



PIERCE COLLEGE DISTRICT

Policies, Regulations, and Financial Review

Prepared for the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities
September 2022



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Institutional Report Certification Form.....	1
Mission Fulfillment	2
Standard Two: Governance, Resources, and Capacity.....	4
2.A.1 Board of Trustees	4
2.A.2 Institutional Leadership	5
2.A.3 Chief Executive Officer	7
2.A.4 Decision-Making Structures and Processes	7
2.B.1 Academic Freedom.....	9
2.B.2 Promotion of Independent Thought.....	9
2.C.1 Transfer of Credit	11
2.C.2 Student Rights and Responsibilities	12
2.C.3 Admissions, Placement, and Academic Standing	13
2.C.4 Student Record Retention	15
2.D.1 Institutional Responsibility in Representation.....	16
2.D.2 Management and Operations Ethical Standards	17
2.D.3 Conflict of Interest.....	19
2.E.1 Audit Process and Reporting	20
2.E.2 Financial Resource Planning.....	25
2.E.3 Financial Resource Management.....	33
2.F.1 Conditions of Employment	37
2.F.2 Professional Learning and Growth	38
2.F.3 Employee Sufficiency and Qualifications	41
2.F.4 Employee Evaluations	42
2.G.1 Equitable Learning Environments	44
2.G.2 Catalog	48
2.G.3 Notification of Licensure and Employment Requirements	52
2.G.4 Financial Aid Program Effectiveness and Accountability.....	53
2.G.5 Financial Aid Monitoring.....	54
2.G.6 Academic Advisement	55
2.G.7 Distance Education Identity Verification Process	58
2.H.1 Access and Sufficiency of Library and Information Resources	59
2.I.1 Learning and Working Environments to Meet Mission	61
Moving Forward.....	70



INSTITUTIONAL REPORT CERTIFICATION FORM

On behalf of the Institution, I certify that:

- There was broad participation/review by the campus community in the preparation of this report.
- The Institution remains in compliance with NWCCU Eligibility Requirements.
- The Institution will continue to remain in compliance throughout the duration of the institution's cycle of accreditation.

I understand that information provided in this report may affect the continued Candidacy or Accreditation of my institution. I certify that the information and data provided in the report are true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

Pierce College District

(Name of Institution)

Dr. Michele L. Johnson

(Name of Chief Executive Officer)

Michele L. Johnson

(Signature of Chief Executive Officer)

August 16, 2022

(Date)

MISSION FULFILLMENT

Pierce College Mission Statement

Pierce College creates quality educational opportunities for a diverse community of learners to thrive in an evolving world.

Pierce College is a mission-driven institution. In 2011, the Pierce College Board of Trustees approved our mission and five Core Themes. For each Core Theme, objectives and metrics to measure those objectives were identified in order to holistically assess mission fulfillment. Our strategic plan is our Core Theme planning because the Core Themes and their associated objectives and metrics define mission fulfillment (Figure 1). Pierce's mission and five Core Themes were re-evaluated following the 2016 NWCCU comprehensive visit; Core Theme Positive and Diverse College Environment was changed to Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion. Though equity has long been central to Pierce's mission and Core Themes, we wanted to visibly foreground this commitment. The mission and new Core Themes were affirmed by the Board in 2017.

Assessing Mission Fulfillment

Since 2009, Pierce College publishes an Institutional Effectiveness Report that provides a comprehensive analysis of the performance indicators for each Core Theme. The report includes an executive summary; a Scorecard that is a snapshot of Pierce's overall effectiveness; strengths and priority areas; and an in-depth examination of each Core Theme through its defined objectives and performance indicator metrics.

Board Policy 1.12 – Monitoring Mission Fulfillment defines mission fulfillment as the achievement of at least 70 percent of the performance indicators. It is important to note that 70 percent indicates the minimum for mission fulfillment; it does not represent our expectations or goals for Pierce.

The Board of Trustees monitors mission fulfillment monthly, reviewing key objectives and metrics from the Institutional Effectiveness Report. The Board uses this information to develop their annual goals.

Budgeting and Resource Allocation

Pierce engages in an open, inclusive and transparent budget process, beginning with a review of our budget values and principles (detailed in Standard 2.E.2) to ensure consistency with mission and Core Themes. Central to our budget values and principles is the purposeful connection of budget requests in moving us closer to meeting mission. The budget team reviews proposals and evaluates requests against institutional priorities defined by Core Themes, in order to build Pierce's budget proposal.

Figure 1. Mission, Core Themes, and Objectives.



Conceptual Framework
For Mission Fulfillment



Mission Fulfillment Evidence

- [Board Policies 1.11 Mission Defined and 1.12 Monitoring Mission Fulfillment](#)
- [Institutional Effectiveness Reporting – Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes](#)
- [Board of Trustee’s 2021 - 2022 Goals](#)
- [2019 Institutional Effectiveness Report](#)

STANDARD TWO: GOVERNANCE, RESOURCES, AND CAPACITY

2.A.1 BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The institution demonstrates an effective governance structure, with a board(s) or other governing body(ies) composed predominantly of members with no contractual, employment relationship, or personal financial interest with the institution. Such members shall also possess clearly defined authority, roles, and responsibilities. Institutions that are part of a complex system with multiple boards, a centralized board, or related entities shall have, with respect to such boards, written and clearly defined contractual authority, roles, and responsibilities for all entities. In addition, authority and responsibility between the system and the institution is clearly delineated in a written contract, described on its website and in its public documents, and provides the NWCCU accredited institution with sufficient autonomy to fulfill its mission.

Eligibility Requirement (ER) 3 Authority: *The institution is authorized to operate and confer degrees as a higher education institution by the appropriate governmental organization, agency, and/or governing board as required by the jurisdiction in which it operates.*

Eligibility Requirement (ER) 9 Governing Board: *The institution has a functioning governing board(s) responsible for the quality and integrity of the institution and for each college/unit within a multiple-unit district or system, to ensure that the institution's mission is being achieved. The governing board(s) has at least five voting members, a majority of whom have no contractual or employment relationship or personal financial interest with the institution. Institutions that are part of a complex system with multiple boards, a centralized board, or related entities, shall have, with respect to such boards, clearly defined authority, roles, and responsibilities for all entities in a written contract(s). In addition, authority and responsibility between the system and the institution is clearly delineated, in a written contract, described on its website and in its public documents, and provides NWCCU accredited institutions with sufficient autonomy to fulfill its mission.*

The State of Washington, through the Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges, grants Pierce College the authority under the Community and Technical College Act to operate two of the state's 34 community and technical colleges: Pierce College Fort Steilacoom and Pierce College Puyallup. The Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges manual includes the statutes, policies, and regulations for instruction, student services, and administration.

Pierce College's policy-making body is a five-member Board of Trustees appointed by the Governor of Washington to five-year terms. Each board member serves without compensation, except reimbursement for reasonable expenses when performing Pierce College business. No board member has a contractual, employment or financial interest in Pierce College. The Pierce College Board of Trustees is charged with the responsibility and the authority for operation of Pierce College as set in Revised Code of Washington (RCW) 28B.50.140 and other statutes. The Board of Trustees meetings are open to the public and advertised according to RCW 42.30.075.

As defined within the Board of Trustees policies, the Board of Trustees has the responsibility to establish policy and to evaluate the success of Pierce's operation to include financial reviews, approve fundraising goals and plans, and direct strategic planning efforts. The board has delegated all powers and duties under RCW 28B.50.140 to the chancellor, except those retained by the board; included in that delegation is the authority to carry out the administration and operation of Pierce College.

Standard 2.A.1, ER 3, and ER 9 Evidence

**Evidence required for Standard 2.A.1, ER 3, and ER 9*

[Community and Technical College Act](#)

[RCW 28B.50.140 - Board of Trustees Powers and ties](#) *

[RCW 42.30.075 - Schedule of Regular Meetings](#) *

[Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges Policy Manual](#) *

[Board of Trustees Website](#) *

[Board of Trustees and District Policies and Procedures](#) *

2.A.2 INSTITUTIONAL LEADERSHIP

The institution has an effective system of leadership, staffed by qualified administrators, with appropriate levels of authority, responsibility, and accountability who are charged with planning, organizing, and managing the institution and assessing its achievements and effectiveness.

Eligibility Requirement (ER) 11 Administration: *In addition to a chief executive officer, the institution employs a sufficient number of qualified administrators, with appropriate levels of authority, responsibility, and accountability, who are charged with planning, organizing, and managing the institution and assessing its achievements and effectiveness. Such administrators provide effective leadership and management for the institution's major support and operational functions and work collaboratively across institutional functions and units to foster fulfillment of the institution's mission. Executive officers may serve as an ex officio member of the governing board(s) but may not serve as chair.*

The Executive Team, in addition to the chancellor, includes two college presidents; two college vice presidents for learning and student success; vice president for equity, innovation, and engagement; vice president for administrative services; vice president for human resources; vice president for workforce, economic and professional development; vice president for strategic advancement; chief information officer; and director for marketing and communications. Members' responsibilities are detailed in job descriptions. Executive Team members do not serve as ex officio members on the Pierce College Board of Trustees.

As evidenced in our organization chart, the Executive Team members represent and lead major units of the district. The Executive Team generally meets weekly, or as needed, to plan, organize and manage the affairs of the district and assess its achievements and effectiveness. They engage in regular planning and assessment activities specific to their functional area.

We have experienced changes within our executive team leadership since our mid-cycle report. In 2021 Dr. Ilder Betancourt Lopez, Ms. Sylvia James, and Mr. Andrew Glass joined the executive team as the vice president for learning and student success at Fort Steilacoom, the vice president for administrative services and finance and chief information officer, respectively.

In February of 2022 we saw the departure of our President of Puyallup campus for a promotional opportunity. With the upcoming retirement of Pierce College's Chancellor and CEO, Dr. Michele Johnson in December 2022 and her assessment of the executive team leadership needs the chancellor appointed Dr. Matthew Campbell as the Interim President of Puyallup. Dr. Campbell has been the Vice President of Learning and Student Success at Puyallup for eight years. Our District Vice President for Equity, Innovation, and Engagement, Mr. Charlie Parker is serving as the Interim Vice President of Learning and Student Success at Puyallup. While in this role Mr. Parker will continue to oversee the key responsibilities of the Vice President of for Equity, Innovation, and Engagement while we are in transition to integrate of our Equity, Diversity, Inclusion – College Access, Retention, and Engagement Services (EDI CARES) into the Learning and Student Success unit of the college. The appointment of Mr. Parker and Dr. Campbell to these interim positions has expanded opportunities for the college to more fully integrate equity practices across all learning and student success programs. Dr. Campbell and Mr. Parker will serve in their roles until a search for a permanent President of Pierce College is conducted after January 2023 when the new Chancellor will begin.

Our Director of Marketing and Communications retired in June 2022. A search to fill this position will begin in fall 2022. Ms. JMarie Johnson-Kola will serve as interim director of marketing and communications until the permanent position has been filled. We anticipate the position being filled by January 2023.

Standard 2.A.2 and ER 11 Evidence

**Evidence required for Standard 2.A.2, ER 11*

[Pierce College Organization Chart](#) *

[Chief Information Officer CV, Andrew Glass](#) *

[President of Fort Steilacoom CV, Julie White, PhD](#) *

[Interim President of Puyallup CV, Matthew Campbell, EdD](#) *

[Vice President for Administrative Services, Finance CV, Sylvia James](#) *

[Vice President for Learning and Student Success Fort Steilacoom CV, Ilder Betancourt Lopez, EdD](#) *

[Interim Vice President for Learning and Student Success Puyallup CV, Charlie Parker](#) *

[Vice President for Equity, Innovation, and Engagement CV, Charlie Parker](#) *

[Vice President for Human Resources CV, Holly Gorski](#) *

[Vice President for Strategic Advancement CV, Michael Wark](#) *

[Vice President for Workforce, Economic, and Professional Development CV, Jo Ann Baria](#) *

[Interim Director for Marketing and Communications CV, JMarie Johnson-Kola](#) *

2.A.3 CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

The institution employs an appropriately qualified chief executive officer with full-time responsibility to the institution. The chief executive may serve as an ex officio member of the governing board(s) but may not serve as its chair.

Eligibility Requirement (ER) 10 Chief Executive Officer: *The institution employs an appropriately qualified chief executive officer who is appointed by the governing board and whose full-time responsibility is to the institution. The chief executive officer may serve as an ex officio member of the governing board(s) but may not serve as chair.*

Dr. Michele Johnson is the chancellor and chief executive officer (CEO) of the Pierce College District, and reports to the Board of Trustees. As listed in Board Policy 1.33 Board Organization and Responsibilities, the chancellor and CEO serves as secretary to the Board of Trustees without a vote.

The board delegates to Dr. Johnson the authority and responsibility for interpreting board policy into administrative action and administering and operating the district. Dr. Johnson's goals are reviewed during the board's summer retreat work session and are foundational for the chancellor's annual performance evaluation. Dr. Johnson will be retiring in December 2022. The search for the next chancellor and CEO is underway.

Dr. Johnson holds a Doctorate of Philosophy in Educational Planning and Management from the University of Oregon and has 44 years of experience in community colleges: 15 years as a tenured faculty member, and 12 years as an executive dean, chief academic officer, and campus president before becoming chancellor and CEO in 2005.

Standard 2.A.3 and ER 10 Evidence

**Evidence required for Standard 2.A.3, ER 10*

[Chancellor and CEO CV, Michele Johnson, PhD](#) *

[Chancellor and CEO Annual Performance Review Memo](#) , see Board Action 2021-49 Chancellor's Contract

[Board Policy 1.33 - Board Organization and Responsibilities](#)

2.A.4 DECISION-MAKING STRUCTURES AND PROCESSES

The institution's decision-making structures and processes, which are documented and publicly available, must include provisions for the consideration of the views of faculty, staff, administrators, and students on matters in which each has a direct and reasonable interest.

The Pierce College decision-making system is comprised of three primary structures: the Board of Trustees; the chancellor, presidents, and executive team; and the representative shared governance structure of District Policy and Governance Cabinet (Cabinet) and five supporting governance councils. In addition, structures such as the Budget Team, Achieving the Dream (ATD) core and design teams, Pierce College Federation of Teachers (PCFT), Washington Public Employee Association (WPEA), Student Life Leadership teams, and an array of campus and district committees provide additional shared governance for the institution.

Our shared governance system of councils was developed in 2012 by a taskforce co-chaired by the PCFT faculty president and the president of Pierce College Fort Steilacoom, with representation from faculty, staff, administration and students, and implemented during the 2014 – 2015 academic year and modified in 2017 (see Board Actions 2014-9 Shared Governance and 2017-37 Governance).

Chaired by the chancellor, cabinet reflects broad district representation from Fort Steilacoom, Puyallup, and Joint Base Lewis McCord campuses that includes members from the five supporting governance councils, faculty, administrative-exempt, classified staff, PCFT representative, WPEA representative, and students. Cabinet is the major district policy recommendation body. Its work includes steering and assessing the institution's system of representative, shared governance; district operating budget oversight including recommendation of the values and principles for the district budget process and final annual budget recommendation to the chancellor for board of trustees' approval; discussing issues confronting the district; and advising the chancellor.

