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 Integration Tags	
External Reference:	
Custom Variable 1 :	
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California Black-Serving Institutions Application

College/University

Pasadena City College

Website

pasadena.edu

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College/University President

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Position

Associate Vice President, Chief Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Officer

State your institution's commitment to address Black and/or African American student success and explain how your commitment is consistent with your institution's mission.

Pasadena City College (PCC) is unwavering in its institutional commitment to advancing the success, retention, and thriving of Black students. This commitment is both a moral imperative and a reflection of PCC's mission to be an equity-minded learning community dedicated to enriching students' academic, personal, and professional lives through high-quality programs, inclusive campus engagement, and customized student support. We recognize that racial equity is essential to academic excellence—and that the success of Black students is a foundational benchmark of institutional integrity. PCC's dedication to Black student success is also inseparable from the historical and cultural context of the greater Pasadena community. Since the city's founding in 1896, Black residents have made indelible contributions to Pasadena's civic and educational landscape, despite facing entrenched racism, redlining, and systemic exclusion—including the city's history as a sundown town, where Black individuals were systematically discouraged or prohibited from remaining in certain neighborhoods after dark. Many Black families settled in Pasadena after fleeing the Jim Crow South, and through resilience and community-building, they established a legacy of excellence in politics, the arts, civil rights, and education. This commitment to community and justice is also shaped by more recent tragedies, including the Eaton Canyon fires, which devastated a predominantly Black and Brown Altadena community and directly impacted nearly 2,000 of our students. The aftermath of the fires laid bare the structural vulnerabilities that many of our student's face—and revealed the strength of our community's collective response. As a college, we not only mobilized immediate support but reaffirmed our long-term responsibility to serve, uplift, and advocate for those most disproportionately impacted by systemic inequities. This moment of crisis reinforced our resolve to advance Black student success not as charity, but as justice, rooted in the lived experiences and resilience of our students. PCC has always been part of this legacy. The achievements of alumni such as Jackie Robinson and Octavia Butler exemplify the intersection of Black brilliance and educational opportunity at PCC. The institution also honors local leaders such as Ruby McKnight Williams and Dr. Edna Griffin, whose activism led to the desegregation of public facilities like Brookside Plunge and the broader integration of Pasadena's schools through landmark cases like Spangler v. Pasadena City Board of Education (1970). These historical milestones shape PCC's present-day vision to serve as a partner and steward of Black community advancement. That vision is operationalized through strategic, systemic, and people-centered efforts driven in collaboration by Student Services and the Office of Institutional Equity, Diversity, and Justice (IEDJ). PCC's 2022–2025 Student Equity Plan and Strategic Plan prioritize racial equity as a core institutional value, outlining explicit goals to eliminate equity gaps, expand access, and cultivate identity-affirming environments. Central to this work is a comprehensive ecosystem of support co-led by IEDJ and Student Services, including the Black Student Success Center (BSSC), BlackSTEM, Transfer Bound, A2MEND, the Ujima learning community, and our developing Umoja program. These initiatives are not simply support programs they are powerful affirmations of Black identity, community, and

capacity, designed through intentional partnerships that ensure holistic, student-centered impact. To ensure that students are met with culturally responsive, high-impact services, PCC has invested in specialized roles that anchor our commitment, including a Black Student Success Specialist, Men of Color Student Success Specialist, Black Honors Educational Advisor, and a High School Relations and Orientation Specialist dedicated to Black/African American students. These professionals provide outreach, high-touch advising, and tailored persistence strategies that acknowledge the lived realities of Black students, from first-time college-goers to adult reentry learners. PCC also stands out as one of five California community colleges recognized by EdTrust–West’s Jumpstart report for achieving proportional representation of Black students in dual enrollment. Between 2017 and 2023, we saw a 572% increase in Black student participation, and notably, 75% of high school students who earned associate degrees before graduating during this period were Black. These outcomes are the result of intentional, equity-minded program design and sustained investment in early outreach and academic readiness. Yet, we know that Equity is not just about access, it’s about truly listening to the experiences of our students. That’s why, in 2024, Pasadena City College partnered with the RP Group, a respected research and planning organization dedicated to supporting California Community Colleges, to better understand the experiences of Black and African American students. We selected Executive Director Dr. Darla Cooper because of her expertise in equity-centered research and her proven track record of amplifying the voices of marginalized students to drive meaningful institutional change. Through focus groups with over 50 Black students, Dr. Cooper facilitated candid conversations that revealed gaps in support, the need for greater visibility of Black faculty and staff, and the importance of consistent, culturally affirming engagement. Her findings directly informed PCC’s nine-point action framework, guiding strategic improvements in communication, investment in the Black Student Success Center, faculty-student connections, and recruitment and retention of Black employees. We also draw strength and guidance from the broader Black community. For more than a decade, the President’s African American Advisory Committee (PAAAC) has served as a vital bridge between PCC and Pasadena’s Black community. This group of parents, civic leaders, and community stakeholders meets monthly to share insights, elevate concerns, and co-create solutions to advance Black student success. Their partnership ensures that PCC’s work is rooted not only in campus-based strategies but in authentic, ongoing accountability to the communities we serve. Our institutional mission compels us to serve every student equitably—but it also calls us to recognize and respond to the unique barriers and opportunities that shape the Black student experience. At PCC, equity is not a one-size-fits-all goal; it is a commitment to differentiated support, structural change, and cultural transformation. Through intentional strategy, historical awareness, and deep collaboration with students and community, we are building a college where Black students are not only present, but thriving—academically, personally, and professionally. PCC’s commitment to Black student success is not an initiative; it reflects who we are and who we strive to become.

Please state the percent of the institutions enrolled student population identifying as Black/African American for the current term.

As of the current term, 7.7% of the institution’s enrolled student population identifies as Black. This percentage reflects a comprehensive count that includes students of African ancestry across a range of enrollment types. It encompasses individuals enrolled in credit and non-credit programs, as well as those participating in dual enrollment opportunities. It also includes individuals who identify as Black in combination with one or more other racial identities. This approach ensures a more inclusive and accurate reflection of the diverse backgrounds, lived experiences, and cultural identities within our Black student community.

Please state the number of students identifying as Black/African American enrolled at the college or university for the current term.

For the current term, 1,997 students enrolled at the institution identify as Black. This number represents a broad and inclusive count of students of African ancestry, spanning credit, non-credit, and dual enrollment programs. It also includes individuals who identify as Black in combination with one or more other racial identities. This inclusive approach allows for a fuller understanding of the rich diversity of backgrounds, lived experiences, and cultural identities within our Black student community.

Describe the academic goals for the institution to achieve within the five-year period in which the initial designation is awarded. The goals described in this section should outline the institution’s plans to improve retention, time-to-degree or time-to-certificate completion, and graduation rates of Black and African American students.

Pasadena City College’s five-year academic equity goals are rooted in a firm belief that outcomes for Black students must improve through system-wide transformation, cultural responsiveness, and targeted accountability. These goals align with the RP Group’s 2024 focus group recommendations, the Student Equity Plan, and PCC’s Strategic Plan

