



A MESSAGE FROM CHANCELLOR DR. FRANCISCO C. RODRIGUEZ

September 5, 2017

Dear LACCD Students, Staff, and Faculty colleagues:

This morning, U.S. Attorney General Jeff Sessions announced that the DACA program (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals) has been rescinded. He has directed the Department of Homeland Security to “wind-down” the program, and has signaled to Congress time to address this issue over the next six months. This ruling affects our Dreamer student population, within the approximately 11,000 undocumented students, enrolled in the Los Angeles Community College District (LACCD). We have immediately started work to better understand the implications of this decision on our families, classrooms, and communities. Those currently enrolled in DACA will be able to continue working until their permits expire; those whose permits expire by March 5, 2018, will be permitted to apply for a two-year renewal as long as they do so by October 5, 2017. For now, our message is clear: Stay enrolled in school and, if working, maintain your employment. Do nothing to jeopardize your current status. We will communicate often and clearly as we learn more.

On behalf of the nine college presidents and LACCD’s Board of Trustees, I want to reaffirm LACCD’s commitment as a place where all students can enroll and achieve their educational goals, regardless of their immigration status. Our undocumented students are integral and valued members of our LACCD family. These are extraordinarily talented students who have sacrificed to better themselves, their families and their communities, and our country. Over my years as an educator, I have taught and studied alongside many undocumented students striving to achieve their educational dreams—their courage is inspiring. The President’s decision, while uncertain and unsettling for our Dreamer students and their families—is not defeating, nor will it dissuade us from providing advocacy and support for this segment of our student body. Any threat to this vulnerable constituency is a threat to us all.

Since 2012 when DACA was enacted, LACCD has made a firm and unwavering commitment to undocumented students. As educators, we have invested in their success, and in return, they have made positive contributions to our classrooms and in our communities. I want to reassure you that LACCD—as a public higher education institution—will not stand back and allow our brothers and sisters to lose their right to a high quality and affordable education. My note today is to underscore that “we have their back.”

In June 2017, the Board of Trustees passed a resolution that reaffirms student privacy protections, resources and services provided by LACCD for all undocumented students attending any of our nine colleges. Please go to www.laccd.edu and click on the LACCD Immigration Resources button for additional resources and information. On August 31, Board President Sydney Kamlager-Dove and I sent a letter to President Trump urging him to uphold the 2012 executive actions that created the DACA program. Today, we sent another letter to our Congressional leaders urging them to pass the bipartisan DREAM Act, or to enact legislation to provide our Dreamer students, raised in this country, the opportunity to live free from the fear of deportation and give them the permanent residency solution they deserve.

Dreamers are vital to the future health of our economy and to the stability of our nation. These young people are aspiring Americans, pursuing their higher education goals, working hard, and paying taxes. With them, our economy grows, our communities thrive and we continue to have a distinct, global competitive advantage.

As Chancellor, this issue is personal to me. As a proud son of immigrant factory workers, I pledge to keep the doors of LACCD's colleges open for all students seeking an education, particularly for the most vulnerable and poorest in our communities. We will continue to advocate relentlessly, fearlessly and unapologetically for the rights of all students, regardless of their immigration status.

In closing, my message to all undocumented LACCD students is to stay enrolled at your LACCD College. You have our support, respect and admiration. We are committed to standing by your side as you succeed and reach your goals at LACCD.

Adelante estudiantes!