The five supporting councils to cabinet are the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Council; Facilities and Safety Council; Learning Council; Student Advancement Council; and Technology Council. Each council is co-chaired by an executive team member and a member who is elected by the council. The elected co-chairs serve on cabinet, providing a formal link with the supporting councils. Each council has a specific scope of work identified in their charter, which includes a specific focus on institutional policy and procedures. Additionally, council chairs participate in all-college monthly meetings hosted by each president and present progress on work priorities and gain perspective from the college community.

The Fort Steilacoom and Puyallup campuses maintain an independent student government body, the Associated Students of Pierce College Fort Steilacoom (ASPCFS) and the Associated Students of Pierce College Puyallup (ASPCP), respectively. The two bodies of the Associated Students of Pierce College regularly present updates to the Board of Trustees, are represented on cabinet and other shared governance councils; review proposals and recommend allocation of services and activities fees and the technology fees to the Board of Trustees; and provide input to various constituencies so that student perspective is considered in decision-making.

The PCFT and WPEA unions maintain representation at Pierce College and are represented throughout the institution's shared governance system, as well as additional institutional committees that support operations (e.g., the Institutional Effectiveness committee and Calendar committee).

PCFT leadership is elected by a vote of the faculty membership. The PCFT President has two-thirds release time and Vice President one-third release time to engage in district-wide activities as appropriate. PCFT leadership appoints or works with the administration to appoint faculty or facilitate faculty selection to the shared governance councils, committees, and task forces. PCFT reports monthly at the regular Board of Trustees meetings.

WPEA leadership is elected by a vote of the classified staff membership. WPEA leadership appoints or works with the administration to appoint classified staff or facilitate classified staff selection or election to the shared governance committees, councils, and task forces. WPEA reports monthly at the regular Board of Trustees meetings.

Standard 2.A.4 Evidence

**Evidence required for Standard 2.A.4*

[Shared Governance Website](#)

[Board Action 2014-9 Shared Governance](#), see Item 9 under the year 2014 *

[Board Action 2016-37 Governance](#), see item 37 under year 2016 *

[Shared Governance Procedure](#) *

[Collective Bargaining Agreements for Classified Staff and Faculty](#)

2.B.1 ACADEMIC FREEDOM AND 2.B.2 PROMOTION OF INDEPENDENT THOUGHT

2.B.1: Within the context of its mission and values, the institution adheres to the principles of academic freedom and independence that protect its constituencies from inappropriate internal and external influences, pressures, and harassment.

2.B.2: Within the context of its mission and values, the institution defines and actively promotes an environment that supports independent thought in the pursuit and dissemination of knowledge. It affirms the freedom of faculty, staff, administrators, and students to share their scholarship and reasoned conclusions with others. While the institution and individuals within the institution may hold to a particular personal, social, or religious philosophy, its constituencies are intellectually free to test and examine all knowledge and theories, thought, reason, and perspectives of truth. Individuals within the institution allow others the freedom to do the same.

Eligibility Requirement (ER) 16 Academic Freedom: Within the context of its mission and values, the institution adheres to and maintains an atmosphere that promotes, supports, and sustains academic freedom and independence that protects its constituencies from inappropriate internal and external influences, pressures, and harassment. Faculty, students, staff, and administrators are free to examine and test all knowledge and theories.

Pierce College affirms the right and responsibility of all members of the district community to pursue knowledge without impediment or undue influence through Board Policy 1.42 - Academic Freedom. This policy states, "The Board of Trustees recognizes and will act to support traditional academic freedom as it applies to members of the district community carrying out their assigned duties, responsibilities and obligations, including the professional presentation or study of what might be considered by some to be controversial." Section 4.1 of the Negotiated Agreement between Pierce College Federation of Teachers and Pierce College District affirms that commitment for faculty. This is also echoed in the Pierce College Tenure Manual, wherein candidates are prompted to be – and committees are prompted to support – the expression of their authentic selves, recognizing that processes such as tenure often limit voice and agency, which functions to limit the fundamental tenants of academic freedom, particularly in the context of assimilation within predominantly white institutions. Our Statement of Student Rights (WAC 132K-135-060 Student Rights) found within our Student Code of Conduct outlines student academic freedoms to free inquiry, expression, and assembly within public spaces of the college; pursuit of education objectives from the college's programs; protection from arbitrary, prejudiced, or capricious academic evaluation; and a learning environment that is free from unlawful discrimination, inappropriate and disrespectful conduct, and harassment.

The Core Theme of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion is reflected through employee job descriptions. Opportunities are provided for all employees to engage in personal and professional learning to actively develop as equity practitioners that support a college community engaged in understanding oppression and acting to advance racial and social justice. For example, this work is centered during (all employee) All-District learning days; and racial affinity groups provide opportunities for colleagues to engage in open discourse about equity, antiracism, justice, and how these relate to both person and professional action. We believe this learning to be essential to an ecosystem that fully respects and upholds academic freedom.

Pierce's administrative policies include a Civility Policy which cites free expression rights while also guiding responsibility. Similarly, the Student Rights and Responsibilities/Student Code of Conduct outlines student responsibilities for "engaging in academic freedom with responsibility and collegiality."

Standard 2.B.1, 2.B.2 and ER 16 Evidence

**Evidence required for Standard 2.B.1, 2.B.2, and ER 16*

[Board Policy 1.42 Academic Freedom](#) *

[WAC 132K-135-060 Student Rights](#) *

[PCFT Negotiated Agreement](#), see Section 4.1 *

[Tenure Process Manual 2021 -22](#) *

[Tenure-Track Faculty Cluster Hire to Support Black and Brown Students](#)

[Board Policy 1.43 Civility](#)

[Student Rights and Responsibilities/Student Code of Conduct](#)

[All-District Day Agendas and Racial Affinity Groups](#)

2.C.1 TRANSFER OF CREDIT

The institution's transfer-of-credit policy maintains the integrity of its programs and facilitates the efficient mobility of students desirous of the completion of their educational credits, credentials, or degrees in furtherance of their academic goals

Pierce is guided by clear, published policies and processes regarding the acceptance of credit from accredited colleges and universities. These policies maintain the integrity of Pierce's programs while facilitating student mobility between institutions and supporting students in the completion of their educational goals. The transfer-of-credit policy, as established by the state and followed by the district, is published in the catalog's Academic Information section under Transfer Right and Responsibilities and in the Admissions section. Pierce's credentials evaluators, who report through the registrar, determine external credit transfer.

Pierce participates with the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges Intercollege Reciprocity policy through which credit from other community and technical colleges within the state may be accepted. Pierce may accept individual course completion or completion of a distribution requirement when a student meets requirements at a previous institution. This policy guides Pierce's determination of course satisfaction for degree requirements. Pierce's compliance with this policy eases student transfer between the state's community colleges and the baccalaureate institutions.

Students are responsible for providing official transcripts and, if required, additional documentation such as course syllabi, to determine course equivalency. Evaluations program specialists evaluate official transcripts for Pierce course equivalencies. Evaluations are done on a course-by-course basis using the official course descriptions in the catalogs of the transferring institutions. If catalog information is insufficient, the evaluator requests course descriptions and course syllabi, and may also confer with the dean or with faculty from the academic division where credit might apply. Pierce excludes credit accepted for transfer from the calculation of Pierce's grade point average.

The Earning Credits section of the catalog informs students about different types of nontraditional credit, such as the College-level Exam Program, Advanced Placement, Cambridge International, International Baccalaureate, and military credits. This section also includes Dual Credit Programs such as Running Start, credit awarded for professional licensure, Peace Corps, VISTA and AmeriCorps. Additionally, Pierce is a member of the Pierce County Careers Consortium and has agreements with several school districts to award credit for some professional/technical courses taken in high school. Through this program, students who complete selected high school courses with a "B" grade or better can earn college credit.

Pierce upholds consistency and integrity through articulation agreement partnerships with Washington baccalaureate and select other institutions, and by participation in major statewide articulation and transfer councils and committees. All transfer degrees are accepted by the Washington state public baccalaureate institutions based on our membership in the Intercollegiate Relations Commission (ICRC), a statewide council that coordinates transfer articulation. The ICRC is responsible for all Direct Transfer Agreements and assures program consistency for the public and private baccalaureate institutions accepting Washington state community and technical college transfer credits. Pierce maintains an active membership in ICRC and complies with all ICRC Handbook guidelines. This assures students that our programs, degrees, and student learning outcomes meet regional standards and secures their ability to transfer.

Standard 2.C.1 Evidence

**Evidence required for Standard 2.C.1*

[Transferring of Credit to Pierce College](#) *

[Earning Credit](#) *

[Admissions](#) *

[Transfer of Rights and Responsibilities](#) *

[Pierce County Career Consortium](#)

[Career Maps](#)

[ICRC Handbook](#) *

2.C.2 STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The institution's policies and procedures related to student rights and responsibilities should include, but not be limited to, provisions related to academic honesty, conduct, appeals, grievances, and accommodations for persons with disabilities.

Policies and procedures related to students' rights and responsibilities, including provisions related to academic honesty, conduct, appeals, grievances and accommodations for persons with disabilities can be found on our Students Rights Information webpage.

The Student Rights and Responsibilities/Student Conduct Code, revised in 2021, contains the rights and expectations for students, including academic honesty, conduct, appeals, accommodations, and the processes for resolving alleged code violations. The recent revisions include Title IX requirements due to changes in processes around sexual misconduct allegations as well as to align the code with best practices in adjudication and conduct processes and procedures.

Pierce seeks to streamline processes and clarify language to facilitate understanding for students and the campus community. The Associate Dean, Student Conduct serves as the conduct officer for the district. They are responsible for overseeing the conduct processes, including training and guiding the campus community regarding all conduct practices. The Code outlines appeal processes, which may result in a new finding, as well as sanctions being upheld, removed, reduced or increased. The Code, all relevant forms, and all appeal and complaint processes are available on the website.

The Access and Disability Services (ADS) department facilitates reasonable accommodations for qualified students and members of the public with disabilities in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and Washington state laws. Services include accommodated testing, Sign Language interpreting, alternatively formatted classroom materials and note taking assistance as well as addressing grievances and complaints. The ADS webpage contains information related to services, policies and procedures.

Standard 2.C.2 Evidence

**Evidence required for Standard 2.C.2*

[Student Conduct Code](#) *

[Student Handbook](#)

[Access and Disability Services](#)

[Access and Disability Services – Your Rights](#) *

[Student Complaint Process](#) *

[Complaint Reporting by Type](#) *

[Pierce College General Complaint Form](#) *

[Student Grade Appeal Procedure for Final Course Grades](#) *

[Student Grade Appeal Petition](#) *

[Student Rights Information](#) *

2.C.3 ADMISSIONS, PLACEMENT, AND ACADEMIC STANDING

The institution's academic and administrative policies and procedures should include admission and placement policies that guide the enrollment of students in courses and programs through an evaluation of prerequisite knowledge, skills, and abilities to ensure a reasonable probability of student success at a level commensurate with the institution's expectations. Such policies should also include a policy regarding continuation in and termination from its educational programs, including its appeal and re-admission policy.

Eligibility Requirement (ER) 17 Admissions: *The institution publishes student admission policies which specify the characteristics and qualifications appropriate for its programs and adheres to those policies in its admissions procedures and practices.*

Admissions

Pierce is an open admission institution serving a diverse group of students with a wide range of abilities and funds of knowledge. The Admissions webpage includes clearly defined steps of the Admissions process. The Admissions section of the catalog outlines admissions policies regarding who may enroll, and policies for new, former, transfer, Running Start and international students.

Pierce has developed and adheres to policies and programs to guide admission and placement of students in certificate and degree programs.

Admission to the college does not guarantee admission to any specific program, course, or class. Some programs have selective admission criteria and a competitive admission process. These programs include Nursing, Veterinary Technology, and our six bachelor's degree programs. The catalog and program web pages contain admission requirements for these programs. The Dean for Allied Health and Technology and the Dean for Business and Social Science administer admission requirements for Pierce's bachelor's degree programs; the Bachelor of Applied Science in Dental Hygiene, and the Bachelor of Applied Science in Teaching, Bachelor of Applied Science in Business Management, Bachelor of Applied Science in Fire Services Leadership and Management, Bachelor of Applied Science in Homeland Security Emergency Management, and the Bachelor of Applied Science in Construction Management.

The catalog and college website contain admissions and placement policies for international students. Students must complete the Pierce International Student Admission Application, including high school transcripts, proof of English proficiency, and bank statements documenting that the students meet Pierce and U.S. Immigration requirements.

Placement

Students take Guided Self-Placement (GSP) for English and math, which provides information to aid their decision about English and math selection. English GSP offers a brief overview of English 101 and the two versions of the course: corequisite and non-corequisite. Math GSP contains a series of questions and activities requiring reflection on prior experience with math.

Students may use credits from other accredited institutions to satisfy prerequisites for college level English, mathematics and other classes. Pierce accepts an unofficial copy of the transcript for determining a prerequisite; however, an official copy must be on file for credit to be granted towards a degree or certificate program.

Advisors support matriculated students with course placement by reviewing documents such as high school transcripts, college transcripts, and Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, Cambridge test results. Additionally, the student management registration system is coded with prerequisite requirements to ensure that students meet stated prerequisites prior to enrollment in classes.

Student Continuation/Dismissal and Readmissions

Pierce College commits to student academic success. The Academic Standards Policy quickly identifies and alerts students who have not met academic standards in order to provide students resources and the opportunity to improve their academic success. Advisors review student progress every quarter in order to identify students who may benefit from additional support. The Student Success team helps students create a plan to succeed in achieving their academic goals. Early intervention allows students time to address progress and connect with campus resources. The Academic Standards Policy articulates categories regarding student standing (Good Academic Standing, Academic Concern, Academic Alert, Academic One-Quarter Dismissal, and Academic Four-Quarter Dismissal).

Termination/Changes of Programs

Students enrolled in programs that are slated for elimination, or in which significant changes have been approved, will be permitted to finish the program, to the extent the college finds possible, provided the student fulfills the requirements within three years of when the program is discontinued. Substitutions for discontinued courses will be permitted when appropriate substitute courses are available and when authorized through the course substitution procedures currently in effect. Requests for course substitutions should be made through the appropriate faculty.

Standard 2.C.3 and ER 17 Evidence

**Evidence required for Standard 2.C.3 and ER 17*

[General Admission Information](#) *

[International Student Admission Information](#) *

[Bachelor of Applied Science Program Information](#) *

[Student Placement](#) *

[Student Advising](#)

[Academic Standards](#) *

[Completion Time for Degrees and Certificates](#) *

2.C.4 STUDENT RECORD RETENTION

The institution's policies and procedures regarding the secure retention of student records must include provisions related to confidentiality, release, and the reliable backup and retrievability of such records.

Pierce adheres to policies and procedures regarding the secure retention of student records, including provisions for reliable and retrievable backup. Pierce securely stores files in locked areas and removes paper records as prescribed in the Washington state record retention schedule, then shreds these at the appointed timeline. The college electronically maintains all student records through the student management and financial aid management ctcLink systems used by all SBCTC, which facilitates system maintenance and backup.

Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) protects the confidentiality of student information. The Dean of Enrollment Services and Financial Aid/Registrar serves as Pierce's FERPA officer. Our website and the catalog, under Notification of Student's Rights, contains complete review of FERPA. The catalog includes the list of directory information items that may be released without written authorization from the student. Additionally, Pierce blocks release of directory information for students who request information not be disclosed. All new employees must complete FERPA training as part of their on-boarding process. The college limits access to student management system data and restricts employee access to electronic files.