priorities—each of which centers racial equity and student success. Current Data and Gaps: • First-year retention rate for Black students: 66% (8 percentage points below the institutional average) • Time-to-degree: 4.9 years for Black students, one year longer than average • Three-year completion rate: 18% for Black students • Transfer rate within three years: 24% for Black students • Degree/certificate completion: 20% for Black students Five-Year Academic Equity Goals (2025–2030): Goal Current Target (2030) Benchmarking Progress First-Year Retention Rate 66% 76% (match institutional avg) +2% annually Three-Year Completion Rate 18% 30% +2.5% annually Time-to-Degree 4.9 years 4.0 years Reduce by 0.2 years/year Transfer Within Three Years 24% 35% +2.2% annually Degree/Certificate Completion Rate 20% 33% +2.6% annually Strategies to Achieve These Goals: • Expanded Learning Communities and Wraparound Support: Programs within the Black Student Success Center provide identity-affirming, cohort-based experiences tied to academic coaching, counseling, and career readiness. These will be scaled through new staffing and peer mentorship. • High-Touch Transfer Programming: Transfer Bound and the HBCU Caravan provide specialized workshops, application assistance, and guaranteed admission pipelines to four-year institutions. Faculty and Transfer Center staff collaborate to ensure students meet transfer milestones. • Faculty and Curriculum Development: Pasadena City College is expanding professional learning focused on culturally sustaining teaching and racial literacy. By 2030, all gateway Math and English course sections will be taught by equity-trained faculty. In partnership with Institutional Equity, Diversity, and Justice and Instruction, PCC is redesigning key courses—especially English and Statistics—to provide targeted support and close equity gaps for Black students. • Black Honors Expansion: A dedicated Black Honors Advisor is growing access to PCC’s Honors Program—currently serving 1,400 students, of whom only 1% are Black. This expansion will increase participation and foster academic excellence. • Expanded Dual Enrollment Access: PCC’s dual enrollment strategy includes K–12 partnerships with high Black enrollment schools, Open Educational Resources (OER) to reduce textbook costs, and equity-minded faculty onboarding. From 18 Black dual enrollees in 2016-17, the number has grown to 121 in 2023-24. • Holistic Case Management and Outreach: Pasadena City College is reimagining its “Give Me 5” initiative—a concierge-style, holistic case management campaign—to support Black student success more intentionally. Originally designed to ensure that all students complete five critical milestones—developing an education plan, enrolling in transfer-level math and English, applying for financial aid, and connecting with the Transfer Center—Give Me 5 acts as an initiative-taking student success checklist. Now, through a renewed equity lens, we are evolving Give Me 5 into a culturally responsive outreach model specifically tailored to the needs of Black students. This includes intrusive, relationship-based engagement with success coaches and staff who help students navigate complex processes such as degree completion, financial aid renewal, and transfer planning. The reimagined Give Me 5 centers trust-building, consistency, and identity-affirming support—ensuring every Black student receives the guidance and resources needed to persist, graduate, and thrive. As part of our commitment to institutional accountability, PCC recently launched a comprehensive climate survey and is currently awaiting the results. These findings will directly inform our Black Student Success Strategic Plan, helping us deepen our understanding of where systemic barriers persist and how to better foster a culture of belonging. PCC’s academic goals are evaluated continuously through disaggregated dashboards, climate assessments, and equity audits. Our success will be measured not only by improved metrics (GPA, Math/English completion, FAFSA completion, CSEP completion, unit completion) but also by how deeply Black students feel connected, seen, and supported in reaching their full potential.

Describe the academic equity goals your institution aims to achieve within the five-year period of the initial designation as a California Black-Serving Institution. Specifically, outline how these goals will improve academic equity gaps in retention, time-to-degree or time-to-certificate completion, and graduation rates between your Black and African American students and the overall student population. Provide data-driven benchmarks and strategies for achieving these objectives.

Pasadena City College (PCC) envisions a bold, unapologetically student-centered future for Black learners—one rooted in cultural belonging, equity-minded policies, and data-informed transformation. As we seek formal designation as a California Black-Serving Institution (BSI), our academic equity goals are not simply responsive measures, but strategic, forward-thinking commitments designed to dismantle systemic inequities and create a college culture where Black excellence is cultivated and celebrated. These goals are grounded in findings from the RP Group's 2024 focus group research and are aligned with PCC's 2022–2025 Student Equity Plan and the District's Strategic Plan, both of which center equity as a core institutional priority. Current Equity Gaps Based on disaggregated student success data and the RP Group's 2024 focus groups with Black students, PCC identified the following equity gaps: • First-Year Retention: 8 percentage points lower than the overall student population • Three-Year Completion: 12 percentage points lower than the institutional average • Time-to-Degree: Nearly one year longer than peers • Transfer Rates: 5.8% for Black students, compared to 6.6% for all students Retention Goal: Increase first-year retention for Black students from 66% to 76% by 2030, closing the equity gap. Benchmark: +2% annual increase through 2030. Strategies: Pasadena City College (PCC) has established a cross-functional Black Student Success Leadership Team to align communication, policy, and programming in support of Black student retention. As part of our institution-wide

commitment to equity, we are advancing a unified “Give Me 5” strategy, focusing on five key retention indicators: completion of an educational plan, FAFSA submission, math/English enrollment, and connection to the Transfer Center. To deepen impact, we are expanding wraparound services through the Black Student Success Center (BSSC), which now offers extended in-person and virtual hours, culturally relevant workshops, and peer mentorship pods. Programs such as Black Grad Celebration, Black Honors, and Black STEM elevate visibility of Black excellence and reinforce a sense of belonging and academic pride. Additionally, PCC is actively developing an Umoja program to provide an academically rigorous, culturally responsive learning community centered on African American history, contributions, and experiences. Umoja will strengthen retention by fostering cultural identity, academic confidence, and community among Black students. At PCC, we understand that retention for Black and African American students depends not only on access but on mindful, culturally responsive support that connects their academic journeys to purposeful, real-world career outcomes. National data shows that roughly 75% of students enter college undecided or prematurely committed to a major, and our 2024–25 Career Confidence Survey reflects this trend, with only about 25% of Black and African American students reporting a clear major and career direction. To meet this need, the Freeman Center for Career and Completion has partnered with the BSSC to deliver culturally affirming, identity-conscious career advising directly in student-centered spaces. Through one-on-one guidance, targeted workshops, and dedicated outreach campaigns, these partnerships help students explore, clarify, and connect their academic goals to career aspirations. Initiatives such as internship info sessions, job fairs, and culturally affirming career development events are part of our broader effort to ensure Black students not only persist but thrive with purpose and direction. Calculus Achievement for Access (CAS) is an instructor—designed program created to support historically minoritized students pursuing B-STEM (Biological Sciences, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) fields. The program’s primary goal is to foster a strong sense of community among students, faculty, tutors, and the broader success team to ensure students’ progress through the Calculus sequence with the support needed to thrive. By integrating academic instruction with mentoring and peer support, CAS provides a structured pathway that guides students toward successful completion of gateway math courses and onward into STEM careers. In collaboration with the BlackSTEM initiative, CAS specifically aims to increase the representation and success of Black/African American students in STEM, while improving overall math achievement and completion rates across the board. Time-to-Degree Goal: Reduce average time-to-degree for Black students from 4.9 years to 4.0 years. Benchmark: Decrease by 0.2 years annually. Strategies: PCC will scale proactive advising and embed case management models into services for adult and online Black students. These include digital resource hubs, flexible class scheduling, and increased access to faculty through office hours and mentorship. By 2030, 100% of gateway English and Math courses will offer at least one section taught by equity-trained faculty using culturally sustaining curriculum. This ensures that instruction aligns with the cultural and academic needs of Black students, promoting both engagement and timely completion. A real-time equity dashboard will launch in 2026 to enable monitoring of progress, while our Equity Data Coaching initiative will help faculty analyze and use disaggregated data to make real-time adjustments to pedagogy and support. These efforts are designed to identify and close racial equity gaps in the classroom, ensuring Black students receive timely, relevant academic interventions and a more supportive learning environment. Completion (Degrees and Certificates) Goal: Increase three-year degree/certificate completion rate for Black students from 20% to 33%. Benchmark: +2.6% annually. Strategies: PCC is institutionalizing programs such as BlackSTEM, Ujima, and the Black Honors Cohort to support Black identity and persistence across disciplines. We are also scaling participation in the Honors Transfer Program and building thoughtful faculty-student connections through new cohort models and student feedback loops. To remove non-academic barriers to completion, the college has expanded its basic needs programming through the BSSC, offering emergency gift cards, hygiene supplies, transportation assistance, and housing referrals. This integrated approach recognizes that completion is tied to the ability to meet students’ social, emotional, and material needs. To improve degree and certificate completion rates for Black students, PCC will develop “Completion Communities” within culturally rooted spaces like the Black Student Success Center (BSSC). These communities would provide structured, cohort-based academic support for students nearing the finish line, specifically those with 45+ earned units but who have not yet applied for graduation. Staffed by success coaches, counselors, and peer mentors, these communities would offer targeted interventions such as degree audits, graduation application workshops, and one-on-one milestone planning. By anchoring this initiative within the BSSC, the approach honors cultural identity while removing common logistical and informational barriers to completion. Integrated communications, texts, emails, and personal outreach would be coordinated to ensure students stay on track and feel a sense of belonging through to the conferral of their degree or certificate. To accelerate certificate completion, PCC can embed ‘certificate stacking’ pathways into existing career exploration programs like those offered through the Freeman Center and the upcoming Umoja program. For example, students in exploratory or undecided phases can be guided toward short-term certificates that align with their interests and long-term goals, such as digital media, entrepreneurship, or health careers. These certificates serve as both skill builders and momentum milestones, allowing students to accumulate credentials on the way to larger degrees. Implementation would involve integrating academic advising and career counseling in first-year courses, ensuring that students see certificate options as part of

their academic map early on. Partnerships with faculty and industry professionals would support contextualized learning and reinforce the value of these certificates in real-world applications. PCC's Apprenticeship Program is a powerful degree completion strategy designed with Black student success in mind by bridging academic achievement with economic mobility. Rooted in the "earn while you learn" model, the program allows students to pursue tuition-free coursework at PCC while gaining paid, industry-relevant experience through vetted employer partners. Recognizing that financial barriers and limited access to professional networks disproportionately impact Black students, the program was strategically built to remove these obstacles. With support from the PCC Freeman Center, students receive culturally responsive career counseling, resume and interview prep, and guidance on course selection, ensuring they are fully equipped to succeed both in the classroom and the workplace. This integrated approach not only accelerates time to degree or certificate completion, but also strengthens students' confidence, skillsets, and long-term career trajectories.

