommendations in a prioritized manner for subsequent placement into the program's annual plan.

1. Summarize the program's strength and areas that need improvement.

A. Strengths:

- The Compton Educational Center has a fully functioning Financial Aid Lab with 20 work stations that is open 5 days a week and one evening per week. The Financial Aid e-Services Lab also houses the reception area office with student peer assistants that has effectively served as a self-service environment and a primary vehicle for all electronic access for students to include: financial aid application, financial aid status review, award letter printing, application for admissions, registration for classes, educational plan review and printing, class schedule management, and access to all web application services related to the financial processes.
- The financial aid office is well supported by Compton Community College District administration in the area of staffing and equipment purchase needs in consideration of the colleges growing enrollment.

B. Areas Needing Improvement:

- Improve timeliness of delivery of funds to ensure student academic success by creating easy-to- understand policies and procedures and reference manuals that effectively address staff process and prompts for the efficient and timely delivery of funds to students. Increasing FAFSA application workshops at feeder high schools and overall in-reach and outreach efforts that move the volume of student to applying early and meeting a priority filing deadline

Implementing necessary upgrades in ITS in the near future that will move the financial aid office to efficient automated process and to implement interactive documents that can facilitate the processing of financial aid applications.

- Facility and Equipment: Facility and Equipment needs include addition of ergonomically enhanced work cubicles in the advising area to accommodate for larger work spaces and to ensure privacy when discussing FERPA protected information. Carpet replacement is also necessary to create a clean and healthy work environment to improve staff morale and correct safety hazards.

- Staff: Staff training with current, accessible, and user-friendly policies and procedures manual that references all operational procedures. Senior Employees may retire in the next three to five years. These employees must be replaced in the very near future, therefore staff development and cross-training for succession is essential to preserving institutional knowledge.

2. List prioritized recommendations

1. Improve timeliness of delivery of funds to ensure student academic success by: creating easy-to- understand policies and procedures and reference manuals that effectively address staff process and prompts for the efficient and timely delivery of funds to students; continue to re-evaluate existing policies and procedures that may create unnecessary student barriers and counter customer service efforts; advocate for implementing necessary upgrades in ITS that will move the financial aid office to efficient automated process for Cal Dream Act application import, and to implement interactive documents that can facilitate the processing of financial aid applications; increasing FAFSA application workshops at feeder high schools and overall in-reach and outreach efforts that move the volume of student to applying early and meeting a priority filing deadline.

2. Facility and Equipment: Facility and Equipment needs include addition of ergonomically enhanced work cubicles in the advising area to accommodate for larger work spaces and to ensure privacy when discussing FERPA protected information. Carpet replacement is also necessary to create a clean and healthy work environment to improve staff morale and correct safety hazards.

3. Staff: Staff training with current, accessible, and user-friendly policies and procedures manual that references all operational procedures. Senior Employees may retire in the next three to five years. These employees must be replaced in the very near future,

therefore staff development and cross-training for succession is essential to preserving institutional knowledge.

4. **Conclusion: Continue Program**

Revised: 04/15/2014, 10/24/14