Standard 2.C.4 Evidence

**Evidence required for Standard 2.C.4*

[Washington State Records Retention Schedules](#) *

[Family Education Rights and Privacy Act \(FERPA\), web description](#)

[Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act \(FERPA\), catalog description](#)

[Computer Information Systems Resources \(CISR\) Acceptable Use Procedure](#)

2.D.1 INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSIBILITY IN REPRESENTATION

The institution represents itself clearly, accurately, and consistently through its announcements, statements, and publications. It communicates its academic intentions, programs, and services to students and to the public and demonstrates that its academic programs can be completed in a timely fashion. It regularly reviews its publications to ensure accuracy and integrity in all representations about its mission, programs, and services.

Pierce College uses modern and traditional methods to represent itself clearly, accurately and consistently through its communications to students and the public. Our Marketing and Communications department accurately represents Pierce's academic intentions, programs and services to students and to the public, and demonstrates that our academic programs can be completed in a timely fashion.

Web-based communications, including blogs, social media, and a robust website provide real-time, updated information.

We also use a Customer Relationship Management tool called Radius to email targeted information to current and prospective students, and community members. We use this system to track prospective student inquiries from sources like the website and outreach activities. Radius is also used to manage all campus tours and information session bookings.

The Director of Marketing and Communications serves on the Executive Team; this person is responsible for monitoring publications to assure accuracy and clarity in all messaging to students, the public, the media, community leaders, legislators and other constituents, with assistance from staff and subject matter experts throughout Pierce.

Standard 2.D.1 Evidence

**Evidence required for Standard 2.D.1*

[Customer Relationship Management Interest Form](#)

[Advertising of College Services and Programs Policy](#) *

[College Publication Policy](#) *

[News Media Contact Policy](#) *

[Use of College Logo Policy](#) *

[District Website Policy](#) *

2.D.2 MANAGEMENT AND OPERATIONS ETHICAL STANDARDS

The institution advocates, subscribes to, and exemplifies high ethical standards in its management and operations, including in its dealings with the public, NWCCU, and external organizations, including the fair and equitable treatment of students, faculty, administrators, staff, and other stakeholders and constituencies. The institution ensures that complaints and grievances are addressed in a fair, equitable, and timely manner.

Eligibility Requirement (ER) 7 Non-Discrimination: *The institution is governed and administered with respect for the individual in a nondiscriminatory manner while responding to the educational needs and legitimate claims of the constituencies it serves as determined by its mission.*

Eligibility Requirement (ER) 8 Institutional Integrity: *The institution establishes and adheres to ethical standards in all of its academic programs, operations, and relationships.*

Pierce College advocates for, subscribes to, and exemplifies high ethical standards in managing and operating the district.

The Washington Ethics law, Revised Code of Washington (RCW), Chapter 42.52, and Washington Administrative Code (WAC) 465-40-010 governs the actions and working relationships of Pierce College employees “that hold a public trust that obligates them, in a special way, to honesty and integrity in fulfilling the responsibilities to which they are elected and appointed.” Paramount in that trust is the principle that public office, whether elected or appointed, may not be used for personal gain or private advantage.

Pierce College employees are bound by the provisions of the Washington State Ethics Act, as interpreted by the State Executive Ethics Board. Section 2.7 of the Negotiated Agreement between Pierce College Federation of Teachers and Pierce College District (PCFT Negotiated Agreement) reaffirms the responsibility of both full- and adjunct faculty to “be mindful of and abide by state ethics law in conducting union and collective bargaining related business.” Pierce College’s civility policy, discrimination, harassment, affirmative action and equal opportunity policies prohibit discrimination toward any member of the Pierce College community. Section 2.6 of the PCFT Negotiated Agreement reaffirms the college’s and federation’s “support and commitment to equal opportunity, affirmative action and Title IX programs.”

Pierce College strives to be proactive by assisting and supporting employees in compliance with ethics laws and codes rather than responding to ethics violations. Support and guidance regarding ethics rules and policies is provided throughout the recruitment, hiring, supervision, and day-to-day operations. Ongoing support, guidance, and training regarding state ethics rules and district policies.

Processes for resolving complaints and grievances are outlined in the relevant RCWs and WACs, and their associated documents. For example, the Washington State Ethics Act sections RCW 42.52.410 and 42.52.420 address the filing and investigation of ethics complaints.

The fair and equitable treatment of students is ensured in Pierce College's Student Rights and Responsibilities/Code of Conduct. The code states rules of student conduct, guarantees certain student rights, and establishes procedures governing student conduct. On a regular basis we follow the Office of the Code Reviser's process to review the code for the fair and equitable treatment of students. Our review process includes reviewing current best practices identified by organizations such as the association for student conduct administration; changes in state and federal laws; and feedback from shared governance councils, the student body, college community, and general public.

Student complaint and grievance processes are managed and tracked using Maxient software. Complaints and grievances submitted in the system are routed to the appropriate Pierce College personnel for action. The system tracks steps taken to address complaints and grievances. Additionally, Maxient tracks the number of complaints, frequency of complaints, and type of complaints.

Standard 2.D.2, ER 7, and ER 8 Evidence

**Evidence required for Standard 2.D.2, ER 7, and ER 8*

[RCW 45.52 Ethics in Public Service](#) *

[WAC 465-40-010 Ethics Policy](#) *

[RCW 42.52.410 Filing a Complaint – Whistleblower Protection](#)

[RCW 42.52.420 Investigation](#) *

[Office of the Code Reviser – Code Review Process](#)

[Non-Discrimination and Harassment Policy](#) *

[Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action Policy](#) *

[Equal Opportunity Statement](#) *

[PCFT Negotiated Agreement](#), see Section 2.6 Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity; Article State Ethics Laws *

[Board Policy - 1.43 Civility](#) *

[Student Conduct Code](#) *

[Student Complaint Process](#) *

[Complaint Reporting by Type](#) *

[Pierce College General Complaint Form](#) *

[Resolving Complaints, Problems, Appeals, Grievances](#) *

2.D.3 CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The institution adheres to clearly defined policies that prohibit conflicts of interest on the part of members of the governing board(s), administration, faculty, and staff.

Chapter 42.52 of the Revised Code of Washington (RCW), the Ethics in Public Service Act, applies to each member of the Board of Trustees. The by-laws of the board reassert this understanding through Board Policy 1.34 – Board Ethics and Conflict of Interest and through defining core values of Integrity, Accountability, and Respect into the mission of the college in Board Policy 1.11 - Mission Defined.

As members of the Executive Branch of the State of Washington, all Pierce College employees are subject to the Ethics in Public Service Act, codified as Chapter 42.52 of the Revised Code of Washington. This law prohibits state officers or employees from having an interest in any activity that is in conflict with the discharge of their official duties. Under RCW 42.52.365, the Act requires that the college, as an agency of the state, designate an ethics advisor. The Vice President for Administrative Services serves as the college's ethics officer.

Washington Administrative Code 465-40-010 charges that all "state officials and employees of government hold a public trust that obligates them, in a special way, to honesty and integrity in fulfilling the responsibilities to which they are appointed. Paramount in that trust is the principle that public office may not be used for personal gain or private advantage."

Pierce College requires that employees, except adjunct faculty, complete our online ethics training that includes conflict of interest information when they are hired, and again every three years. Adjunct faculty are strongly encouraged to take this training. Pierce College maintains an ethics intranet site that includes access to an ethics pamphlet; information on the five common misconceptions about the State Ethics Law; connection to the Executive Ethics Board website; and links to the Acceptable Use Policy, the Acceptable Use Procedure, and Pierce College Limited Personal Use Policy.

Standard 2.D.3 Evidence

**Evidence required for Standard 2.D.3*

[Chapter 42.52 RCW Ethics in Public Service](#)

[Board Policy – 1.34 Board Ethics and Conflict of Interest](#) *

[Board Policy – 1.11 Mission Defined](#)

[Human Resources - Conflict of Interest Policy](#) *

[RCW 42.52.365 Ethics Advisors – Ethics Training](#) *

[WAC 465-40-010 Ethics Policy](#) *

[Ethics Pamphlet](#)

[Five Common Misconceptions about the State Ethics Law](#)

[Executive Ethics Board Website](#)

[Limited Personal Uses of Computers, Electronic Mail, the Internet, and Other Computer Information Resources Policy](#) *
[Acceptable Use Policy](#) *
[Acceptable Use Procedure](#) *
[Copy Rights and Patent Policy](#) *
[Fair Use of Copyrighted Works Policy](#) *

2.E.1 AUDIT PROCESS AND REPORTING

The institution utilizes relevant audit processes and regular reporting to demonstrate financial stability, including sufficient cash flow and reserves to achieve and fulfill its mission.

Eligibility Requirement (ER) 20 Financial Accountability: *For each year of operation, the institution undergoes an annual, independent financial audit by professionally qualified personnel in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards or International Financial Reporting Standards reconciled to US-GAAP. The audit is to be completed no later than fifteen months after the end of the fiscal year. Results from the audit, including findings and management letter recommendations, are considered annually in an appropriate and comprehensive manner by the administration and the governing board.*

Financial Statements

Pierce College District is a component unit of the State of Washington, as disclosed in the reporting entity section of the State's Annual Comprehensive Financial Report (ACFR). The state aggregates the college's financial data into the governmental and proprietary funds of the state, primarily through the Higher Education Special Revenue Fund.

Based on a recommendation from the Northwest Commission, Pierce College provides an annual set of Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) compliant proprietary fund statements. These statements, prepared under GASB Statement 34, as amended by GASB Statement 63, provide the following statements, notes, and schedules to disclose the financial health of the college:

- A statement of net position
- A statement of revenues, expenses, and changes in fund net position
- A statement of cash flows
- Notes to the financial statements
- Required supplementary information (RSI) including:
 - Management's discussion and analysis (MD&A)
 - Pension schedules
 - Other Post-Employment Benefits (OPEB) schedules
- Component unit financial statements, as prepared under Financial Accounting Standards Board (FASB) presentation for the calendar year.

All financial data presented by the college, unless otherwise noted, is in accordance with the State of Washington's fiscal year, which runs from July 1 of the preceding year, to June 30 of the current year.

Audits as an agency of the State of Washington

As an agency of the State of Washington, Pierce College is subject to inclusion in a number of statewide engagements. State auditors, using Generally Accepted Government Auditing Standards (GAGAS) and federal compliance requirements, determine which state financial line items and federal programs to audit. They then identify the state agencies to perform their fieldwork based on coverage or materiality thresholds. Generally, this has resulted in fieldwork at Pierce College on an annual basis for either the State's ACFR, the Statewide Single Audit (SWSA), or other statewide audit engagements. Typically, Pierce sees fieldwork on federal programs approximately every three fiscal years.

Financial Audits

In fiscal year 2021, Pierce College had selected records reviewed in relation to work performed over the community and technical colleges as a part of the audit opinion for the State of Washington. The balances reviewed were Federal Grants in Aid and Education Expenditures.

Single Audits

The State of Washington includes Pierce College in the annual Statewide Single Audit (SWSA), as conducted by the Office of the State Auditor, in accordance with the guidance of the Office of Management and Budget under 2 CFR, part 200, subpart F, and GAGAS. In fiscal year 2020, the State Auditor's Office selected Pierce College for inclusions in the Statewide Single Audit's compliance testing related to the Student Financial Assistance Cluster of federal programs. Pierce was the only selected college or university not to receive a finding for the federal program cluster.

Other Statewide Audits and Engagements

During 2021, the State of Washington audited the Schedule of Other Post-Employment Benefits State Agency Allocations and Schedule of OPEB Amounts by Agency (financial schedules) of the State of Washington, as of and for the year ending June 30, 2021. Though selections did not identify Pierce College as a material testing site, the college remains included in the referenced schedules that affect the allocations made to the financial statements of the college.

As reported previously, in 2015, Pierce was included as a part of the GASB 68 Examination Report. Because of changes related to the implementation of GASB Statement 68, the State of Washington chose select agencies for its work on its reporting of pension liabilities. The State Auditor's Office selected Pierce College for inclusion in the samples for the 2014-15 fiscal year. This was in addition to the specific work that Pierce did for its own financial statements during the same period, which included a section specific to GASB 68. At the conclusion of this audit, and the audit of the college's financial statements for 2015, Pierce College was awarded the State Auditor's Stewardship Award, presented in recognition of outstanding accomplishment in the stewardship of public resources.

Independent External Audits

Financial Audits

Pierce College undergoes an independent external audit of their annual financial statements by professionally qualified personnel who conduct the audit in accordance with GAGAS. Pierce College uses the Office of the State Auditor as their principal auditor, who has received a peer review from the National State Auditor's Association (NSAA), with a rating of "Pass" establishing their qualifications to perform these audits.

Pierce College's last audited financial statements were for the fiscal years 2016, 2017, and 2018. Pierce received an unmodified opinion for each of these audits with no findings or management letter recommendations. These audit opinions were released twelve (12), nine (9), and ten (10) months after their respective fiscal year end dates.

Pierce College is subject to some delay due to the completion of the State of Washington's ACFR during the fall. This delays state auditors from beginning college audits until the spring of each respective year. The college seeks to provide completed financial statements to the auditors in a timely manner, with a goal of issuing unaudited statements within six months of the end of each fiscal year.

Financial statements and their respective audits for the 2019, 2020, and 2021 fiscal years are pending. This is due to a combination of the COVID-19 pandemic and the transition to a new accounting software system, ctclink in May 2020. Financial accountability is critical for Pierce College's overall health. Since the implementation of ctclink we continue to adapt as we realize efficiencies and new needs in financial tracking and reporting in ctclink. One of those efficiencies was the creation of a Financial Reporting and Compliance Specialist position, with the primary responsibility of ensuring compliance with internal and external reporting agencies. With this critical gap filled and continued progress in developing effective reporting systems in ctclink in spring of 2022 the state auditors scheduled audits of the outstanding financial statement years. Pierce College expects to be back to an annual report filing for fiscal year 2022.

Foundation Audits

Pierce College Foundation is a registered 501(c)3 entity with an independent board which engages in fundraising activities on behalf of the college. Pierce College maintains a memorandum of understanding with the Foundation, detailing the exchange of services between the district and the Foundation.

Pierce College staff, under direction of the vice president for administrative services, provide the foundation with advice concerning conduct of fundraising campaigns, classification of donations, financial reports for their board, routine accounting services, and coordination of their annual audit.

The Foundation's Board of Directors selects the auditing firm, currently Dwyer, Pemberton, & Coulson, PC., who provides the audit services. The audited statements are then included in Pierce College annual financial statements as a discretely presented component unit of the college, in compliance with the requirements of GASB Statement 39. The principal auditors of the college review the work of the Foundation auditors as a part of compliance with group auditing standards under AU-C 600.

Joint Venture Audits

Pierce College is part of a joint venture. INVISTA Performance Solutions (IPS) is a Limited Liability Partnership (LLP) collaboration of three Pierce County Community and Technical College Districts: Clover Park Technical College, Pierce College, and Tacoma Community College. Formed through a memorandum of understanding between the colleges which complies with state requirements for an interlocal cooperation agreement under RCW 39.34, RCW 28B.50.020, RCW 23B.63.050, and all relevant and associated statutes.