Graduation and Transfer Goals:

- Raise three-year graduation rate from 18% to 30%
- Increase transfer rates from 24% to 35% within three years

Benchmarks:

- +2.5% annual increase in graduation
- +2.2% annual increase in transfer

Strategies: We are strengthening structured transfer pathways for Black students through coordinated advising, reserved seats in high-demand courses, and CSU, UC, and HBCU transfer tours. PCC has hosted the Chancellor's HBCU Caravan for two consecutive years, and we are increasing institutional support for expanding these efforts. In partnership with Human Resources, Instruction and The Equal Employment Opportunity Advisory Committee, our hiring and retention strategy aims to increase the number of Black faculty by 10% and Black student service professionals by 15% through equity-centered hiring practices. This includes launching cohort-based hiring, expanding outreach through diversity job boards, and partnering with HBCUs and graduate programs to build strong recruitment pipelines. These efforts are supported by an expansion of our Equal Employment Opportunity training to include anti-bias and culturally responsive strategies. PCC is also scaling its visibility of Black excellence through storytelling and community engagement. Cultural celebrations, professional conferences like All-African Diaspora Education Summit (ADES), and media campaigns such as 'Break Barriers' and 'PCC for Dena' spotlight Black student achievements and honor the legacy of PCC's Black alumni. Pasadena City College's Athletics program demonstrates a remarkable record of student success, particularly for our Black/African American student-athletes who make up nearly 40% of our athletic population. With steadily increasing retention and success rates over the past five academic years—culminating in a 92.75% retention rate and an 87% success rate in 2024–2025—our student-athletes consistently outperform the general student population. These outcomes reflect the deep support systems embedded within our Athletics program, including academic counseling, mentoring, structured study halls, and culturally responsive coaching. For many of our Black student-athletes, this environment offers a critical anchor—fostering both academic persistence and personal development. PCC Athletics not only prepares students to compete on the field, but also positions them to succeed in the classroom and beyond.

Institutional Accountability PCC's academic goals are evaluated continuously through disaggregated dashboards, climate assessments, and equity audits. We launched a new campus climate survey in 2025, and its findings will inform revisions to our Black Student Success Strategic Plan. Our success will be measured not only by improved academic metrics but also by how deeply Black students feel connected, seen, and supported in reaching their full potential. Pasadena City College is committed to ensuring that the BSI designation serves not just as recognition of our past efforts, but as an accelerator of future progress. Our data-driven goals and integrated strategies reflect a clear understanding: student success is not accidental; built through equity, community, and institutional accountability.

Identify institutional memberships, charters, or affiliations to organizations dedicated to the advancement of Black and or African American Students.

The institution maintains active memberships, charters, and affiliations with several organizations dedicated to the advancement of Black students in higher education. These affiliations reflect our ongoing commitment to fostering equity, access, and success for Black learners across all levels of the institution. Key memberships include the National Society of Black Engineers (NSBE) and the National Council on Black American Affairs (NCBAA), both of which support the academic and professional development of Black students and professionals in education and STEM fields. Additionally, the institution is engaged with the African American California Community College Trustees (AACCT) Caucus, and the National Association of Diversity Officers in Higher Education (NADOHE), further supporting system level equity efforts. Through partnerships with organizations such as the California Council of Cultural Centers in Higher Education (CaCCCHE), Men of Color Action Network (MOCAN), and A2MEND (African American Male Education Network and Development), we advance culturally responsive practices and leadership development for Black students, particularly Black male students. Our involvement with the Western Association of Educational Opportunity Personnel (WESTOP) and the Council for Opportunity in Education (COE) strengthens our efforts to support Black students through TRIO and other federally funded equity-based programs. Additionally, Pasadena City College actively participates in the All-African Diaspora Educators Summit (ADES), a national convening that centers the experiences,

scholarship, and advocacy of Black educators across the diaspora. This engagement deepens our institutional learning, informs our practices, and reinforces our commitment to fostering inclusive, culturally affirming environments that advance Black student success. These collective affiliations are instrumental in guiding institutional strategy, professional development, and direct student support efforts that center Black student success.

Attach your institution's strategic plan to address the academic goals and academic equity goals your institution aims to achieve within the five-year period of the initial designation as a California Black-Serving Institution. The strategic plan should include, but not be limited to, all the following: (A) a mission statement that addresses the applicant's commitment to serve Black and or African American students; (B) outreach services to potential Black and or African American students; (C) existing and/or proposed academic or basic needs support services to assist in the academic success of Black and/or African American students. Support services described in this section may include campus affinity centers, coursework, activities or events; (D) an outline of the planned allocation of resources during the five-year period in which the initial designation awarded; (E) an outline of how the institution is using or will use existing resources to provide culturally relevant professional development for the applicant's faculty and staff in pursuit of Black Serving Institution goals.

1. [576503-143404975-PCC-Black-Student-Thriving-Strategic-Plan-2025-2030.pdf](#)

4-year College/University applicants submit the following for the previous three academic years: (A) Submit graduation rates for the previous three academic years for all students within the normal time and up to 150 percent of the normal time to degree completion. (B) Submit graduation rates for Black and African American students, within the normal time and up to 150 percent of the normal time to degree completion.

Community College applicants submit the following for the previous three academic years: (A) The number of degree and certificate programs completed by all students, and by Black and or African American students. (B) The number of all students, and of Black and or African American students, who completed degree and certificate programs within normal time and up to 300 percent of normal time to degree completion. (C) The student transfer rates for all students, and for Black and or African American students, to four-year colleges and universities.

1. [576503-143405137-PCC-Data-Submission-BSI-Application.docx](#)

Please Submit a certification, in writing, by the chief administrative officer of the college or university, of the applicant's commitment to address Black and African American student success that is consistent with the applicant's mission.

1. [576503-146850640-PCC-BSI-Letter-of-Support.docx](#)

Describe the campus resources available to promote equity and inclusion for Black and African American students. Include details on academic support programs, cultural centers, mentorship opportunities, student organizations, financial aid initiatives, and any other institutional efforts designed to foster an inclusive and supportive campus environment.

At Pasadena City College (PCC), promoting equity and inclusion for Black students is not confined to a single office or program; it is a shared, cross-campus commitment embedded into the institution's fabric. From culturally grounded academic centers to targeted financial aid initiatives, PCC has intentionally built a network of high-impact resources that recognize and respond to the lived experiences, strengths, and systemic challenges faced by Black students. These resources are designed to affirm identity, promote belonging, support achievement, and foster leadership—ensuring that Black students not only attend college, but thrive and graduate with purpose. Cultural and Academic Support Hubs At the heart of PCC's equity infrastructure is the Black Student Success Center (BSSC)—a central space designed by and for Black students. The BSSC is a cultural and academic sanctuary, offering a holistic model of support that centers Black identity and community care. Key services include: • Academic support: Peer and faculty tutoring, study groups, and subject-specific workshops • Faculty-in-Residence program: Equity-minded instructors hold regular office hours in the BSSC, bridging classroom and cultural space • High touch advising: One-on-one success coaching, educational planning, and support with degree completion, transfer, and financial aid • Mental health referrals and wellness workshops tailored to Black student experiences • Cohort-based programming: Weekly empowerment groups like NIA (focused on Black womanhood and leadership) and BUILD Womxn, centering mental health, identity, and academic resilience • Belonging-building: Community meals, guest speakers, student-led events, and cultural celebrations Pasadena City College's Extended Opportunity Programs and Services (EOP&S) plays a vital role in supporting

