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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

LACCD Board President Announces Panel to Review Campus Safety and Emergency Preparedness

Panel to be co-chaired by Los Angeles County Sheriff Jim McDonnell, and will be composed of distinguished public safety experts, LACCD trustees, and District stakeholders, and will examine procedures and preparations at the District office, the nine district colleges, and its other facilities and recommend strategies for improvement

Los Angeles, January 20, 2015 -- Los Angeles Community College District (LACCD) Board of Trustees president Scott J. Svonkin today announced the formation of a panel to examine safety and emergency preparedness at the District's various facilities, including its downtown Los Angeles headquarters, its nine colleges, and other facilities. Svonkin announced that he will co-chair the panel with newly-elected Los Angeles County Sheriff Jim McDonnell. The panel will be supported by funding from the LACCD's bond-funded Building Program.

In addition to Svonkin and McDonnell, the 20-person panel is composed of public safety experts, members of the LACCD Board of Trustees, and LACCD stakeholders from the LACCD campuses and faculty and employee groups. (The full list of members is attached.)

The panel will hold its first meeting on January 21, 2015, and expects to complete its report by the end of the year.

"Next to helping our students achieve their educational goals the safety of our students is a top priority," said Svonkin. "My goal is to bring together the best and the brightest in public safety with our faculty, staff and students to look at our colleges and find ways to make them safer. We know our colleges are safe but you can and should always look for ways to improve. There is no better way to help everyone connected to LACCD know we value them then to make sure they are safe and feel safe."

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LACCD's Building Program is a 16-year, \$6 billion program funded mostly by taxpayer-approved bonds, supplemented by additional funding from the state of California. With approximately \$4 billion spent so far, the LACCD's nine colleges are benefiting from brand new and renovated academic buildings, sports facilities, arts complexes, administrative buildings, child development centers, and parking structures. The Building Program has completed hundreds of separate projects, with hundreds more in the planning or construction stages.

"I'm very pleased to accept the invitation of President Svonkin to serve on and co-chair this new and important panel," said McDonnell, who was elected Sheriff last November. "I look forward to providing recommendations on how to make LACCD's colleges safer for everyone on campus and to ensure that personnel are prepared to properly respond to emergencies."

"Leading a district as large and complex as LACCD requires searching for established best practices, and this outstanding panel of experts will advise us on how best to enhance college security and emergency preparedness," noted Francisco C. Rodriguez, chancellor of the District. "Our job at the district is to ensure student success, and while we can't predict emergencies, we'll be better positioned to respond swiftly and appropriately."

President Svonkin noted that he will be providing periodic reports on the panel's progress and recommendations.

About the Los Angeles Community College District

The Los Angeles Community College District, the nation's largest community college district, serves one-quarter million students a year in more than 36 cities in Los Angeles County at its nine colleges. The District covers nearly 900 square miles and has educated and trained the region's diverse workforce since 1969.

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