Founded in September 2011, IPS' mission is to provide customized solutions to meet organizations' training and development needs, assisting companies in gaining a competitive advantage in the global economy by increasing the skills of their workforce through education, training, and consulting support.

Pierce College currently serves as the Fiscal Agent for the joint venture and is responsible for ensuring that the entity receives an annual audit of their independent financial statements. INVISTA's Board of Directors selects the auditing firm, currently Dwyer, Pemberton, & Coulson, PC, who provides the audit services. This is not a component unit of the college, under GASB Statement 39, but the college reports the joint venture, with interest in equity, in our notes to financial statements.

Accountability Audits

RCW 43.09.310 requires the State Auditor's Office conduct post-audit engagements over state agencies. These audits, performed on a risk-based statutory process, examine public resources, compliance with state laws and regulations, internal policies and procedures, and internal controls over such matters. Auditors identify areas of risk and perform procedures over those areas examined.

Pierce receives an accountability audit on a four-year cycle. The last accountability audit covered the fiscal years 2016 through 2019. This audit reviewed cash receipting, payroll, accounts payable, and monitoring of sensitive assets. Pierce did not receive any findings or management letter recommendations. The audit was released 15 months after the end of the last fiscal year under review ended.

Performance and Cyber Security Audits

State voter-approved Initiative 900, authorized in 2005, grants the State Auditor's Office authority to conduct performance and cyber security audits on agencies of the state. The college has not been included in any Initiative 900 engagements during the last six years.

Administrative Oversight and Response to Formal Audit Results

The Board of Trustees delegates the selection of the auditor to the chancellor, or their designee, the vice president for administrative services. Pierce College elects to use the Office of the State Auditor as the most cost-effective auditor.

College management affirms their responsibility for the financial statements and the design, implementation, and maintenance of internal controls in the management representation letter annually at the end of each audit engagement. The board of trustees designates one member of the board, usually the chair, to attend the entrance and exit conferences with the auditors. This provides the representative of the board an opportunity to make inquiries of the auditors and receive the final draft report(s) that the auditor will issue.

After the publication of each audit report, the chancellor, executive team, and the Board of Trustees receive copies of the report for review at their next scheduled meeting. In the event there are findings or management letters they would be reviewed at that time. The board would discuss and consider the appropriate actions needed.

RCW 43.09.310 requires that any findings of non-compliance with state law have a corrective action plan submitted to the Office of Financial Management within thirty days of the issuance of the finding. At the end of the finding resolution process, the chancellor, or designee (vice president for administrative services), is required to submit a certification of completeness to the Office of Financial Management's Accounting Division in accordance with the State Administrative & Accounting Manual Policy 55.10.50.

Pierce College has not had any findings or management letters during the preceding six years.

Reviews and Monitoring by Oversight Entities

As required by federal program guidance, Pierce is subject to sub-recipient monitoring by the primary federal grant award recipients who pass through program funding to the district. The extent of monitoring varies depending on the grant award but typically includes detailed reporting processes, field visits, etc. Federal grant funding for Pierce College and pass-through funds totaled approximately \$22.6 million dollars in fiscal year 2021, exclusive of Federal Financial Aid awards. This monitoring is in addition to, and not in lieu of, single audit work performed by auditors at the college.

The State Board for Community and Technical Colleges performs an annual internal audit engagement referred to as an Operations Review. These may include reviews of federal pass-through dollars, provisioned or earmarked state funding, or other federal or state compliance issues.

Currently the college receives grant awards from the following entities:

- The US Department of Education;
- The State Board for Community and Technical Colleges;
- The Washington State Department of Social and Health Services;
- The City of Tacoma;
- The Washington Student Achievement Council;
- The Puget Sound Education Service District;
- CCAMPIS Childcare;
- Achieving the Dream;
- Smart Sparrow LLC;
- College Spark Washington;
- The Kresge Foundation;

Standard 2.E.1 and ER 20 Evidence

**Evidence required for Standard 2.E.1 and ER 20*

[Financial Statements](#) *

[RCW 43.09.310 - Audit of statewide combined financial statements](#) *

[RCW 39.34](#), [RCW 28B.50.020](#), and [RCW 23B.08.050](#) Interlocal Cooperation Agreement *

[State and Administrative & Accounting Manual Policy 55.10.50](#) *

[Pierce College 2021 Reserve Information](#)

2.E.2 FINANCIAL RESOURCE PLANNING

Financial planning includes meaningful opportunities for participation by stakeholders and ensures appropriate available funds, realistic development of financial resources, and comprehensive risk management to ensure short-term financial health and long-term financial stability and sustainability.

Eligibility Requirement (ER) 19 Financial Resources and Planning: *The institution demonstrates financial stability, with cash flow and reserves necessary to support and sustain its mission, programs, and services. Financial planning ensures appropriate available funds, realistic development of financial resources, and appropriate risk management to ensure short-term financial health and long-term financial sustainability.*

Board Policy – 1.45 Financial Oversight ensures financial stability with adequate funding to sustain academic programs and other operations over the long term. These policies provide for maintaining a contingency reserve, seeking external grants to support innovative initiatives, and using a sound, transparent and inclusive budget planning process to adjust programs or services based on careful reviews and analysis.

Pierce College maintains financial stability through cash flow management and cash reserves to support its programs and services. The budgetary financial planning performed by the college reflects the available funds, realistic development of financial resources, and appropriate risk management activities to ensure short-term solvency, and anticipation of long-term obligations including payment of debt incurred on behalf of the college.

The college takes a conservative approach to financial management, using a low ratio of capital debt, a stable operating budget, and well-funded reserves to ensure operational continuity. Pierce's annual operating budget was nearly \$71 million for the 2021-2022 operating budget, including the fall 2021-22 supplemental budget, with just over \$3.6 million coming from the reserves. This leaves the college with approximately \$26.9 million in unrestricted reserves as of June 30, 2021, and an additional \$8.8 million earmarked through policy restrictions for the continuation of contractual programs for international and military students. This is approximately 40 percent of the operating budget for the current fiscal year.

Pierce's budgets vary year-to-year based on external economic and legislative factors. In 2020, during the pandemic, the governor asked agencies to prepare for a 15 percent cut from the state. Pierce engaged in the budget process to find cost savings, and additional revenues to address the potential shortfalls that may have come with the pandemic. Pierce engaged in a mixture of operational cost savings resulting in nearly \$5.5 million dollars in proposed reductions. After review, the final budget resulted in a \$1.9 million proposed cut. The Board of Trustees approved the final 2020 budget at a reduced amount of \$64 million, including \$1.8 million from the reserves. The College has received funding from Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund (HEERF) grants from the US Department of Education, and the state has maintained a better-than-expected economic strength through the pandemic.

During fiscal years 2015 and 2016, the college saw a decrease in state funding that necessitated \$880,000 in cuts, and application of self-imposed cuts of \$1.25 million in internal funding to increase services for academic advising and other related student support programs.

While these cuts have been periodic for Pierce, the college has still seen a steady uptick in the overall budget, rising 50 percent between 2015 and 2022 as the college continues to grow.

Planning Cycles

Pierce College bases its planning within a Strategic Plan (Core Theme Planning, see Figure 1) that guides the core mission, vision, and values of the college. The current plan runs from 2017 through 2024. This plan is a key component of all budgetary considerations made by the college to ensure that it remains focused on mission.

Pierce College operates within the State of Washington's biennial budget cycle, receiving appropriations from the state from the biennial and supplemental budgets through the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges. Pierce incorporates these appropriations into the budgetary planning process for the district, which issues annual operating and capital budgets approved by the Board of Trustees.

Operating Budgetary and Planning Activities

Board Policy – 1.45 Financial Oversight directs the chancellor to conduct a thorough and sound process of annual budget development for presentation to the board, presenting options and alternatives for consideration, and recognize the resulting approved budgets as the Board of Trustees' expression of fiscal priorities.

Pierce College continues to examine its efforts, and redirects resources in response to actual results and outcomes through its participation in Achieving the Dream and Institutional Effectiveness work. All while ensuring that the budget proposals consider the long-term obligations and solvency of the college and ability to maintain its mission.

Guiding Principles and Process

Pierce College develops and adheres to a balanced operating budget each year through a series of clearly defined policies, guidelines, and processes for financial planning and development. Numerous groups oversee the process: The Board of Trustees, the chancellor and the District Policy and Governance Cabinet (cabinet), the budget team, comprised of the executive team, budget staff, budget managers, and union representatives. Finally, there are planning groups, which work on individual areas of the budget. Each group has a specific role within the process to ensure that the college's budgets develop in a smooth, well thought out, and informed way.

The process begins with the Budget Values and Principles document. This document is an evolving reflection of external pressures, internal priorities, and lessons learned from each prior year's budget process. The Board of Trustees, the cabinet, and the budget team each have an opportunity to revise this document twice during the process, but it acts as a foundational guideline for each of the budgetary requirements of the college. It is broken down into Board Policy Interests, Institutional Priorities, and Expectations of Ourselves. This last section addresses the inclusion of the college community in the budgetary process.

From this document, the board sets the annual expectations for the operating budget's development. In an oversight role, the cabinet members receive monthly updates on the process of the budget. The cabinet reviews the budgetary proposal to ensure that it complies with this Budget Values and Principles document.

A calendar is set for the process, and the budget team develops instructions for the development of the budget for use by the planning groups. This includes the forms for submitting funding requests and saving proposals. These are all included on a budget intranet site and reviewed with the stakeholders of the college during the kickoff presentation(s). Pierce College advertises these kick-off meetings and encourages all employees of the district to attend. The college generally holds kickoff meetings at Puyallup and Fort Steilacoom annually. In 2021, the college held the kickoff meeting through Zoom, and a copy of the presentation is available on the intranet.

After the kickoff meetings, the college sends key information to all employees, and encourages those assigned to a planning group to contact their supervisor or a budget team member with any questions or suggestions they may have on the budget process.

The six budget planning groups are assigned a dedicated budget team contact: instruction (includes support, library and media, workforce, e-learning); student services; institutional support services (administrative services, human resources, information technology, advancement, marketing, chancellor's office, presidents' office); facilities and security; and indirect and revenue operations (military, international, child development centers, and community and continuing education).

The purpose of these planning groups is to develop budget requests and coordinate the budget setting activities with the budget team. This is to ensure that projects and priorities budgeted by stakeholders are supported by the college as a whole, including the necessary support services.

The development of each proposal includes both revenue and expense analysis to support the budget request. The largest expense for the college is salaries and benefits. Employee wages make up over 80 percent of each year's operating budget.

Revenue Considerations

Pierce College relies on a mixture of tuition, fees, state and local grants and contracts for operating revenues to fund operations. State appropriations and Federal Pell Grant revenues are the primary source of non-operating revenues. The college also receives non-tuition revenue from enrollment fees from contracted and self-supported instruction programs such as military programs, International Education, and Continuing Education. These form the basis for budgetary planning on the revenue side.

The most volatile of these revenue streams is the state appropriations, which are subject to the state legislature's decisions. This lack of certainty about future streams of revenue from the state hinders some long-term planning efforts. Pierce addresses this by ensuring a conservative fiscal stance and robust reserve availability for obligations.

Tuition is one of the largest sources of operating revenues for the college. A key element of the budget development process hinges on setting the annual enrollment goal for the year. Instructional planners use Pierce's Tableau data dashboards to conduct multiple scenario analysis trials on fill rates, gateway courses, program requirements, and other factors in developing their proposal. Instructional and support planning groups use this information to provide potential cost impacts of increasing or decreasing Pierce College's enrollment goals.

State law requires that a portion of tuition funds be set aside for specific funds held by the state. These include the building fee and innovation funds held by the State Treasurer, an institutional financial aid fund, and the student services and activities account. Currently, this is about 25 percent of the total tuition received, leaving the remaining 75 percent for inclusion in the operating budget.

Non-tuition enrollment programs formally present revenue projections for their activities, and spending plans during budgetary hearings. Part of the spending plan addresses how much the program will provide to the operating budget to reimburse for goods and services provided by non-program staff. In addition, budget managers annually review non-tuition revenue and planned spending from course fees and administrative fees. If fee revenues appear insufficient to cover costs, budget managers may recommend an increase or change in fee structure during the budget development process.

Out of Many Proposals: One Budget

Throughout the early stages of the budget process, the budget team meets with the various stakeholders in the departments and divisions within the district. These meetings range from staff level meetings to divisional or even all-college meetings as needed to ensure that proposals and requests are properly coordinated.

The budget team collects these proposals and makes available, through the intranet, an evolving budget. The budget team does not share selected information related to proposed savings from vacancies or layoffs until after the affected employee(s) receive notification of this possibility. Proposals are collected and reviewed to determine if they should be included in the balanced budget recommendations. Once the recommendations are developed, the cabinet meets to review the recommended budget for consistency with Pierce College's pre-determined values and principles. If consistent the cabinet recommends to the chancellor to present the budget to the Board of Trustees for consideration and approval.

The chancellor presents the proposed general operations budget to the board for approval typically during the June board meeting. By policy, the board shall approve the operating budget no later than the beginning of the fiscal year. The final approved notification of the budget appears in the meeting minutes and actions of the Board of Trustees.

Capital Budgets

Pierce College maintains a facility master plan for each campus, Fort Steilacoom and Puyallup. These plans incorporate input from stakeholders at each campus to ensure that they build upon Pierce College's mission, core themes, and objectives. The Strategic Plan (Core Theme Planning, Figure 1) informs the decision-making process, and final plans receive approval from the Board of Trustees.

Pierce engages with planning committees representing constituencies from all areas of the district to discuss prioritized capital needs and assist in the development of detailed requests for capital projects at both college locations.

The state budgetary process allows Pierce College to submit detailed requests for capital projects to the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC) for funding by the state legislature. Pierce's Facilities Master Plans determine the order of priority when submitting these proposals. If the projects are determined to be major, they may be included in the state's capital budget, which includes both new construction and major renovations, and the Department of Enterprise Services conducts the bid service process. The state sells general obligations bonds to fund these projects.

Additionally, the legislature allocates State Minor Capital Improvement funds, designating the SBCTC to oversee their disbursement. These include minor works, small repairs, and emergency or hazard mitigation projects. Funding for minor works is formula driven, while repairs to facilities receive funding based on a statewide system facilities condition survey score. Emergency and hazard mitigation funding is only available to address emergent damages or previously unknown conditions. Funds awarded to Pierce provide for improvements to campus priorities set by the Facilities Master Plan, the Executive Team, and the Director of Facilities and Operations.

When funds provided by the state for capital projects are insufficient, the board reviews and approves requests for spending from the district's reserves, technology fee, or Services and Activities (S&A) fees, to provide funding to support capital projects. The Pierce College Foundation may hold fundraising campaigns to supplement capital acquisitions.

Student Budgets

State law, Student Program Financial Code, and the Student Technology Fee Financial Code governs the use and committee structures of Student Services and Activities (S&A) Fees, and Student Technology Fees. Annual budgets adhere to both laws and codes, are restricted from supplementing general operations of the college, and are approved by the Board of Trustees.