students facing economic and educational barriers, many of whom are Black and Brown and identified as “at most promise.” Over the past five years, EOP&S students have demonstrated strong retention and success rates, often matching or exceeding those of their peers despite systemic challenges. For instance, in 2023–2024, the program served 1,306 students who achieved an 85.7% retention rate and a 74.1% success rate—underscoring EOP&S’s critical role in fostering persistence, belonging, and academic achievement. The CalWORKs program at PCC is dedicated to supporting low-income parents pursuing their educational goals while balancing family responsibilities. As part of a state-funded Welfare-to-Work initiative, CalWORKs partners with local counties to provide access to educational and career opportunities along with high-quality support services. Recognizing the unique challenges faced by student parents, the program encourages and empowers participants to succeed academically and become inspiring role models for their children. The Veterans Resource Center (VRC) offers a culturally responsive, affirming space for student veterans—including Black/African American veterans—navigating the transition from military to college life. Through specialized counseling, academic advising, peer mentorship, and connections to benefits and basic needs, the VRC enhances student belonging and retention. Veteran retention rates have steadily improved, reaching 90.5% in 2023–2024, reflecting the Center’s commitment to holistic support and closing equity gaps for Black veterans as they pursue long-term success. Together, these cultural, and academic hubs form the foundation of Pasadena City College’s ecosystem of support for Black students. They are not stand-alone services, but deeply interconnected spaces where identity, academics, and community converge. As PCC continues to invest in culturally responsive infrastructure, these hubs serve as both anchor points and launch pads, grounding students in belonging while propelling them toward academic success, leadership, and lifelong purpose. Cohort Programs and Learning Communities PCC has developed a growing number of identity-affirming academic programs that create intentional communities for Black students:

- **BlackSTEM:** A cohort-based STEM pathway that provides students with wraparound tutoring, mentorship from Black professionals, transfer coaching, and exposure to STEM careers through industry partnerships.
- **Transfer Bound:** A guided pathway that offers workshops, peer mentors, and direct support from a Black Transfer Advisor. The program’s success has helped boost participation in HBCU and CSU transfer agreements.
- **A2MEND Club:** supports Black male students through mentorship, leadership development, and community building—advancing success and belonging as part of PCC’s Black-Serving Institution efforts.
- **Black Lancer Advisory and Advocacy Collaborative Council (BLAACC):** exists to serve as a dynamic leadership board composed of Black student leaders committed to advancing Black student voice, engagement, and institutional change at Pasadena City College.
- **NIA:** a community-building program that centers Black womxn students by fostering spaces of affirmation, sisterhood, and purpose-driven support to promote academic and personal success.
- **Men of Color Action Network (MOCAN):** A PCC program that provides mentorship, academic support, and leadership development for male students of color, with a focus on increasing retention and completion among Black and African American men.
- **Black Honors Cohort:** Created in response to historical underrepresentation in PCC’s Honors Program, this track offers dedicated advising, writing support, and community-building tailored to Black scholars.
- **Freshman 15 and “Give Me 5”:** Structured interventions that provide incoming students with milestone-based advising to ensure timely completion of enrollment, FAFSA/Dream Act, transfer-level English and math, and transfer navigation.
- **Ujima:** A learning community rooted in African diasporic cultural values, offering Black and African American students a supportive network of peers, mentors, and faculty. Through linked courses, culturally relevant curriculum, and wraparound support services, Ujima addresses educational barriers by promoting collective achievement and retention. These learning communities leverage both academic infrastructure and cultural connection—an approach that supports student success while nurturing students’ sense of purpose and pride.

Financial Aid and Basic Needs Support Recognizing the financial barriers disproportionately affecting Black students, PCC has built several financial aid and basic needs initiatives with cultural responsiveness:

- **Black/African American Financial Aid Liaison:** Embedded in the BSSC, this staff member helps students navigate FAFSA, Dream Act, and SAP appeals, while connecting them to scholarships.
- **Emergency support:** Wildfire relief funds, emergency grants, and textbook assistance are available to students impacted by climate and housing crises, which have significantly affected local Black communities.
- **Open Educational Resources (OER):** In partnership with instructional faculty, PCC has expanded zero-cost textbook pathways in high-enrollment courses.
- **Food security and transportation support:** Free meals, grocery cards, and public transit passes are promoted through equity hubs, including the BSSC and CORE. PCC views financial aid not as transactional but as transformational; requiring culturally relevant guidance, empathy, and institutional flexibility.

Financial Aid Partnership Supporting Black Student Success To strengthen financial access and increase FAFSA and Dream Act completion among our Black and Latine/x student populations, the Black Student Success Center has established a collaborative partnership with Pasadena City College’s Financial Aid Office. Currently, the college maintains a FAFSA/Dream Act completion rate of approximately 50%. In response, student equity funds have been strategically allocated to support a dedicated Financial Aid Outreach Liaison, who provides culturally responsive workshops, one-on-one financial aid advising, and drop-in office hours directly within the Black Student Success Center and other empowerment program spaces. This proactive, community-based approach ensures that Black students receive timely, trusted support in navigating complex financial systems, thereby removing barriers to

persistence and completion. Building on these efforts, the Pasadena City College Foundation plays a vital role in sustaining and expanding financial and programmatic support for Black students. Through strategic investments, the Foundation funds events that foster academic and cultural engagement, such as the HBCU Caravan and targeted high school recruitment initiatives designed to inspire prospective Black students. Additionally, the Foundation manages nearly \$200,000 across six dedicated scholarship and program accounts, including the African American Heritage Endowment, the Jackie Robinson Scholarship, and the President's African American Advisory Committee Fund. This robust financial infrastructure underscores PCC's deep commitment to cultivating belonging, equity, and opportunity in alignment with our Black-Serving Institution goals. Student Organizations and Leadership Development PCC cultivates Black student leadership through both formal and informal pathways. While student-led Black organizations fluctuate annually based on student capacity, the college ensures ongoing opportunities for students to:

- Participate in event planning and peer mentorship through the BSSC
- Serve on equity governance committees and advisory groups such as the Student Equity Committee and the Men of Color Consortium
- Lead programming for cultural observances, including Black History Month, Juneteenth, and the Black Grad Celebration
- Represent PCC at conferences such as the African American Male Education Network and Development (A2MEND) and the Young African American Women's and Men's Conferences
- Engagement in career panels and alumni talks hosted by Black professionals and PCC alumni in partnership with the Freeman Center and The Association of Black Employees (TABE).
- The Intercultural Engagement Retreat deepens Black student leaders' understanding of their complex identities and equips them with compassionate skills to lead social justice efforts on campus. By fostering self-awareness and empathy, the retreat strengthens their capacity to create inclusive, transformative change.
- HBCU, UC, and CSU College Tours: Through the Black Student Success Center and A2MEND partnership, PCC hosts annual tours to Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), University of California (UC), and California State University (CSU) campuses, providing Black students with direct exposure to transfer opportunities and supportive networks. To deepen student agency, The Black Lancer Advisory and Advocacy Collaborative Council (BLAACC) exists to serve as a dynamic leadership board composed of Black student leaders committed to advancing Black student voice, engagement, and institutional change at Pasadena City College. BLAACC is charged with empowering students to take an active role in shaping campus culture through advocacy, peer leadership, and the execution of culturally affirming initiatives. The council works in direct partnership with the Black Student Success Center and campus leadership to identify student needs, recommend solutions, and implement programs that promote academic achievement, belonging, and community building. As a collective, BLAACC elevates the lived experiences of Black students and mobilizes leadership to ensure equity-driven progress across the college. PCC views student leadership development through a race-conscious culturally sustaining lens that prioritizes healing, identity affirmation, public speaking, advocacy, and community engagement. Instructional Equity and Faculty Engagement PCC ensures Black students are taught by equity-minded faculty through the following efforts:
- Gateway Course Redesign: Reserved sections of English and Statistics for Black students, taught by instructors trained in racial equity and culturally sustaining teaching.
- Racial Literacy and Embodied Equity professional development series Comprehensive professional development programs that deepen understanding of anti-Blackness, trauma-informed practices, and culturally responsive teaching to foster an inclusive campus climate.
- Equity Data Coaching Program: Faculty learn to analyze and act on disaggregated student data to close equity gaps in their courses.
- New Faculty Seminar: A three-year equity development sequence that prepares new instructors to teach with racial consciousness and anti-deficit frameworks. In addition, the upcoming Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) will house PCC's professional development infrastructure, offering year-round support for faculty seeking to deepen their equity practice. Community Partnership and Intergenerational Belonging PCC understands that Black student inclusion does not end at the classroom door. Through its long-standing President's African American Advisory Committee (PAAAC), a multi-administration advisory body of parents, community leaders, and alumni, PCC maintains a trusted relationship with the local Black community. Monthly meetings provide space for honest feedback, mutual learning, and collaborative solution-building. The Black Family Reunion, launched in 2022, is a signature event where alumni, students, families, and faculty reconnect through food, storytelling, resource sharing, and celebration. This event, along with Black Grad and church-based outreach, reinforces that PCC is not just an institution, but a community home. In addition, PCC's Small Business Development Center (SBDC), in collaboration with the Freeman Center, provides students with direct access to entrepreneurial tools, professional development, and economic empowerment strategies. Since Fall 2022, the SBDC has offered 4–6 entrepreneurship workshops each semester, covering foundational and practical topics such as "The Power of Entrepreneurship," "Skills that Pay the Bills," and "Starting a Business." Of particular significance are the in-person panel events held during Black Heritage Month in 2023 and 2024 in partnership with BlackSTEM. These panels featured successful Black entrepreneurs, many of whom were community college alumni, and gave students the opportunity to engage with real-world role models in entrepreneurship. Moderated by PCC staff and rooted in culturally affirming dialogue, the events created an intergenerational space for mentorship, inspiration, and networking. These programs highlight PCC's commitment to building bridges between academic, cultural, and professional spaces for Black students, reinforcing entrepreneurship as both a viable career

