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LACCD Board of Trustees Directs Legal Team to Pursue Mediated Settlement Without Filing Case to the U.S. Supreme Court

LOS ANGELES—The Los Angeles Community College District (LACCD) Board of Trustees at its March 2 meeting directed the District’s legal team to continue seeking a mediated settlement in a lawsuit about the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and voted not to have a petition filed to the U.S. Supreme Court for review.

“The Board of Trustees stands strongly united in support of the Americans with Disabilities Act and reaffirms our direction that the Los Angeles Community College District will always be a welcoming, inclusive higher education environment where all individuals of all abilities and backgrounds can pursue their goals of a quality, affordable college education,” LACCD Board President Gabriel Buelna, Ph.D., said.

“We understand and support the importance of the ADA and agree completely with all of the people who took the time during the past several months to share with us their thoughts and feelings. Their strong, heart-felt beliefs resonate with us and it is our desire to bring quick closure to the case,” Board Vice President David Vela said.

The petition deadline to the U.S. Supreme Court is March 3, but both sides have agreed to continue good-faith communications and to meet by March 14 to discuss a settlement agreement. If successful, the settlement agreement will be presented to the Board at its April 13, 2022 meeting for approval. If the next round of settlement talks fails, it is likely the matter will go back to the U.S. District Court for the Central District of California for re-trial.

“We remain firmly committed to reaching a settlement that will enable us to provide even more inclusive and responsive educational services for reasonable accommodations under the provisions of the ADA,” LACCD Chancellor Francisco C. Rodriguez, Ph.D., said. “The District is a strong and vociferous advocate for students with disabilities and we remain steadfast in our primary mission to help our students achieve their higher education goals.”

The Board’s decision Wednesday night followed public comments from dozens of people who spoke about the personal importance of the ADA in their lives and education.

“The Board clearly recognizes and supports the foundational principles of the ADA and its integration into our District’s educational mission. Together, we are stronger and better as a result,” Board Second Vice President Nichelle M. Henderson said.

The complicated case of *Payan v LACCD* began in 2017 regarding the accessibility of educational materials for blind students at Los Angeles City College, one of the nine LACCD colleges. A technical legal nuance emerged in the lawsuit about the ability of a person to sue a public entity even if there was no direct actions to deliberately discriminate against the person who made the request for reasonable accommodations under ADA provisions. The matter has been through multiple layers of the federal court system for years without resolution.

The LACCD colleges include: [Los Angeles City College](#); [East Los Angeles College](#); [Los Angeles Harbor College](#); [Los Angeles Mission College](#); [Los Angeles Pierce College](#); [Los Angeles Southwest College](#); [Los Angeles Trade-Technical College](#); [Los Angeles Valley College](#) and [West Los Angeles College](#).

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About the Los Angeles Community College District

We are the Colleges of Los Angeles! LACCD (www.laccd.edu) is the nation’s largest community college district, educating about 250,000 students annually at its nine colleges that serve the residents of more than 36 cities and communities from 900 square miles of Los Angeles County. Since 1969, the District has been providing an important learning pathway for students seeking transfer to four-year colleges or universities while also offering two-year degrees and certificated training programs to Southern California’s diverse workforce in many specialized trades and professions. Follow us on Facebook, [@LACCD](https://www.facebook.com/LACCD), and on Twitter, [@laccd](https://twitter.com/laccd) and Instagram, [@laccd_edu](https://www.instagram.com/laccd_edu).

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