Budget Monitoring

Historically, the financial staff of the college assist the board in the monitoring process by preparing and providing data for board member reviews on a monthly basis. However, with the conversion to ctLink these have been suspended and supplemented with additional information to the board. These reports show operating budget spending and tuition revenues compared with the budgeted amounts, and the prior year levels. The report includes data related to key drivers of revenues, including tuition, fees, state allocations, state funded enrollments, Running Start enrollments, and reimbursements of indirect costs from military and international contract programs. Additional information in the report includes revenue and spending information related to grants, scholarships, and financial aid programs at the college. Pierce monitors the collected revenues in comparison with models used to estimate key resources.

The board receives a written progress report on capital projects, in addition to dashboard data showing spending against major capital projects.

Cash balances and cash demands are reviewed frequently, ensuring that Pierce maintains (pooled) cash accommodates expected cash outflows. The college may invest balances of funds in a mixture of short or mid-term investments that provide the college with available liquidity if an unexpected need arises.

Financial Risk Management Reserves

Under regular operating conditions, the district's goal is to maintain unrestricted revenues of at least ten percent, and sufficient to repay the principle on debts. Pierce's cash reserves policy (Board Policy – 1.45 Financial Oversight) requires board approval for any expenditures from district reserves over fifty thousand dollars. The chancellor may approve amounts up to fifty thousand dollars for unanticipated expenditures outside the operating budget. The use of this authorization by the chancellor appears as a reconciling item in the subsequent financial dashboard report.

Internal classification of reserves is either policy restricted, or unrestricted. Policy restricted reserves are funds which are not legally restricted but have been identified by the board for future purposes and held for that specific program or purpose. Unrestricted fund balances are those unidentified by the board as being for any specific program or purpose. The board may change these designations at any time.

After the adoption of the 2021-2022 College Budget, approximately \$26.9 million in unrestricted reserves as of June 30, 2021, and an additional \$8.8 million earmarked through policy restrictions for the continuation of contractual programs for international and military students.

Investments

The Board of Trustees authorizes the chancellor to oversee the investment of surplus local fund cash balances in any legally approved investments. State law limits the college's use of investments to the highest quality sectors of the domestic fixed income market and specifically excludes corporate stocks, corporate and foreign bonds, futures contracts, commodities, real estate, limited partnerships and negotiable certificates of deposit. Investments used by the college include money market funds, local government investment pool, agency securities, corporate bonds, mortgage pools, and collateralized mortgage obligation and asset backed securities. Pierce's internal policy does not limit the amount the college may invest in any one issuer.

The college's short-term cash-equivalent investment funds may reside in the Local Government Investment Pool in the State Treasury, in accordance with Chapter 294, Laws of 1996. The Board of Trustees delegates signature authority for deposits or withdrawals of monies from the LGIP to the chancellor or the chancellor's designee.

Debt Management

Pierce College approaches debt with a conservative mindset, limiting borrowing to student-funded capital projects and energy upgrades. The Delegation of Board Powers and Duties to the district chancellor policy, excludes borrowing from the powers otherwise delegated to the chancellor. As a result, the Board of Trustees reviews and must approve any actions on proposed borrowing.

The college primarily uses the Office of the State Treasurer's Certificates of Participation program to issue bond-debt instruments. This program provides economies of scale resulting in better interest rates for the college for financing activities.

The delegation of board powers authorizes the chancellor to approve transfers and borrowings between funds within the college.

The college currently has two long-term liabilities, incurred through student self-assessed fees to provide additional facilities at the college. The college has pledged to pay the principal and interest on the COP using the anticipated revenues from the student self-assessed fees. Currently the college maintains enough funds in these restricted accounts to meet the scheduled repayments. Pierce reviews this balance annually, at a minimum, to ensure that it continues to be sufficient to make payments during the remaining repayment period, even if there are fluctuations in enrollment levels when economic cycles are considered.

Fundraising

Washington State law grants the Board of Trustees authority to solicit donations on behalf of Pierce College. The board delegates the oversight of this program to the chancellor, authorizing the chancellor to cultivate donor prospects, marketing of the college, and solicitation of private gifts from individuals, corporations, and other foundations.

The Pierce College Foundation is the fundraising arm of the college, operating as a registered 501(c)3 entity, with an independent board. Pierce College maintains a memorandum of understanding with the Foundation, detailing the exchange of services between the district and the foundation.

The bulk of contributors chose to donate to the Pierce College Foundation. As a result, donations are not generally part of the district's resource projections. The Foundation coordinates the granting of scholarships and emergency aid with Financial Aid and other key student service areas, and the collection and distribution of funds with key district fiscal and student financials staff.

Standard 2.E.2 and ER 19 Evidence

**Evidence required for Standard 2.E.2 and ER 19*

[2019 – 2021 Capital Project Summary](#)

[2021 – 2022 Master Fee List](#)

[2021 – 2022 Student Technology Fee Budget Presentation for Board of Trustees](#) *

[2021 – 2022 Budget Values and Principles](#) *

[2021 – 2022 Budget Instructions](#) *

[2021 – 2023 State Funded Capital Projects](#) *

[Cabinet Agenda, Budget Values and Principles Review November 2021](#)

[Service and Activities and Student Technology Fee Financial Code](#) *

[2021 – 2022 Workforce Budget Planning Overview](#) *

[Fiscal Years 2021 and 2022 Service and Activities Budget](#) *

[Fiscal Years 2021 and 2022 Student Technology Fee Budget](#) *

[Office of Financial Management Acceptance of Electronic Funds by State Agencies](#) *

[Board Policy 1.45 - Financial Oversight](#) *

[Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges Allocation and Monitoring](#) *

2.E.3 FINANCIAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Financial resources are managed transparently and in accordance with policies approved by the institution's governing board(s) in accordance with its governance structure and state and federal and applicable state laws.

Pierce College, as an agency of the State of Washington, operates under several layers of oversight. Foundationally the college is governed by the statutes of the Revised Code of Washington under Chapter 28B, governing the foundation of the college. Additional administrative rules exist under WAC Chapter 132K.

Most state laws do not directly affect the daily financial operations of the college; however, state law does limit the college's use of investments to the highest quality sectors of the domestic fixed income market and specifically excludes corporate stocks, corporate and foreign bonds, futures contracts, commodities, real estate, limited partnerships and negotiable certificates of deposit. Investments used by the college may include money market funds, local government investment pool, agency securities, corporate bonds, mortgage pools, and collateralized mortgage obligation and asset backed securities. When investing, the college adheres to the use of a third party who manages the investment activities of the college, with ultimate oversight retained at the college level.

The college is also subject to the oversight of several state agencies. The Office of Financial Management (OFM) provides financial oversight to the entire State of Washington through the State Administrative and Accounting Manual (SAAM). The Department of Enterprise Services (DES) directs the authority for purchasing and contracting for State Agencies under RCW 39.26.110 and DES procurement policies. The State Board for Colleges and Technical Colleges (SBCTC) who oversees the college most directly, providing oversight of legislative budgetary requests on behalf of the Community and Technical College system, including capital projects; provides guidance for all community and technical colleges with the SBCTC Policy Manual, and directs accounting policy through the Fiscal Affairs Manual (FAM) directs the authority for purchasing and contracting for State Agencies under RCW 39.26.110 and DES procurement policies. The State Board for Colleges and Technical Colleges (SBCTC) who oversees the college most directly, providing oversight of legislative budgetary requests on behalf of the Community and Technical College system, including capital projects; provides guidance for all community and technical colleges with the SBCTC Policy Manual, and directs accounting policy through the Fiscal Affairs Manual (FAM).

The college is subject to a wide array of federal requirements over financial resources. These primarily exist as a function of grant awards to the college, either as a direct recipient or as a pass-through entity, and most are from the US Department of Education which stipulates the use of, and compliance with, requirements to receive these funds, notably under programs such as Title IV and Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund grants.

The Board of Trustees adopts district policies regarding matters affecting the operation of Pierce College and are subject to compliance with applicable state and federal laws. The board makes the policies readily available to the college community on the District Policies and Procedures website.

The primary financial policy is Board Policy 1.45 Financial Oversight. Refer to the college's response under Standard 2.E.2 for details on financial risk management policies over reserves, investments, debt management, and fundraising.

Financial Operations and Controls

Through the mixture of state mandated controls, manuals, and guidance, Pierce College has established internal policies, procedures, and practices to maintain a system of internal controls to adequately safeguard the financial health of the institution, and maintain compliance with laws, regulations, guidelines, and institutional policies.

In addition to the policies laid out above, the college has administrative policies and procedures that incorporate the guidance listed in the sections above into a practical application for the staff to follow. Wherever possible these policies defer to the original guidance in the most authoritative policy, manual, or guidance available. The administrative policies and procedures that govern fiscal reporting, compliance, contracts, and budget and finance (to include procurement, accounts payable and receiving), are approved by the vice president for administrative services (or their designee) and govern the daily operations with controls over financial activities.

Internal Control Design

The college follows Green Book (COSO) guidance for internal control implementation. Currently, the college is implementing the Internal Controls Assessment Tools and guidance developed by the State Auditor's Office to ensure internal control protections against fraud.

Additional reviews of processes occur through an internal control framework using action plans that focus on the department or program's performance. This includes performance outcome targets, criteria for success, data collection, and projects that the college may undertake to improve operational effectiveness. Annually the college performs an internal control self-assessment.

Financial Instrument Controls

The Board of Trustees establishes designees who retain the authority to act on behalf of the college with respect to the deposit, transfer, or commitment of funds by check, wire, transfer, or other negotiable instrument. This is further restricted for the funds retained in the Local Government Investment Pool, which is restricted to the chancellor or the chancellor's designee.

Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) System

Pierce College migrated from its legacy accounting system to the new Oracle/PeopleSoft system called ctcLink. A team led this project, from the State Board for Community and Technical College (SBCTC)s, along with an implementation vendor, Ciber. Pierce's role was to ensure that our data, business processes, and practices align with the new system. The college assigned a multi-disciplinary team to work on this project, culminating in the transition to the new system in May 2020. The SBCTC Information Technology Division maintains the system and controls over it. In turn, the college shares a proportional share of the operational costs of the system. Pierce College uses ctcLink to perform payroll, procurement, accounting, and reporting, as well as customer solutions for students (registration, financial aid), and human resources.

The system incorporates several controls over transactional behavior to ensure compliance with GAAP and provisions of state law. SBCTC strictly controls the coding, accounting hierarchy, and tables for the system. This includes controls over vendors, which require specific authorization on a college-by-college basis.

Payroll

Payroll is administered through SBCTC's ctcLink system. The process draws upon a single bank account for all 34 of the community and technical colleges.

The college is responsible for inputting key data for new hires and tracking time inputs for employees. This includes the rates, applicable charged budget codes, and elected benefits. College employees track hours through ctcLink's ctcTime application, with approvals managed by designated supervisors. The ctcTime application shows the pay rates and budget codes in the system for supervisory review, and tracks employee leave balances. Payroll and Finance staff ensure that hours, overtime, and leave have received approval before payroll processing.

Procurement

The state mandates strict adherence to bid-laws and use of authorized vendors for the procurement of goods and services. To ensure that the college is following these requirements as laid out in the DES Purchasing Manual, the college ensures that key staff attend required DES trainings. These staff then monitor procurement at the college for compliance.

Purchases over designated limits require additional authorization. The college maintains an active, annually updated, list of approvers based on their authority. In most circumstances, authorities for purchases over \$10,000 require higher-level approval from an executive team member, to ensure that all purchases are reasonable, and are for the benefit of the college and its mission. Additional restrictions exist in the PeopleSoft system over commodity codes, using the National Institute of Governmental Purchasing to limit certain purchases from general authorization approvals.

For smaller purchases, the college contracts with a procurement card (p-card) program, corporate card program, and gas card program. Employees approved to have p-cards receive training at issuance describing the restrictions on card use. Restrictions include prohibitions on item types and amounts. Spending limits are fixed but may have temporary increases if there is a compelling reason, but this requires approval from the purchasing department. Supervisors review and approve individual cardholder purchases before submission of reconciliations to the procurement office.

Financial Reporting Integrity

Pierce College maintains a firm commitment to responsibly establish and maintain internal controls over financial reporting. The college implements prescriptive guidance from the Office of Financial Management and SBCTC to ensure compliance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles in accordance with standards issued by the Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB). SBCTC also provides directives, templates, and guidance on upcoming GASB implementation requirements.

Within the financial statements, the college incorporates best practices including the National Association of College and University Business Officers guidance for allowances. To ensure that staff are adequately trained, the college has participated in the Budget, Accounting, and Reporting Council; the Western Association of College and University Business Officers; and professional trainings hosted by various entities including the US Department of Education, and other professional higher education and accounting organizations. Finally, the college has sought professional services from certified professional accounting firms to ensure that the College is aware of the impending impacts of new financial policies, guidance, or standards.

Standard 2.E.3 Evidence

**Evidence required for Standard 2.E.3*

[28B RCW: Higher Education](#)

[132K WAC Pierce College](#)

[State Administrative and Accounting Manual \(SAAM\)](#) *

[RCW 39.26.1010 - Provision of Expertise and Training for State Procurement](#) *

[Washington State Department of Enterprise Services \(DES\) Procurement Policies](#) *

[SBCTC Policy Manual Chapter 6 - Capital Expenditures and Real Property Transactions](#) *

[State Board for Community and Technical Colleges Fiscal Affairs Manual \(FAM\)](#) *

[Green Book \(Standards for Internal Control in the Federal Government\)](#) *

[Office of the Washington State Auditor – Internal Controls](#) *

[Pierce College Board Policy 1.45 Financial Oversight](#) *

[Pierce College Tuition Refund Procedure](#) *

[The Washington Purchasing Manual](#) *

[Pierce College Procurement Card Manual](#) *

2.F.1 CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT

Faculty, staff, and administrators are apprised of their conditions of employment, work assignments, rights and responsibilities, and criteria and procedures for evaluation, retention, promotion, and termination.

All new employees are apprised of their conditions of employment, work assignments, rights and responsibilities, and performance evaluation procedures by their supervisors and human resources. All faculty, administrative-exempt and classified employees receive copies of their job description, which contains an explanation of key duties and key competencies required to be successful in the position.

Classified

Classified staff employee working conditions, rights and responsibilities are referenced in the Washington Public Employees Association Collective Bargaining Agreement. This agreement contains key employment provisions, including but not limited to types of appointments; probationary periods; compensation, benefits and promotions; work location; employee job movement, reductions in force; leaves; procedures for evaluation; disciplinary standards and due process; and non-discrimination and grievance procedures. Classified staff engage in annual performance reviews where job performance expectations are reviewed, and annual goals are set for continued growth in the position. Position descriptions for classified employees are consistent with the job class specifications set by the Washington State Department of Enterprise Services. In instances where an employee or supervisor has concerns that a position includes responsibilities that are not consistent with the job classification the Human Resources Office will conduct a desk audit to determine if an adjustment to classification or responsibilities is needed.

Faculty

The Negotiated Agreement between Pierce College Federation of Teachers and Pierce College District (PCFT Negotiated Agreement) contains key employment provisions, including but not limited to types of appointments; probationary periods; compensation, benefits and promotions; work location; employee job movement, reductions in force; leaves; procedures for evaluation; disciplinary standards and due process; and non-discrimination and grievance procedures.