path and a tool for community transformation. Pasadena City College understands that building trust, belonging, and sustained support for Black students extends beyond the classroom and into the heart of the community. Through active participation in regional events, PCC fosters intergenerational relationships and strengthens the pipeline between local families, community leaders, and the college. These engagements serve as vital touchpoints—where prospective students see themselves reflected in higher education and where PCC shows up not just as an institution, but as a partner deeply rooted in the community it serves. PCC's presence at culturally affirming events—ranging from educational expos to community festivals—creates authentic opportunities for dialogue, visibility, and recruitment. These spaces also allow us to celebrate Black excellence, honor heritage, and bridge generations of learners, advocates, and mentors. Key community events where PCC engages and invests in Black student belonging include:

- Assemblymember Chris Holden's Annual Block Party
- The 10th Annual Backpack Giveaway & Festival hosted by Brandon D. Lamar
- Black Education Expo
- Taste of Soul (South Los Angeles)
- Black College Expo
- Pasadena's 43rd Annual Black History Festival
- Young African American Women's Conference

These partnerships are more than outreach—they are part of a broader strategy to affirm Black identity, increase visibility of college pathways, and deepen PCC's role as a culturally responsive institution committed to intergenerational success. PCC's commitment to equity and inclusion for Black students is comprehensive, sustained, and evolving. From the physical space of the BSSC to the intellectual space of reimagined curricula, from emergency aid to long-term transfer coaching, PCC has cultivated a collegewide ecosystem where Black identity is not only recognized but celebrated. We are proud of our progress and even more committed to the work ahead. Through continued investment, community partnership, and strategic leadership, PCC is building a campus where Black students belong, persist, and lead.

Include any additional information that the governing board should consider in evaluating your institution's readiness to be identified as a Black Serving Institution.

Pasadena City College (PCC) submits this application with profound intention and urgency; not only to be recognized as a Black-Serving Institution (BSI), but to solidify and expand a long-standing, equity-rooted commitment to the success and flourishing of Black. We approach this designation as a responsibility, a reflection of ongoing work, and a catalyst for deeper institutional transformation. While the preceding responses capture the strategic programs, data-informed practices, and culturally affirming efforts already underway, several additional points further underscore why PCC is uniquely positioned to lead as a BSI. First, PCC's internal structure is designed to sustain Black student success long term. The Office of Institutional Equity, Diversity, and Justice (IEDJ) provides executive-level oversight and coordination of initiatives related to racial equity and student belonging. This centralized leadership is critical in ensuring that equity is not fragmented across departments, but instead, integrated across systems—from hiring and curriculum to facilities and policy. Within this office lies a dedicated commitment to serving Black students, as reflected in the direct supervision of the Black Student Success Center and a host of culturally sustaining programs. Second, PCC has invested in intentional, equity-driven hiring. In addition to ongoing professional development for hiring committees, the college has implemented processes to track the demographics of applicants, interviewees, and hires. This allows PCC to identify and interrupt bias at each stage of the hiring process. We have also revamped our EEO training to include culturally responsive frameworks that better equip hiring committees to recognize and mitigate systemic inequities. We are committed to increasing Black representation across faculty, staff, and leadership roles, which we know directly impacts student outcomes and belonging. We also utilize the USC Center for Urban Education's Equity in Faculty Hiring Toolkit to guide our strategies. Third, PCC's institutional culture prioritizes student re-engagement and retention with innovative models. One such model, the Freshmen 15 initiative, targeted 15 Black students who had previously stopped out. Through one-on-one, personalized outreach by faculty and staff, PCC re-enrolled over 200 Black students within a single term. This success story exemplifies PCC's capacity to operationalize culturally relevant care, data utilization, and agility across departments. Fourth, PCC's commitment to data transparency and accountability is unwavering. Through equity dashboards, annual climate surveys, and program assessments, we continuously evaluate our progress in closing racial equity gaps. We are building an infrastructure where every academic division and student service area must report on its equity impact. Equity is not housed in a single office; it is everyone's responsibility. Fifth, PCC is a state and national leader in dual enrollment equity. We were one of only five colleges recognized in Ed Trust-West's 2022 "Jumpstart" report for achieving proportional Black student representation in dual enrollment. Since 2016, the number of Black students participating in dual enrollment has increased by 572%, and notably, 75% of high school students who earned an associate degree while still in high school identified as Black. This success demonstrates that with intentional, equity-centered outreach, faculty training, and strong K–12 partnerships, the transition from high school to college can be reimagined as a seamless, empowering pathway. For students, this means earlier access to college-level learning, significant cost savings, and increased confidence in their academic potential. For PCC, it represents a blueprint for cultivating Black student achievement from the very start of the college journey, reaffirming our institutional commitment to access, excellence, and long-term success. Sixth, The Pedagogical Advancement through Community

and Teacher-Students (PACTS) program is a Title V-funded initiative that advances PCC's equity and liberation goals by transforming classroom learning for and with Black and Latina/o/x students. Grounded in a liberatory framework, PACTS positions students as co-educators who partner with faculty through community-based learning, equity-focused classroom observations, and critical dialogue around curriculum and instruction. The program equips both faculty and students to co-create inclusive, culturally relevant, and antiracist learning environments. As PCC strengthens its identity as a Black-Serving Institution, PACTS exemplifies how we are embedding equity directly into the academic core—centering student voice, deepening faculty critical consciousness, and reimagining classroom spaces where Black students can thrive. Seventh, The PCC Association of Black Employees (TABE) is a dedicated group of individuals committed to advancing Black student success and supporting the Black-Serving Institution (BSI) goals. Through mentorship, advocacy, and collaboration, TABE members provide guidance and encouragement, helping students navigate their academic journeys. They also champion scholarships and initiatives that affirm Black identity and foster belonging. By partnering with campus and community groups, TABE strengthens a network of support that uplifts Black students and fuels PCC's ongoing commitment to equity and empowerment. Eighth, for many students, especially those from historically marginalized communities, the pursuit of higher education is deeply connected to economic mobility and career advancement. At PCC, we acknowledge these motivations and respond with a commitment to equity in career access and outcomes. The Freeman Center for Career and Completion offers an expansive portfolio of work-based learning (WBL) experiences, including programs designed to close opportunity gaps for Black and African American students, women, and system-impacted individuals. Among these are Intern Pasadena, a program offering paid summer internships for PCC students, and a specialized Arts and Entertainment Work Experience Program developed in collaboration with the regional workforce development board. Additionally, the Freeman Center hosts over 200 industry recruiters on our campus on an annual basis to help connect students to quality jobs in their field of interest. These initiatives aim not only to prepare students for competitive workforce entry but to dismantle structural barriers to equitable employment which often result in wage gaps for the Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) community. Ninth, while all PCC students are encouraged to engage with career services, we recognize that Black and African American students often face distinct challenges in navigating professional spaces where their identities may not be fully reflected or affirmed. To foster inclusive pathways to career success, the Freeman Center has developed specialized programming that center belonging, cultural identity, and professional empowerment. Since 2022, the Freeman Center has collaborated with the Black STEM program and BSSC to host the annual Black Entrepreneurs Career Panel, where Black business leaders share insights, offer mentorship, and model career success. Additionally, PCC is proud to launch a College Corps Fellowship program in the 2025-26 academic year, which will include fellowship placements with the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). This opportunity will offer leadership and career development within a nationally recognized civil rights organization and will directly serve PCC's Black student population. Furthering our commitment to early intervention, the Freeman Center has also partnered with PCC's Dual Enrollment Division to design a first-of-its-kind internship program for Black high school dual enrollment students. Beginning in 2026, this initiative will place 15 Black students in paid summer internships with Black-owned businesses, providing culturally affirming, hands-on experiences that build career readiness and community connection from an early stage. And finally, that Pasadena City College is not new to equity work—we are a college with a deep and demonstrated history of serving racially and educationally minoritized communities. As a federally designated Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI) and Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institution (ANAPISI), PCC has long recognized the importance of institutional transformation rooted in servingness, not just enrollment. We have been actively engaged in cross-campus conversations and strategies around what it means to serve racially minoritized students with intentionality, cultural responsiveness, and measurable impact. This means we are entering the Black-Serving Institution (BSI) designation process with not only commitment, but capacity. We already have in place the infrastructure, personnel, funding mechanisms, and community partnerships required to support Black student success at scale. Through the leadership of our Office of Institutional Equity, Diversity, and Justice, our integrated student services model, and our track record of launching identity-affirming centers and cohort programs, we are fully prepared to actualize this designation and ensure it leads to lasting, elevated outcomes for our Black students. Pasadena City College (PCC) submits this application not only to be recognized as a California Black-Serving Institution (BSI), but to affirm our deep, enduring relationship with Pasadena's Black communities—a bond rooted in shared struggle, resilience, and the pursuit of educational justice. While African Americans represent 8.3% of Pasadena's population, their leadership and cultural contributions have profoundly shaped the city and our college. PCC's mission is grounded in this legacy, and we view our role as a public institution as one of dedicated service to the communities that have sustained us. Our commitment to the success and empowerment of Black students is not peripheral; it is central to our identity, our values, and our accountability as an institution. Our history is inextricably linked to the history of Black Pasadena. As a college that has educated generations of Black leaders, PCC sees Black student success as both a legacy and a future. Being designated as a Black-Serving Institution will not only recognize