As outlined in the PCFT Negotiated Agreement Section 10.3, tenured faculty have promotional opportunities through participation in action research and professional learning in Pierce's Targeted Skills 1 and 2, and Master Teaching programs. Section 11.9 outlines the adjunct faculty promotional leveling program.

Administrative-Exempt

Administrative-exempt employees serve at the will of the district. Adhering to Pierce policies and procedures, HR and supervisors are jointly responsible for ensuring that administrative-exempt employees understand their conditions of employment, work assignment, rights and responsibilities, and criteria and procedures for evaluation, retention, promotion, and termination. To keep pace with changes in compensation structures Pierce periodically conducts market salary studies for administrative-exempt positions. The most recent study in 2018 led to an update in the compensation structure for salaries to align with the median of the market and the development of a promotional step plan for Administrative-exempt employees to move up in the pay scale through structured professional development. Similar to classified employees, administrative-exempt engage in annual performance reviews where job performance expectations are reviewed, and annual goals set for continued growth in the position.

Standard 2.F.1 Evidence

**Evidence required for Standard 2.F.1*

[Collective Bargaining Agreements](#) *

- See WPEA sections: Article 3 Workplace Behavior; Article 6 Performance Evaluation; Article 28 Disciplinary Procedures; Article 30 Grievance Procedure.
- See PCFT sections: Section 2.7 State Ethics Law; Article 8 Reduction in force/ progressive discipline and due process/dismissal/tenure; Article 10.3 Promotional Opportunities for Full Time Faculty; Section 11.9 Promotional Opportunities for Adjunct Faculty; Article 14 Post Tenure Evaluation; Article 16 Grievance Procedure.

[Discipline/Corrective Action/Dismissal Policy](#) *

[Discrimination and Harassment Policy](#) *

[Sick Leave for Non-represented Part-Time Employees Policy](#) *

[Nepotism Policy](#) *

[Drug and Alcohol Workplace Prevention Policy](#) *

[Alcohol and Drug Rehabilitation Policy](#) *

[HR Onboarding Toolkit](#) *

2.F.2 PROFESSIONAL LEARNING AND GROWTH

The institution provides faculty, staff, and administrators with appropriate opportunities and support for professional growth and development.

Employees are one of the most valuable assets to Pierce College, as such we place high value on the professional growth and development of faculty, staff and administrators. Pierce provides a variety of professional development opportunities for employees.

Under the leadership of the Vice President of Workforce, Economic, and Professional Development, the Employee Learning and Development (ELAD) department, frames faculty, classified, and administrative-exempt employee learning and development response to Institutional Effectiveness Action Priorities. Additionally, ELAD collaborates with departments to develop critical learning materials. For example, ELAD commonly partners with the Information Technology department to develop training materials when new technologies are deployed at the college. All employees are provided opportunities for professional development through Pierce's biannual All-District days, in-service days, communities of practice, ongoing cohort opportunities and online learning opportunities through LinkedIn Learning and Bridge. Tutorial libraries for our service management system (ctcLink) and advising system (Starfish) are provided to all employees. As referenced in standard 2.D.3 all full-time employees are required to complete the college's ethics training and employees serving on job screening committees are required to complete bias training delivered through LinkedIn Learning.

Faculty

The PCFT Negotiated Agreement provides full-time faculty with 15 days per year for planning and professional development. Additionally, the contract includes two and one-half contracted days to support faculty cross-division collaboration on institutional effectiveness (Assessment Day, Guided Pathways Institutional Faculty Development, and Faculty in-service). To support professional development each full-time faculty member is provided \$500 in professional development and each adjunct faculty member \$250. Full-time faculty are eligible for up to six quarters of sabbatical leave after completing seven years of instruction at the college. As noted in Section 2.F.1 of the PCFT Negotiated Agreement, tenure- and permanent status-track faculty members are required to participate in the first-year faculty cohort and tenured faculty are encouraged to take advantage of promotional opportunities to participate in year-long action research projects (targeted skills 1 and 2; master teaching).

Adjunct faculty are invited to participate in professional development events that connect their teaching practice to larger Institutional Outcomes and priorities. In fall 2021 the college designed and implemented the Equitable Learning and Teaching Essentials stipend program for adjunct faculty, which was co-created with adjunct faculty and ELAD. This program was designed to support the growth of equitable, anti-racist teaching practices that remove personal, disciplinary, and institutional barriers for all students.

As defined in Sections 5.2.6, 7.7.E.1, and 7.7.E.3 of the PCFT Negotiated Agreement, all faculty that teach online or hybrid courses are required to complete modules on our learning management system (Canvas) and Foundations to Teaching Online trainings.

Classified

Classified employees are provided development opportunities through an in-service day organized by the Classified Staff Training Committee with activities to expand their professional skills and experience. Classified employees are also encouraged to attend trainings provided by the State Human Resource Office. The Classified Staff Training Committee subsidizes department budgets so employees can attend classes or trainings deemed appropriate to their job. Employees are eligible to request paid time to attend professional development opportunities such as conferences and workshops.

Administrative Exempt

As part of the professional development plan process administrative-exempt employees work with their supervisors to identify key learning development opportunities for the annual year. Every three years, Pierce supports the application of two upper-level administrators to the Washington Executive Leadership Academy, a year-long leadership development program designed as part of a senior leadership succession plan. As noted in standard 2.F.1, a recent addition to professional learning and growth for administrative-exempt employees is promotion through structured professional development in alignment with mission and racial equity.

Standard 2.F.2 Evidence

**Evidence required for Standard 2.F.2*

[Collective Bargaining Agreements](#) *

- See WPEA sections: Article 9 Training and Employee Development, 9.2; and Article 9 Training and Employee Development, 9.5).
- See PCFT sections: Sabbatical, Section 6.9; Advising Training, Sections 7.5.6.2 and 7.5.B.6.d; and Online Teaching Training Requirements, Sections 5.2.6, 7.7.E.1, 7.7.E.

[Employee Learning and Development Information \(ELAD\)](#)

[ELAD Identified Self-paced Bridge Courses](#) and [ELAD Teaching Community Modules](#)

[CtcLink Training Resources](#)

[Starfish Employee Training Resources](#)

[Collection of Pierce College hosted Professional Learning Experiences](#)

[Collection of Pierce College Master Teaching, Targeted Skills 1 and 2](#)

[Excerpt of Administrative-exempt Promotion through Professional Development](#)

2.F.3 EMPLOYEE SUFFICIENCY AND QUALIFICATIONS

Consistent with its mission, programs, and services, the institution employs faculty, staff, and administrators sufficient in role, number, and qualifications to achieve its organizational responsibilities, educational objectives, establish and oversee academic policies, and ensure the integrity and continuity of its academic program

Eligibility Requirement (ER) 12 Faculty: Consistent with its mission, the institution employs qualified faculty members sufficient in numbers to achieve its educational objectives, establish and oversee academic policies, and ensure the integrity and sustainability of its academic programs. The institution regularly and systematically evaluates the performance of faculty members in alignment with institutional mission and goals, educational objectives, and policies and procedures. Evaluations are based on written criteria that are published, easily accessible, and clearly communicated. Evaluations are applied equitably, fairly, and consistently in relation to responsibilities and duties

Guided by our mission and core themes the institution employs faculty, staff, and administrators sufficient in the role, number, and qualifications. The Human Resources Office (HR) is responsible for ensuring that district positions are accurately and appropriately classified and that all criteria and qualifications are detailed on job announcements and procedures for selection of each employee group are clearly defined. Statewide minimum qualifications for faculty appointments appear in Washington Administrative Code 131-16-080 and 131-16-091. All instructors, full-time and adjuncts, meet these minimum requirements unless an exception is approved in accordance with the code. The Human Resources Office verifies prospective employee transcripts are from institutions approved by the Department of Education. Essential functions and responsibilities, qualifications, and required competencies for classified and administrative-exempt positions are co-developed between the supervisor and an Executive Team member. Classified and administrative-exempt position descriptions are annually reviewed as part of the employee's annual performance and development plan process to ensure position responsibilities, qualifications, and required competencies remain in alignment with needs of the institution in meeting mission.

Currently Pierce College employees, 1044 employees of which 25.1% are classified, 12% are full time faculty, 31.1% are adjunct faculty, 9.5% are administrative-exempt, and 22.3% are part-time employees. Over the past six years, we have had an overall reduction of 8% in staffing at the institution. The largest changes are noted in the number of part-time employees and adjunct faculty teaching at the institution. These decreases are reflective of the effects of COVID-19 on enrollment and available workload for part-time employees. In alignment with our mission and commitment to racial equity the college has embarked on a 16-position cluster hire for tenure-track faculty committed to joining Pierce College in serving Black and Brown students through dismantling areas of inequity, a portion of these positions were made possible as a result of Washington State Bill 5194. As a result, we anticipate an increase in the number of full-time faculty in fall 2022.

When a position becomes vacant or there is a request to increase or decrease staffing the college conducts an internal review to examine how the work of the position impacts the college in meeting mission and core themes.

Standard 2.F.3 and ER 12 Evidence

**Evidence required for Standard 2.F.3 and ER 12*

[WAC 131-16-080 - General Standards of Qualifications for Community and Technical College Personnel](#) *

[WAC 131-16-091 - Additional Qualifications in Areas of Specialization](#) *

[Student Services Organization Chart](#) *

[Instruction Organization Chart](#) *

[Invista Performance Solutions](#)

[Washington State Bill 5194](#)

[Cluster Hire of Tenure-track Faculty to Support Black and Brown Students](#)

2.F.4 EMPLOYEE EVALUATIONS

Faculty, staff, and administrators are evaluated regularly and systematically in alignment with institutional mission and goals, educational objectives, and policies and procedures. Evaluations are based on written criteria that are published, easily accessible, and clearly communicated. Evaluations are applied equitably, fairly, and consistently in relation to responsibilities and duties. Personnel are assessed for effectiveness and are provided feedback and encouragement for improvement.

Eligibility Requirement (ER) 12 Faculty: Consistent with its mission, the institution employs qualified faculty members sufficient in numbers to achieve its educational objectives, establish and oversee academic policies, and ensure the integrity and sustainability of its academic programs. The institution regularly and systematically evaluates the performance of faculty members in alignment with institutional mission and goals, educational objectives, policies and procedures. Evaluations are based on written criteria that are published, easily accessible, and clearly communicated. Evaluations are applied equitably, fairly, and consistently in relation to responsibilities and duties

Performance evaluations are a key element in continuous improvement for faculty, administrative-exempt and classified staff.

Faculty

All faculty are assessed on the performance of their job duties and professional responsibilities on a regular cycle as outlined in the Tenure Manual and the PCFT Negotiated Agreement. Tenure-track faculty initially undergo a three-year tenure review process in compliance with state law RCW 28B.50.850 through 28B.50.873 and Section 8.4 of the PCFT Negotiated Agreement.

As outlined in the tenure manual, tenure is a multi-dimensional review process that includes quarterly student evaluations, collegial and administrative observations, and regular self-evaluation throughout the tenure-review period. The Board of Trustees sets clear expectations for tenure reports and grants tenure to only high-quality candidates. The vice presidents for Learning and Student Success meet with all tenure-track faculty and their committees to communicate Board of Trustees criteria.

Tenured faculty are evaluated every five years according to Pierce's post-tenure review procedure, outlined in Article 14 of the PCFT Negotiated Agreement. The teaching competence and professional improvement of each faculty member is reviewed using multiple indices including teaching observations; student evaluations; a self-evaluation by the faculty member; and an analysis of the professional growth and development in teaching and learning and faculty member's field of study. This evaluation process includes a conference with the dean and the drafting and approval of a new five-year plan, which addresses goals, professional development, and any concerns/deficiencies. Professional-Technical faculty members are required to align their PGDP with the certification process for professional-technical instructors as outlined in WAC 131-16-094. The evaluation process for specially-funded contracted faculty (e.g., military, Department of Health and Human Services, and international programs) is akin to the tenure and post tenure process.

Section 10.3 in the PCFT Negotiated Agreement outlines the salary increment permanent salary promotion to full-time faculty members to support the submission of an annual report on their progress in achieving their PGDP goals through professional learning and development. Faculty in the tenure process use their professional development plan and evidence supplied in their tenure materials for their eligibility for Salary Increment Plan.

Evaluation of adjunct faculty is outlined in Section 11.4 of the PCFT Negotiated Agreement. Instructional Department Chairs are responsible for the regular evaluation of adjuncts.

Classified and Administrative-Exempt

For classified and administrative-exempt employees Pierce College's Human Resources Office maintains procedures and forms to ensure a systematic and complete evaluation process. Administrative-exempt and classified employees are scheduled to be assessed annually, following the calendar year. Both groups use a two-part Performance Development Plan (PDP) form to evaluate the previous year's expectations for key results and key competencies and sets expectations for the upcoming year. Pierce identified core competencies based upon a competency list developed and posted by the Washington State Human Resource Department. At the annual assessment meeting, the supervisor and employee discuss the evaluation each has prepared and how it aligns with the college's mission, goals, and job requirements. Classified employee evaluation procedures can be found in section 6.2 of the WPEA agreement.

During the PDP, the employee will complete a self-evaluation and develop a plan with goals for the coming year that will be discussed with the supervisor. HR provides training for supervisors to assure consistency and compliance on evaluation processes.

In addition to the annual performance evaluation, newly hired classified employees are assessed at three months, and upon completion of a six or 12-month probationary period in accordance with the WPEA contract.

Standard 2.F.4 and ER 12 Evidence

**Evidence required for Standard 2.F.4 and ER 12*

[Tenure Manual](#) *

[RCW 28B.50.850 through 28B.50.873 - Faculty Tenure](#)

[Collective Bargaining Agreements](#) *

- See WPEA: Performance Evaluation, Article 6.
- See PCFT: Tenure, Section 8.4; Faculty Salary Advancement, Section 10.3; Evaluation, Section 11.4; Post Tenure Evaluation, Article 14.

[Tenure Example](#) *

[Professional Growth and Development Plan Example](#) *

[Post Tenure Example](#) *

[Description of Salary Increment Plan](#) *

[Salary Increment Plan and Report Example](#) *

[WAC 131-16-094 - Certification Process for Professional-Technical Faculty](#)

[Washington State Workforce Competencies](#)

[PDP Instructions](#) *

[Pierce Core Competencies](#)

[PDP Example Classified Staff](#) *

[PDP Example Administrative-Exempt](#) *

2.G.1 EQUITABLE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

Consistent with the nature of its educational programs and methods of delivery, and with a particular focus on equity and closure of equity gaps in achievement, the institution creates and maintains effective learning environments with appropriate programs and services to support student learning and success.

Consistent with our mission, Pierce College purposefully designs, implements, and connects students with programming and services to provide holistic support for student academics, basic needs, career planning, identities, and finances to achieve academic and career goals.

To highlight our work in creating equitable learning environments we have focused on the impact of designing and implementing our Pierce Advocacy and Resource Connection site; reorganization of our Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion for College Access, Retention, and Engagement Services (EDI CARES); and use of the Achieving the Dream (ATD) framework to drive change and address priority areas to fulfill mission.

Pierce Advocacy and Resource Connection

The development of our Pierce Advocacy and Resource Connection (PARC) site is an excellent example of a small modification that has a big impact. This online resource page connects students to shelter, safety, health and wellness, crisis hotlines, food, childcare, LGBTQIA+, emergency funding, transportation, and veteran resources. Centralizing this information removes barriers for students to quickly gain access to critical resources and supports the dissemination of this information to all college employees to better assist students in need.

Student Equity and Empowerment Programming - EDI CARES

Our EDI CARES, College Access, Retention, and Engagement Services division is a brave and empowering community that provides culturally sustaining and relational-based services for all of our most powerful and resilient students who have faced various forms of marginalization, equity, economic, and educational barriers. EDI CARES consists of student equity empowerment programs that are institutional, and grant funded in which all students can access and engage.

Through innovative and intentional design, EDI CARES provides holistic and equitable engagement learning opportunities that builds student's self-efficacy, agency, and draws out student excellence and innate capital they bring with them (i.e. cultural, social, familial, aspirational, academic, and navigational capital). Students are empowered with leadership and identity development, academic and career pathway guidance, transfer preparation, financial literacy, tutoring, and strengths-based mentorship throughout their journey at Pierce. At home in EDI CARES, every student is valued, respected, and inspired to pursue their passion and realize their greatness and possibilities while learning at Pierce College and beyond.

The 2019 – 2020 academic year marked a bold structural reorganization and strategic design that removed the barrier of a siloed and disconnected student engagement journey from access, retention, to completion for our BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, Person of Color), economically under-resourced, first generation, and students with disabilities. The new district design equitably centers students, purposefully empowers culture and community to thrive at the college. As part of the reorganization the EDI CARES division was newly positioned to report to the Chancellor's Office, under the leadership and direction of vice president for equity, innovation and engagement and dean for student equity, design and engagement.

In 2020-21 EDI CARES district expansion, the division scaled over 123 engagement, retention, learning, and access programs for currently enrolled students, prospective students, and the college community. Some examples of the EDI CARES division's culturally sustainable and holistic equitable services for student empowerment and success include: Village Time, a program for BIPOC students to engage with their respective campus presidents to speak truth to power about their experiences, challenges, and needs for system support and institutional change; Black, Indigenous, Latino/a/x and Asian American Native Hawaiian Pacific Islander Excellence Programming; Students of Color Empowerment Summits; Women of Color in STEM; Healing and hope spaces; and Enrollment access programming through multiple modalities for student accessibility.

Student Services Continuous Improvement using the ATD Framework

Since 2012, Pierce College has been an active member of Achieving the Dream (ATD). We continue to use their framing in our continuous efforts in achieving mission; becoming an anti-racist institution; and eliminating areas of inequity. We documented in our 2016 Comprehensive Self-Study the use of the ATD framework on the impact to student success with the development and implementation of a mandatory College Success course, embedded tutoring, accelerating the developmental English and math pathways, and access to real-time student achievement data (Tableau Dashboards). In our continued pursuit of dismantling barriers of inequity for students our ATD priority design groups were restructured in 2020 around five areas of priority: Induction Programs and Supports; Inclusive Pedagogy; Aspirational Career Advising; Community Outreach, Recruitment, and Engagement; Embedded Learning Support Services. Approximately 125 faculty and staff (unduplicated) have joined one or more of the priority design groups. The rich membership of our ATD groups and strong shared governance structures support the broad integration of interventions that remove areas of inequity, in this report we highlight the work of our Embedded Learning Support Services Group.

Our tutoring program offers a full spectrum of learning support for campus based and e-learning students. Each campus offers drop-in, appointment-based, and eTutoring options with hours covering day, evening and weekend access. All tutoring sessions emphasize proven best practice college success strategies: building self-regulated learning behaviors, coaching academic life skills, and concept proficiency through collaborative learning.

Our embedded tutoring (modeled after the nationally recognized Supplemental Instruction academic support approach) offers significant enhancement to classroom instruction through a combination of active class engagement, walk-in assistance hours, and peer-educator facilitated study sessions. Pierce offers embedded tutoring support primarily in English, STEM, Business, and Professional Technical courses. National and internal data supports the effectiveness of peer tutoring and direct embedded support a high-impact practice: a statistically significant method of improving retention, completion, and ultimately graduation rates. A three-year cohort assessment showed that embedded tutoring participants were 21% more likely to persist to degree completion than students who did not participate, finishing with higher grade point averages in key disciplines of mathematics and English composition.

The Pierce College Writing Center supports students with the writing they do across all campuses and disciplines. We serve students in a variety of modalities to accommodate their learning preferences: on-campus in our library-co-located writing centers; live and online through our scheduling platform; through written feedback; and in classroom-embedded work. We provide classroom-embedded tutors in English 101 corequisite sections to bring academic support to the classroom as an explicit component of the curriculum; as such, working with a writing tutor is now a learning outcome of that course. We are increasingly working on ways to support our multilingual students with their writing and focusing on highlighting to college staff and faculty the linguistic strengths and dexterity inherent in historically non-dominant forms of English, and of the opportunities for translingual and intercultural exchange in the classroom.

The Math Center is a newly established department, funded through Pierce's College Spark grant award, focuses specialized support for embedded tutoring in mathematics courses. This department employs students who coordinate with instructors to facilitate independent learning via peer education. To equip our staff with the best-practice methods, they are trained in communicating mathematics through equity-centered and anti-oppressive methodologies.

Standard 2.G.1 Evidence; Pierce College Student Services and Supports

**Evidence required for Standard 2.G.1*

[Access and Disability Services](#) *

[Basic Food, Employment and Training](#) *

[Career Counseling](#) *

[Career Pathways](#) *

[Child Development Center](#) *

[College Success](#) *

[Computer Labs](#) *

[Counseling Services](#) *

[Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion \(EDI\) College Access, Retention, and Engagement Services \(CARES\)](#) *

[Financial Aid, FAFSA and WAFSA Workshops](#) *

[Guided Self Placement for Mathematics and English](#) *

[Integrated Basic Skills Education Skills Training](#) *

[Job and Career Connections](#) *

[Media Centers](#) *

[Pierce Advocacy and Resource Connections \(PARC\)](#) *

[Pierce College Foundation Scholarships](#) *

[Running Start](#) *

[Service Learning](#) *

[STAT](#) *

[Student Design Studios](#) *

Student Life [Fort Steilacoom](#) and [Puyallup](#) *

[Tutoring and Embedded Tutoring](#) *

[Veteran Resources](#) *

[WorkFirst](#) *

[Writing Center](#) *

2.G.2 CATALOG

The institution publishes in a catalog, or provides in a manner available to students and other stakeholders, current and accurate information that includes: institutional mission; admission requirements and procedures; grading policy; information on academic programs and courses, including degree and program completion requirements, expected learning outcomes, required course sequences, and projected timelines to completion based on normal student progress and the frequency of course offerings; names, titles, degrees held, and conferring institutions for administrators and full-time faculty; rules and regulations for conduct, rights, and responsibilities; tuition, fees, and other program costs; refund policies and procedures for students who withdraw from enrollment; opportunities and requirements for financial aid; and the academic calendar.

Eligibility Requirement 18 Public Information: *The institution publishes current and accurate information regarding: its mission; admission requirements and procedures; grading policy; information on academic programs and courses; names, titles, and academic credentials of administrators and faculty; rules and regulations for student conduct; rights and responsibilities of students; tuition, fees, and other program costs; refund policies and procedures; opportunities and requirements for financial aid; and the academic calendar.*

The Pierce College catalog, which is published annually using Modern Campus' Digital Architecture program Acalog, is developed through a collaborative process that is facilitated by the Vice Presidents for Learning and Student Success, the Director of Marketing and Communications, and two catalog administrators.

In alignment with the expectations of NWCCU Standard 2.G.2 and ER 18, the college provides current and accurate information about the college for students and other stakeholders, including the vision, mission and values of the district; admission requirements and related procedures; opportunities and requirements for financial aid; information about grading; various policies—including conduct, rights and responsibilities, fees and refunds; information about academic programs, courses, learning outcomes, course sequences; and information about personnel.

Mission

The vision, mission, values, and core themes, and educational philosophy—which includes the degree outcomes—are foregrounded in the About Pierce: Landscapes of Possibility section of the catalog. Major awards and work contributing to our meeting mission are also featured in this section of the catalog.

Admission Requirements and Procedures

Pierce College admissions requirements and procedures can be found on the website and in the College Catalog. The Getting Started at Pierce section of the catalog provides detailed information about admissions requirements, policies, and deadlines. Throughout the Getting Started at Pierce section, there are links out to specialty program (e.g. Dental Hygiene, Nursing, Veterinary Technology, Bachelor of Applied Science programs, and International Education) admissions requirements, policies, and deadlines.

Information pertaining to earning credits, credit hours, credit loads, credit for prior learning, transfer of credits, records and transcripts, Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), transfer rights and responsibilities, and the Inter-College Reciprocity Policy can be found in the Academic Information section of the catalog.

Tuition, Fees, Program Costs, and Refund Policies and Procedures

Alongside Pierce College's admissions requirements and procedures, information about tuition and fees can be found on the Tuition and Fees web page and in the catalog. Detailed information on tuition rates, student fees, technology fees, facilities fees, transportation and security fees, and other fees, as well as tuition and fee waivers and information relating to Veteran Affairs Educational Benefits can be found in the Getting Started at Pierce section of the catalog. Information pertaining to refund policies and procedures can also be found in the Getting Started at Pierce section of the catalog. Refund deadlines are integrated into the academic calendar and on the tuition refunds web page.

Opportunities for Financial Aid and Funding

Pierce College's catalog and website also features information about financial aid and other funding opportunities. Information about the types of funding options is listed in the catalog alongside admission and tuition information. Types of funding opportunities highlighted include grants and scholarships, waivers, work-study, loans, workforce program funding, agency funding, and Veterans Affairs Educational Benefits.

Additional information about funding opportunities, specifically the Opportunity Grant and the Job & Career Connections Center, as well as information about basic needs support can be found in the About Pierce College section of the catalog.

Grading Policy

Pierce College's grading system and academic standards, as well as information pertaining to incompletes, grades changes, grade forgiveness, withdrawals, grade appeals, and academic honors is provided in the Academic Information section of the catalog.

Academic Programs and Courses

Information on academic programs and courses can be found throughout the college catalog. The Course Maps and Programs A-Z and Course Maps and Programs by Pathway sections of the catalog provide links to each of the Career Pathway Course Maps, as well as links to program information degree requirements established by the Intercollege Relations Commission (ICRC) for transfer degrees. The Career Pathway Course Maps provide course requirements, recommendations, and their respective course purposes; advising notes; and the number of credits to complete the credential. Career Pathway Maps are available for each of the degree and certificate types offered at Pierce College. Detailed information about each course, including the description, prerequisites, distribution areas fulfilled, content, student outcomes, and degree outcomes, can be found for each course in a map by clicking on the title of the course. Detailed course information can also be found in the Course Prefix and Course Description sections of the catalog.

Program information for our Transitions Program (e.g. Pierce College Adult Diploma, Basic Education for Adults (BEEdA), English as a Second Language, and Integrated Basic Education and Skills Training (I-BEST)), and our International Education Program can also be found in the Course Maps and Programs A-Z and Course Maps by Pathway sections of the catalog.

Rules and Regulations for Conduct, Rights, and Responsibilities

The Pierce College Catalog, under the Academic Information section, includes information about conduct codes, rights, and responsibilities, as well as policies and links to more detailed information on the Student Conduct Code, Student Rights and Responsibilities, and other related conduct codes and policies on the college website. Conduct policies and codes for computer labs, the library, and the Science Dome can be found on the Pierce College website.

Academic Calendar

An abbreviated version of the academic calendar featuring key dates can be found in the Academic Information section of the catalog. This section also links out to the detailed academic calendar on the Pierce College website.

Names, Titles, Degrees Held, and Conferring Institution for Administration and Full-Time Faculty

A list of Pierce College personnel, which includes each personnel's title, degrees held, and conferring institution of those degrees, can be found in the Appendix section of the catalog. Also found in the Appendix is a glossary of terms used in the catalog and at the college, as well as a photo and video disclaimer.

Standard 2.G.2 and ER 18 Evidence

**Evidence required for Standard 2.G.2 and ER 18*

- [Mission \(catalog\); Mission \(website\)](#)
- Admission Requirements and Procedures *
 - [Admission requirements and procedure \(catalog\)](#)
 - [Admissions page \(website\)](#)
 - [Admissions policy \(website\)](#)
 - [Applied Business BAS-ABM Admission Requirements \(website\)](#)
 - [Veterinary Technology Admission](#)
 - [Homeland Security Emergency Management BAS-HSEM Admission \(website\)](#)
 - [International Education Admission \(website\)](#)
 - [Dental Hygiene BAS Admissions and Application \(website\)](#)
 - [Intensive English Program \(IEP\) Admission Information \(catalog\)](#)
 - [High School / Adult Basic Education / GED / English as a Second Language \(ESL\) Admission Information \(catalog\)](#)
- Grading Policy *
 - [Grading policy \(catalog\)](#)
 - [Grading system and policy \(website\)](#)
 - [Grading Policy \(website\)](#)

- Academic programs and courses *
 - [Degree and Course Information website](#)
 - [Course Maps and Programs A-Z](#)
 - Learning outcomes are listed on courses and in the [Degree and Course Information website](#)
- [Names, titles, degree held, and conferring institutions for administrators and FT faculty \(catalog\)](#) *
- Rules and regulations for conduct, rights, and responsibilities*
 - [Student Conduct Code policy \(website\)](#)
 - [Student Rights and Responsibilities/Student Conduct Code policy \(website\)](#)
 - [Computer Labs Code of Conduct \(website\)](#)
 - [Library Code of Conduct Policy – Fort Steilacoom \(website\)](#)
 - [Library Code of Conduct Policy – Puyallup \(website\)](#)
 - [Science Dome Code of Conduct \(website\)](#)
 - [Student Rights Information Policy \(website\)](#)
 - [Resolving Complaints, Problems, Appeals and Grievances \(website\)](#)
- Tuition, fees, and other program costs *
 - [Tuition and Fees \(website\)](#)
 - [Tuition Installment Plan \(website\)](#)
 - [Tuition – Residency Guidelines \(website\)](#)
 - [Financial Aid – Cost of Attendance \(website\)](#)
 - [Pay for College \(website\)](#)
 - [JBLM Course Fees \(website\)](#)
 - [Paying for College at JBLM \(website\)](#)
 - [International Education Tuition \(website\)](#)
- Refund policies and procedures for students who withdraw from enrollment *
 - [Tuition Refunds \(website\)](#)
 - [Tuition and Fee Refunds Policy \(website\)](#)
 - [Financial Aid Refunds \(website\)](#)
- Opportunities and requirements for financial aid *
 - [Financial Aid \(website\)](#)
 - [Apply for Financial Aid \(website\)](#)
 - [Financial Aid – Frequently Asked Questions \(website\)](#)
 - [Financial Aid – General Requirements \(website\)](#)
 - [Financial Aid – Get and Keep Your Aid \(website\)](#)
 - [Financial Aid Types \(website\)](#)
 - [Financial Aid - Loans \(website\)](#)
 - [Financial Aid – Forms \(website\)](#)
 - [Financial Aid - Costs \(website\)](#)
 - [Financial Aid Cost of Attendance \(website\)](#)
 - [Washington College Grant \(website\)](#)
 - [Pierce College Financial Aid representatives are here to help! \(website\)](#)
- Academic calendar *
 - [Academic Calendar \(website\)](#)
 - [Academic Calendar Policy \(website\)](#)

2.G.3 NOTIFICATION OF LICENSURE AND EMPLOYMENT REQUIREMENTS

Publications and other written materials that describe educational programs include accurate information on national and/or state legal eligibility requirements for licensure or entry into an occupation or profession for which education and training are offered. Descriptions of unique requirements for employment and advancement in the occupation or profession shall be included in such materials.