our decades-long efforts but also provide the platform and resources to continue building a college where Black students thrive—not despite the system, but because the system has finally been built for them.

An applicant is eligible for designation if the applicant meets all the following requirements:

- (1) Has at least 10 percent of the college's or university's enrolled student population identifying as Black and or African American students or has at least 1,500 Black and or African American students enrolled at the college or university.
- (2) Submits an initial or renewal application, as applicable, to the Statewide Central Office for the Advancement of Black Student Success on or before the application deadline

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Pasadena City College (PCC) is committed to advancing Black student success through a systemic and transformative five-year strategy that is deeply rooted in the college's mission, informed by community voice, and guided by institutional equity data. Our aim is not simply to serve Black students—it is to fundamentally reimagine and redesign our systems to center Black excellence, eliminate equity gaps, and foster conditions for thriving. This in-progress plan will be realized through five strategic pillars of Black servingness—Outreach and Access, Enrollment and Retention, Student Engagement and Campus Climate, Professional Learning and Anti-Racism, and Accountability and Continuous Improvement—which collectively form the foundation of PCC's intentional and equity-centered approach. Through integrated outreach, culturally responsive instruction, basic needs support, and deliberate resource allocation, PCC's strategic plan positions the college to emerge as a leading California Black-Serving Institution.

A. Mission Statement: Commitment to Serving Black/African American Students

At Pasadena City College, we are unapologetically committed to cultivating a racially just, Black-affirming institution where Black students don't just succeed—they lead, thrive, and define excellence on their own terms. We believe that racial justice is not optional—it is foundational to academic success. Our mission is grounded in the truth that Black lives, Black brilliance, and Black futures matter.

We embed culturally responsive teaching, data-informed equity strategies, and deep-rooted community partnerships into every classroom, office, and decision-making space across the college. From admissions to graduation, from student services to faculty development, our work is intentional and unrelenting.

Through reflective planning, inclusive pedagogy, and institutional accountability, we actively dismantle systemic barriers and confront anti-Blackness wherever it exists. Black excellence is not an add-on—it is at the center of our educational mission. At PCC, Black students are seen, celebrated, and supported in every pathway, program, and policy.

B. Outreach and Enrollment

Strategic Pillar 1: Outreach and Access

PCC's outreach efforts are grounded in trust, relationships, and visibility, and reflect a collaborative approach between the Outreach team, Athletics, Strategic Communications, Enrollment Management and the Office of Institutional Equity, Diversity, and Justice (IEDJ). Through these partnerships the college implements an extensive, culturally grounded outreach strategy that meets prospective students where they are, both physically and

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emotionally. This deliberate collaboration ensures that outreach is not only strategic, but also affirming, community—informed, and rooted in a shared commitment to Black student success. Annual outreach and engagement touchpoints include:

- The Black Family Reunion, Juneteenth Fair, and Pasadena Black History Parade
- On the Yard HBCU Transfer Caravan
- Black Expo
- Young African American Women's and Men's Conferences
- Regular Sunday visits to Black churches
- Black Student Athlete Success Summit
- Taste of Soul, an annual family-friendly street festival in Los Angeles that celebrates Black culture with more than 350,000 participants.
- Strategic partnerships with the NAACP and USC Race and Equity Center

Complementing these efforts, the President's African American Advisory Committee (PAAAC) has served for over a decade as a trusted conduit between PCC and the Black community. Comprising community members and PCC staff, the PAAAC meets monthly to provide insights and guidance on institutional priorities, ensuring that the voices of Black parents, elders, and civic leaders directly inform the college's decisions. Through initiatives aimed at increasing enrollment, improving academic performance, and enhancing retention and transfer rates for African American students, the PAAAC exemplifies PCC's commitment to equity and community partnership.

We strategically collaborate across organizations, centers, and programs, such as EOPS, CORE, BSSC, and Pride—to ensure that Black students are holistically resourced and supported. Recognizing that Black students hold multiple, intersecting identities, we work to break down silos and foster integrated support systems that reflect the fullness of their lived experiences. This intersectional approach allows us to address barriers, affirm identities, and create pathways that contribute to their success and sense of belonging more effectively.

Athletics stands out as one of PCC's most impactful and intentional recruitment-to-completion pathways, demonstrating a remarkable record of student success; particularly among Black/African American student-athletes, who comprise nearly 40% of the athletic population. With steadily increasing retention and success rates over the past five academic years; culminating in a 92.75% retention rate and an 87% success rate in 2024–

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2025-our student-athletes consistently outperform the general student population. These outcomes reflect the deep support systems embedded within our Athletics program, including academic counseling, mentoring, structured study halls, and culturally responsive coaching. For many of our Black student-athletes, this environment offers a critical anchor—fostering both academic persistence and personal development. PCC Athletics not only prepares students to compete on the field, but also positions them to succeed in the classroom and beyond.

PCC also utilizes high-touch, identity-affirming communications campaigns, such as “PCC Unapologetically Black,” to affirm the value, brilliance, and presence of Black identity visually and publicly on campus. Our marketing materials are thoughtfully designed to feature Black students, staff, faculty, and alumni, ensuring that Black Lancers see themselves reflected and feel a strong sense of belonging. This intentionality has supported the success of broader branding efforts like Break Barriers, a campaign that celebrates Lancers who have overcome obstacles, spotlighting iconic alumni such as Jackie Robinson, Octavia Butler, and Breanna Clark.

Our current campaign, PCC for Dena, responds to the Eaton Canyon wildfire’s impact on a historically Black region, reinforcing our commitment to community resilience. PCC maintains year-round visibility through advertising in the Pasadena Black Pages and on Black-owned radio stations, while sponsoring local programs like James Farr’s Altadena Rising. Recognizing the vital contributions of Black legends shaped by PCC—such as Mack Robinson, John Singleton, and Betye Saar—we remain steadfast in ensuring that our outreach, messaging, and support authentically honor and advance the Black community’s legacy and future.

C. Academic and Basic Needs Support Services

Strategic Pillar 2: Enrollment and Retention

To serve Black students holistically, PCC delivers a robust constellation of services that address academic barriers, emotional wellness, and basic needs.

The Black Student Success Center (BSSC) is the college’s flagship equity hub, offering:

- Identity-affirming advising and counseling
- Learning communities like A2MEND and Black STEM
- Peer and faculty mentorship

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- Study space, tutoring, and workshops
- Faculty-in-residence office hours
- Embedded mental health services
- FAFSA/CA Dream Act assistance and SAP appeals
- Community-building programs like NIA and BUILD Womxn
 - NIA is a community-building program that centers Black womxn students by fostering spaces of affirmation, sisterhood, and purpose—driven support to promote academic and personal success.
 - BUILD Womxn is a “for us, by us” initiative that connects Black womxn employees, students, and alumni to combat anti-Blackness, cultivate professional and academic growth, and build a culture of empowerment and belonging at PCC.

Pasadena City College’s commitment to Black student success is rooted in ongoing assessment, student voice, and intentional program design. Over the past several years, PCC has implemented key academic and student support interventions aimed at increasing retention, transfer, and belonging for Black students. These interventions were developed proactively but have been further validated and refined based on insights from the RP Group’s 2024 focus group series, which highlighted where PCC’s efforts are working and where they must evolve. In response, the college has expanded and deepened a suite of equity-focused strategies designed to remove barriers, affirm identity, and support student agency.

To coordinate and strengthen these strategies, PCC has established a cross-departmental Black Student Retention Committee that brings together stakeholders from academic affairs, student services, institutional research, and community partners. This committee ensures a campus-wide approach to Black servingness by aligning policies, programs, and practices with the lived experiences of Black students. Its work is critical to identifying systemic challenges, fostering accountability, and accelerating the college’s progress toward meeting its equity goals.

Key interventions include:

- “Give Me 5” Transfer Concierge Model: A proactive five-step framework ensuring every Black student receives:
 - An individualized education plan

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- Completion of transfer-level Math and English
 - Financial aid application support
 - Connection to the Transfer Center
 - Ongoing follow-up from success coaches
-
- Gateway Course Redesign: Reserved cohort seats in foundational courses like English and Statistics, taught by equity-trained faculty using culturally relevant curriculum.
 - Black Honors Cohort: A new track within the Honors Program to increase Black student representation, led by a dedicated Black Honors Educational Advisor.
 - Lancer Care Basic Needs Program Enhancements: Wraparound services tailored to Black/African American students, including:
 - Access to grocery and gas cards
 - Hygiene products and school supplies
 - Case management and culturally affirming support to reduce non-academic barriers to persistence
 - Dual Enrollment Equity Initiative: Since 2016, PCC has increased Black student participation in dual enrollment by over 572%, with 75% of associate degrees earned through this pathway awarded to Black high school students. This success is driven by:
 - Use of Open Educational Resources (OER)
 - Equity training for dual enrollment faculty
 - Community-facing information sessions for families and students

Another critical intervention supporting persistence and degree completion is a targeted career counseling initiative designed for Black students who are undecided about their major or career path. In partnership with the Freeman Center, the Black Student Success Center has implemented a strategy to identify and engage students who have not yet declared a program of study or have expressed uncertainty about their academic and

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career direction. Through personalized, weekly outreach and newsletters, students are invited to meet with career counselors to explore their interests, complete assessments like the Strong Interest Inventory or MBTI, and develop a Comprehensive Educational Plan aligned with their goals. By helping students reduce major changes, clarify their academic paths early, and connect their education to meaningful careers, the initiative directly addresses barriers that contribute to credit loss, diminished motivation, and extended time-to-degree. This culturally responsive approach ensures that career exploration is not separate from equity work but integral to Black student success.

These outcomes reflect PCC's institutional commitment to building systems around what Black students say they need and to ensuring that every effort is informed by both data and lived experience.

D. Five-Year Resource Allocation Plan

Strategic Pillar 3: Student Engagement and Campus Climate

To ensure lasting infrastructure and capacity, PCC has committed to significant resource allocation over the BSI designation period:

- **Staffing:** Continued funding for full-time Black Student Success Coordinator, Men of Color Specialist, Black Honors Advisor, High School Outreach Specialist, and Data Analyst.
- **UMOJA Launch:** Curriculum design, staffing, and student support to establish a statewide-aligned learning community rooted in African diasporic frameworks.
- **Center for Teaching and Learning (Opening Fall 2025):** Co-led by IEDJ, Professional Development and Instruction, this hub will advance race-conscious pedagogy across all disciplines.
- **Technology & Online Student Support:** Virtual BSSC access, flexible office hours, and digital career/transfer tools.
- **Emergency Aid and Textbook Support:** Foundation-led wildfire relief fund, textbook vouchers, and food assistance targeted to Black communities disproportionately impacted by climate crisis events.
- **Athletic Zone:** Increasing dedicated physical and academic space to support Black student-athletes with identity-based advising, mentorship, and university recruitment.

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- Increased outreach and in-reach programming resources. These efforts will include culturally responsive events, high school bridge activities, and on-campus engagement that fosters belonging and connection. By strengthening pipelines into PCC and cultivating community within, we aim to increase enrollment, retention, and a sense of empowerment among our Black student population.
- Strategic partnership with Sacramento State's newly launched Black Honors College to further our commitment to Black servingness and academic excellence. This potential collaboration would create intentional pathways for high-achieving Black students, with opportunities for joint programming, transfer alignment, and culturally affirming academic experiences. By building a relationship with an institution that shares our dedication to racial equity and student empowerment, PCC seeks to expand its capacity to support and celebrate Black student success at every stage of the educational journey.
- Pasadena City College is committed to developing a Study Away program that centers Black student identity, global consciousness, and cultural connection. As part of our aspirational goals toward Black servingness, we are exploring opportunities to allocate resources for domestic and international travel experiences that immerse students in the African diaspora and Black intellectual traditions. This future-facing initiative aims to expand access to transformative learning environments where Black students see themselves reflected, valued, and inspired on a global scale.

PCC's resource strategy aligns every dollar with racial equity outcomes and reinforces that Black student success is a collegewide imperative, not a pilot initiative.

E. Professional Development for Faculty and Staff

Strategic Pillar 4: Professional Learning and Anti-Racism

PCC's nationally recognized approach to equity-centered professional learning ensures that Black students encounter racially literate, identity-affirming pedagogy in every classroom and office they visit. All these programs were launched between 2021 and 2023 and continue to shape the college's culture of instructional equity today. Highlights include:

- Racial Literacy Series: A five-part series that provides over 15 hours of annual programming focused on anti-Blackness, implicit bias, intersectionality, and culturally responsive teaching.

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- Embodied Equity Series: Developed in partnership with the University of San Diego and Dr. Nikki Elliott, a nationally recognized expert in trauma-informed education and healing-centered engagement. This series centers student wellness through the integration of trauma-informed and healing-centered practices.
- Racial Equity Anchors (in partnership with USC Race & Equity Center): Cohort-based, race-conscious leadership training for faculty, staff, and administrators.
- New Faculty Seminar/ LancerTrak: Lead by Institutional Equity, Diversity and Justice in partnership with Instruction, provides multiple opportunities through a 3-year-long professional learning sequence experiences grounded in racial justice pedagogy, equity application, and peer-led inquiry projects prioritizing tenured-track faculty but open to all full and part-time faculty.
- Equity Data Coaching Program: A monthly, year-long learning community where Faculty are trained to analyze disaggregated student success data and revise curriculum to close racial equity gaps, with specific focus on Black and Latine students.
- Learning Communities: Programs such as Lancers Leading, CTL workgroups, and course redesign cohorts focused on culturally sustaining teaching practices, with a focus on supporting Black and Latine students.
- Data Trek: Led by the Office of Institutional Effectiveness, this experience serves as a year-long data institute focused on building data literacy and skillsets.
- Humanizing Online Teaching and Learning- Hosted by our Distance Education Instructional Designer, this experience supports faculty development of more inclusive and accessible online courses with a specialized focus on Black and Latine students.
- The All-African Diaspora Educators Summit (ADES) serves as a powerful space for professional and personal development for both Pasadena City College faculty and staff who support Black student success, as well as for Black students themselves. As a professional learning opportunity, ADES offers workshops, panels, and keynotes that deepen cultural competence, pedagogical innovation, and equity-centered leadership.
- AspirePCC is Pasadena City College's year-long leadership institute designed to build the racial equity capacity of faculty and staff to better serve Black students and advance institutional justice. By strengthening equity-centered leadership at every level, the program supports PCC's mission to create an inclusive, affirming

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environment where Black students can thrive academically, personally, and professionally.

Each of these investments advances our goal to ensure that every employee at PCC is equipped, empowered, and accountable in fostering environments where Black students thrive.

F. Accountability and Continuous Improvement

Strategic Pillar 5: Accountability and Continuous Improvement

Pasadena City College ensures that its commitment to Black student success is not just aspirational but measurable, data-driven, and continuously refined. This work is grounded in institutional accountability, racial equity metrics, and the regular evaluation of programs and practices based on both quantitative data and Black student voice.

Key mechanisms of this pillar include:

- **The Black Student Retention Committee:** A cross-departmental body that convenes stakeholders from Academic Affairs, Student Services, Institutional Research, and community partners. This committee ensures collegewide alignment and provides ongoing review of equity-focused initiatives to eliminate structural barriers to Black student success.
- **Equity Data Integration:** Programs like the Equity Data Coaching Program and Data Trek build institutional capacity to use disaggregated student success data to inform instructional redesign, resource allocation, and equity interventions—ensuring that faculty and staff remain equipped to adapt based on evidence.
- **Feedback and Evaluation:** PCC leverages focus groups (e.g., the RP Group’s 2024 series), student satisfaction data, and community advisory input to assess program impact and evolve support services. These insights are regularly shared across departments to inform continuous improvement cycles.
- **Strategic Equity Planning:** Each of the college’s investments—whether in professional development, resource allocation, or new initiatives—undergoes equity impact review, reinforcing that racial justice is not siloed, but institutionally embedded.

Anchored in Purpose: *Centering Black Student Thriving at PCC*
Strategic Plan 2025-2030

By embedding accountability into the fabric of our strategic planning and operations, PCC reinforces that Black servingness is a shared, measurable responsibility across all levels of the institution.

PCC Black Serving Institution Data Submission

At Pasadena City College (PCC), institutional data is not used passively—it is a catalyst for equity-centered action. As we pursue California Black-Serving Institution (BSI) designation, we have analyzed our student success metrics not only to demonstrate our progress but to interrogate our challenges and reimagine our systems of support. The data presented here, covering the past three academic years, highlights key trends in degree and certificate completion, time to degree, and transfer outcomes for Black students. Just as importantly, it illustrates how PCC is aligning its strategies and resources to ensure that these trends move steadily toward parity and prosperity.

A. Degree and Certificate Completion (All Students and Black Students)

Over the last three academic years, PCC has awarded tens of thousands of degrees and certificates across all student populations. During that same period, the number of awards earned by Black and African American students has fluctuated but shown overall growth:

- **2021–2022**
 - All students: 6,444
 - Black students: 168
- **2022–2023**
 - All students: 5,375
 - Black students: 138
- **2023–2024**
 - All students: 8,563
 - Black students: 181

While Black students represented approximately 6.7% of PCC’s total headcount in 2023–2024, their share of degrees and certificates awarded continues to fall below proportional representation. Nevertheless, the increase from 138 completions in 2022–23 to 181 in 2023–24—an increase of 31%—demonstrates the early impact of new equity-centered practices, to include a reimagining of Black Learning communities such as Black STEM and A2MEND, the inaugural Black Honors Cohort, and expanded staff positions dedicated to Black student outreach and advising.

B. Completion Within Normal Time and 150–300% of Normal Time

Timely completion continues to be an institutional priority. However, Black students face complex barriers—including housing instability, employment demands, limited advising

PCC Black Serving Institution Data Submission

access, and disproportionately high course withdrawal rates that lengthen time to degree. PCC's institutional research data reveals the following:

- **Black students who completed within up to 150% of normal time:**
 - 2021–2022: 20 students
 - 2022–2023: 16 students
 - 2023–2024: 7 students
- **All students who completed within up to 150% of normal time:**
 - 2021–2022: 1,381 students
 - 2022–2023: 1,136 students
 - 2023–2024: 1,158 students

This data makes clear that Black students are not equitably represented among those completing credentials within traditional timeframes. PCC has taken direct steps to address this:

- Expanded academic support through the Black Student Success Center (BSSC), which now offers extended hours, online advising, and direct faculty office hours.
- Gateway course redesign, which ensures Black students are placed with equity-trained faculty for critical courses such as English 1A and Statistics. Professional learning and faculty led inquiry projects are critical as we increase success and completion rates for Black students.
- Dual enrollment success strategies, which prepare students to enter PCC with college credits. From 2016 to 2023, Black participation in dual enrollment increased by 572%. Of those earning associate degrees before high school graduation, 75% were Black students—a groundbreaking achievement.
- Basic needs and emergency aid access, which helps reduce life-disrupting stressors that contribute to delays in academic progress. This is critical given the recent Eaton Canyon fires disproportionately impacting our Black communities in Altadena. In response, PCC established the Wildfire Emergency Fund to support students, particularly Black and Latine, who face displacement, financial hardship, and trauma due to natural disasters.
- Concierge-style advising models, such as “Give Me 5,” and Black Honors, which walk students through structured milestones for timely completion and transfer.

PCC Black Serving Institution Data Submission

- PCC has served as the official host site for the HBCU Transfer Caravan for three consecutive years offering Black students on-the-spot admissions and meaningful engagement with representatives from Historically Black Colleges and Universities. PCC is expanding this work through additional CSU and UC Black student-focused tours and the development of a Study Away at an HBCU program, further deepening its commitment to Black student servingness.

PCC's approach to improving timely completion is not about pressure; it is about alignment: ensuring that Black students receive clear, consistent, and culturally relevant guidance throughout their academic journey.

C. Transfer Rates to Four-Year Colleges and Universities

PCC is widely recognized as a statewide leader in student transfer. In 2023–2024, it led California in the total number of students transferring to four-year institutions, with 2,046 students transferring—more than any other community college. For Black students, the three-year trend line illustrates both the challenge and the opportunity:

- **Black student transfer rates:**
 - 2020–2021: 8.6%
 - 2021–2022: 7.4%
 - 2022–2023: 5.8%
 - 2023–2024: 50 transfers
- **All student transfer rates:**
 - 2020–2021: 9.0%
 - 2021–2022: 6.8%
 - 2022–2023: 6.6%
 - 2023–2024: 2,046 transfers

Though Black student transfer rates have remained relatively close to the college average in prior years, the 2022–2023 drop to 5.8% prompted urgent institutional response. PCC has since scaled several strategies to support transfer success:

- Dedicated Black Transfer Advisor and Transfer Bound program, offering targeted coaching, university navigation, and application support.

PCC Black Serving Institution Data Submission

- Expansion of HBCU pathways: PCC is part of the California Community Colleges' HBCU Transfer Guarantee project, and regularly hosts On the Yard transfer caravans.
- Give Me 5: A five-point action plan that supports completion of FAFSA/Dream Act applications, Transfer Center engagement, counseling appointments, and completion of transfer-level math and English.
- Athletic Zone and “Next Play” transfer support for student-athletes, a majority of whom are Black men.
- Cross-campus coordination between IEDJ, Counseling, Transfer Center, and academic divisions to identify at-promise students and intervene early.

Notably, PCC ranks #1 in California in CSU AB 132 Transfer Guarantee participation for Black students (31 guaranteed transfers in 2022–23), confirming the effectiveness of our transfer infrastructure when combined with cultural responsiveness.

The data across completion, time to degree, and transfer tells a powerful story: one of persistence, promise, and purpose. Pasadena City College recognizes that while important gains have been made, Black student outcomes still reflect the impacts of systemic barriers—and therefore require systemic solutions. Our five-year BSI strategy is built around addressing these exact disparities: with stronger advising, culturally responsive teaching, equity-minded policy, and consistent accountability.

PCC does not accept incremental change as enough. We view Black student success as the litmus test of our mission—and we are committed to meeting that test with urgency, transparency, and deep care.



June 6, 2025

Re: Black-Serving Institution Support Letter – Pasadena City College

To Whom It May Concern:

Through its academic programs, comprehensive student services, and support systems across the Pasadena Area Community College District, Pasadena City College stands firm in its commitment to advancing Black and African-American student success in the classroom and beyond.

We take this imperative from our mission, vision, and values. Our mission statement declares in its very first phrase that PCC “is an equity-minded learning community,” establishing that increasing student equity is a fundamental characteristic of this college. This dedication to equity is also present in our Student Equity Plan, which highlights the college’s charge to serve Black and African-American students in particular.

We are grateful for the opportunity to enhance this work by seeking the designation of Black-Serving Institution from the state of California. Our application and supporting documentation make clear our commitment and capacity to serving Black and African-American students.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "José A. Gómez". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first and last names being more prominent.

Dr. José A. Gómez
Superintendent/President