Licensure and entry requirements for appropriate Professional/Technical programs and descriptions of unique requirements for employment are provided to students on career pathway course map web pages. Pierce's catalog is a key information resource for students. As such, all information is accurate and is annually reviewed and updated as needed.

Certain programs offer prospective and admitted student sessions, which provide information on specialized admissions requirements for program eligibility and licensure requirements, respectively. Admission information for programs with prerequisites and other admissions requirements are published in the catalog, and on the website. College advisors discuss specialized admissions and licensure requirements with students.

Standard 2.G.3 Evidence

**Evidence required for Standard 2.G.3*

[Fire Services Leadership Management](#) Course Maps, see course maps section. *

[Early Childhood Education](#), [Paraeducation](#) and, [Teaching](#) Course Maps, see course maps section. *

[Accounting Maps](#) Pathway Course Maps, see course maps section. *

[Homeland Security Emergency Management](#) Pathway Course Maps, see course maps section

[Computer Network Engineering](#), [Data Management and Analytics](#), and [Health Information](#)

[Technology](#) Pathway Course Maps, see course maps section. *

[Nursing](#) Pathway Course Maps, see course maps section. *

[Social Services Behavioral Health](#) Pathway Course Maps, see course maps section. *

[Veterinary Technology](#) Pathway Course Maps. see course maps section. *

[Criminal Justice](#) Pathway Course Maps, see course maps section. *

[NC-SARA Licensure Disclosure](#) *

2.G.4 FINANCIAL AID PROGRAM EFFECTIVENESS AND ACCOUNTABILITY

The institution provides an effective and accountable program of financial aid consistent with its mission, student needs, and institutional resources. Information regarding the categories of financial assistance (such as scholarships, grants, and loans) is published and made available to prospective and enrolled students.

Pierce provides an effective and accountable program of financial aid consistent with its mission and student needs. Pierce helps students access financial aid funds from a variety of sources including Federal Student Aid, Washington State government resources, Pierce Foundation, institutional funds and external scholarship opportunities. Approximately 34% of Pierce students receive need-based financial aid.

Students receiving financial aid at Pierce College are notified of any repayment obligations prior to and at the time of disbursement of funding. The Pierce College Financial Aid website includes further explanation about the possibility of repayment of financial aid funding for non-attendance.

The Financial Aid website is a primary information portal for both incoming and returning students. The site provides information on scholarships and student loans, as well as traditional aid sources.

Financial Aid staff at each campus are available to assist students seeking information or clarification and assist financial aid workshops at local high schools and in the community. Pierce's Student Loans web page outlines student responsibilities and requirements associated with student loans. Students are required to complete the Federal Online Direct Student Loan Entrance Counseling at the U.S. Department of Education Student Aid website.

The College Catalog provides information on financial aid and funding opportunities and links to more in-depth resources on the Financial Aid website.

Standard 2.G.4 Evidence

**Evidence required for Standard 2.G.4*

[College Catalog Financial Aid Section](#) *

[Financial Aid](#) *

[Apply for Financial Aid](#) *

[Financial Aid – Get and Keep Your Aid](#) *

[Financial Aid Types](#) *

[Financial Aid - Loans](#) *

[Financial Aid – Forms](#) *

[Financial Aid Cost of Attendance](#) *

[U.S. Department of Education Student Aid Website](#)

2.G.5 FINANCIAL AID MONITORING

Students receiving financial assistance are informed of any repayment obligations. The institution regularly monitors its student loan programs and publicizes the institution's loan default rate on its website.

Students receiving financial aid at Pierce College are notified of any repayment obligations prior to and at the time of disbursement of funding. The Pierce College Financial Aid website includes further explanation about the possibility of repayment of financial aid funding for non-attendance.

Students are notified of loan repayment obligations when they accept their loans through ctLink. Additionally, they are notified of repayment obligations and where they can view their loan history on the Direct Loan Disbursement Notification that is emailed to the student at the time of disbursement.

Students who have graduated, are attending less than half time status, or who are no longer attending Pierce College are sent a notice to complete Direct Loan Exit Counseling at Federal Student Aid.

Pierce's draft cohort default rate is published by the United States Department of Education every February with final rates published in September. Pierce's 2018 three-year official cohort default rate is 9.5%. Pierce College contracts services through ECMC, a default prevention servicer. ECMC monitors the loan repayment cohorts (both the current year and next year's cohort) and conducts outreach to students who are more than 60 days delinquent on their loan payments.

Standard 2.G.5 Evidence

**Evidence required for Standard 2.G.5*

[Loan Default Rate](#) *

[Financial Aid - Satisfactory Progress](#), see official and unofficial withdrawals under the definition section for repayment due to non-attendance.

2.G.6 ACADEMIC ADVISEMENT

The institution designs, maintains and evaluates a systematic and effective program of academic advisement to support student development and success. Personnel responsible for advising students are knowledgeable of the curriculum, program and graduation requirements, and are adequately prepared to successfully fulfill their responsibilities. Advising requirements and responsibilities of advisors are defined, published, and made available to students.

Advising Practices, Requirements, and Responsibilities Information

Our website is often the first connection for our prospective students and central resource for current students seeking information regarding instruction, student services, and more. As such, we provide detailed information on our advising process as well as information on how to connect with an advisor for in-person, email, phone, or virtual meetings. Our website provides information on our advising philosophy, the advising responsibilities of students and advisor; how advising works; transfer institution resources; academic credit for prior learning; and a list of advisors at Puyallup and Fort Steilacoom campuses. Students are able to access information on curriculum, program, and graduation requirements in the Pierce College Catalog.

As documented on our How Advising Works webpage, student success coaches collaborate with faculty counselor advisors and faculty mentor advisors to ensure students are knowledgeable and supported in identifying, entering, progressing in, and completing a career pathway. Career Pathways is the name selected by our students for Pierce College's rebranding of Guided Pathways, in which each student enters a discipline pathway with a recommended course sequence that can be adjusted to each student's unique learning needs and goals. Students are connected with their student success coach through the induction process that includes an online orientation and an intake appointment to build a relationship and an understanding of each student's unique needs. Students identify a career pathway and build a degree plan using an intentionally designed map that identifies courses and key activities to guide toward completion. Student success coaches and others in the student's network maintain connection through direct communication and the use of Starfish, the student success technology platform, which provides on-demand degree progress as well as communication tools for students, faculty, and staff.

Academic Advisement Design and Evaluation

We regularly review overarching metrics, such as graduation rates and student persistence rates, to evaluate the effectiveness of our advising program. We have set a trajectory by 2027 to achieve 75% fall to fall retention and 50% of students graduate with a degree or certificate within 150% of the time. Despite improvements to remove barriers and put students on a path of success (e.g., guided self-placement, supplemental instruction) since 2016 we have seen limited improvements for our students. Disaggregated graduation and retention data shows we have gaps in serving our marginalized students. To dig deeper in understanding our areas of growth, specifically within our program of academic advising and student services, we employed InsideTrack, to lead an assessment on our student success structures in 2021. The assessment by InsideTrack helped us identify 15 action items to move our student success structures to be inclusive and to center Black and Brown student excellence. In response to the assessment, and in order to tackle these action items, Pierce is actively working to implement both structural and cultural changes to our advising practices.

Included within 2.G.6 evidence is an example of our first phase of restructuring student services in response to the action item of implementing a coordinated advising structure with holistic student supports that focuses on impacting areas of inequity.

Advisor Training and Preparation

One of our strongest resources in assisting advisors and students in understanding curriculum and graduation requirements are our 100+ Career Pathway Maps designed by faculty and reviewed by advisors. The maps provide a clear path for completion of degrees and certificates by listing relevant courses to the program and career. Each map is designed with the appropriate number of credits and meets certificate or degree requirements. The courses are organized in a recommended sequence to support ease in setting part-time and full-time schedules. From information about entrance considerations and degree plans, to articulated transfer institutions and prospective careers, the maps provide an effective tool outlining the mobility between Pierce College and other institutions.

To build a strong advising foundation, our student success coaches participate in a four-week onboarding process that includes in-person and online training that focuses on building networks with the student support and instructional departments; use of advising tools and technology; and development of culturally sustaining advising practices that centers racial equity in navigating the Pierce College experiences. Advising training and resources are centrally located for all advisors on our advising central intranet website.

Faculty mentor advisor training occurs during the tenure process. Mentoring/advising is one of the nine evaluated elements defined by the Board of Trustees. Tenure committee members are responsible for fostering tenure candidates' mentoring/advising professional growth and development. Tenure committee members support the tenure-track faculty member's growth by offering a wide variety of learning opportunities that may include shadowing advising appointments, recommending trainings, and sharing advising materials. Tenure candidate observations of mentoring/advising appointments are used to evaluate and provide professional growth feedback for candidates' continued growth in supporting students. Typically, new tenure-track faculty members are not assigned students to mentor until after the first year of tenure. The exception to this standard would be for faculty counselor advisors, faculty mental health counselors, and professional-technical programs. Faculty mental health counselors focus on supporting student mental wellness and do not carry a student academic advising load. Faculty counselor advisors and professional-technical faculty, where there are limited faculty members to support student mentorship, are introduced to training and skill development for student advising and mentoring with the support of the tenure committee and the full-time faculty members of the associated department at the start of tenure.

District-wide meetings are one strategy for ensuring staff maintain currency in the curriculum, program and graduation requirements, and other key information to support students in their success. District All Advisor Meetings are for all employees who are engaged in advising, for example, faculty mentor advisors, faculty counselor advisors, student success coaches, International Education advisors, program support specialists, and job career connection specialists. District Student Success Coach Meetings offer the opportunity for all student success coaches across the district to come together. Additionally, there are campus-based advising meetings for Fort Steilacoom, Puyallup, and JBLM. These advising meetings, alongside the all-advising listerv, are opportunities to share information, professional development opportunities, and important updates advising staff should be aware of.

Standard 2.G.6 Evidence

**Evidence required for Standard 2.G.6*

Published Advising Information: Advising and Advocacy - [Philosophy and Outcomes](#); [Advising Responsibilities](#); [How Advising Works](#); [Advising \(catalog\)](#) *

[Online New Student Orientation](#) *

Advising Training Resources: [Starfish Training \(employees\)](#) *; [Starfish Training \(students\)](#) *

[Academic Advisement and Design: InsideTrack 15 Action Items](#) *

[Academic Advisement and Design: Student Services Transformation for Equitable Student Success](#)*

[Student Services Reorganization Chart](#)

[Student Services Professional Development Day Agenda](#) *

[District All Advisor Meeting Agendas and Minutes](#) *

[Advising Training Resources on Canvas](#) *

[Advising Central - Advisor Training and Resources Website copy](#) *

2.G.7 DISTANCE EDUCATION IDENTITY VERIFICATION PROCESS

The institution maintains an effective identity verification process for students enrolled in distance education courses and programs to establish that the student enrolled in such a course or program is the same person whose achievements are evaluated and credentialed. The institution ensures that the identity verification process for distance education students protects student privacy and that students are informed, in writing at the time of enrollment, of current and projected charges associated with the identity verification process.

Pierce maintains an effective identity verification process for students enrolled in eLearning courses to establish that the student enrolled is the same person whose achievements are evaluated and credentialed. This process requires students to set up their ctCLink account (student management system) by creating a password and selecting security questions, as an added layer of protection. The ctCLink account is then used to access Canvas, the district's closed and secured online learning management system. A multi-factor identity verification process to access Canvas includes a series of personal identification questions by email or phone.

All courses at Pierce College include the use of our learning management system. As such all courses that support student progress in completing an associate or bachelor's degree include an online fee. An itemized list of fees is provided to students during enrollment. Students are also able to see fee costs using our quarterly tuition calculator. There are no student fees for identify verification.

Standard 2.G.7 Evidence

[Quarterly Tuition Calculator](#)

2.H.1 ACCESS AND SUFFICIENCY OF LIBRARY AND INFORMATION RESOURCES

Consistent with its mission, the institution employs qualified personnel and provides access to library and information resources with a level of currency, depth, and breadth sufficient to support and sustain the institution's mission, programs, and services.

Eligibility Requirement (ER) 14 Library and Information Resources: *Consistent with its mission, the institution employs qualified personnel and provides access to library and information resources with a level of currency, depth, and breadth sufficient to support and sustain the institution's mission, programs, and services.*

Pierce provides access to quality library and information resources that support the district's mission, Core Themes, programs and services. This is accomplished by:

1. Maintaining a collection of relevant print and electronic information resources with appropriate levels of currency, depth, and breadth to engage students in the ideas that emerge in the classroom and district programming;
2. Ensuring quality facilities that encourage interaction with information and active collaboration with fellow students;
3. Employing highly qualified faculty and staff who provide integrated instruction in research methods and services that support and promote inquiry and information competency.

The library is guided by our mission, a comprehensive set of ever-evolving policies, and our values of Access, Adaptability, Authenticity, Collaborative Learning, and Community-Focus. With approximately 77,000 square feet at Fort Steilacoom and Puyallup, the library provides information-rich environments for Pierce College's diverse community. The two facilities operate as "one library" with a common set of policies, procedures, and oversight by one dean. This structure provides students with streamlined, seamless, and consistent information access, through robust electronic resources, online research guides, chat services, and interlibrary loan resources.

Collections

The library collections offer a rich variety of relevant and current print and electronic resources strategically selected to support Pierce College's courses, programs and degrees. Current collections include 140,248 physical items (books, serials, DVDs), 150,221 ebooks and serials, and 100 databases. All resources are discoverable through an online catalog.

The library faculty and staff regularly select, review, and assess use of resources guided by the Collection Development Policy. The library's collection development is driven by its Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) goals. In 2021-22, the library developed a method for assessing the collection using an EDI framework in support of the Pierce College's Intercultural Engagement Core Ability.

Library faculty serve on curriculum committees and liaise with assigned academic divisions to ensure that selection is informed by academic programs and work closely with discipline faculty to select materials that maximize student potential to further broaden their knowledge of subjects presented in the curriculum.

Over the last seven years, the library has continued to dedicate more budget dollars to electronic resources for students. Because of this strong online presence, the library is particularly able to support our active duty military population, regardless of geographic location, as well other students who work, have other responsibilities or life circumstances that may restrict their onsite use of the library. In addition, the library's strong collection of ebooks and online databases proved critical to supporting our students academically when classes went remote in 2020.

The library achieves cost-efficient access to resources by participating in several state consortia for materials purchasing and shared discovery systems operation. These consortia also help maintain an effective and efficient interlibrary loan operation. Moreover, the library partners with other departments (e.g., Veterans Center, Running Start, and TRIO) and the Pierce College Foundation to provide creative alternatives for students unable to purchase textbooks. By removing barriers to continued education, these varied ways for students to access collections and technology have a significant impact on student retention and success.

Library Facilities and Personnel

With a proactive faculty and staff providing a welcoming environment, convenient operating hours, and a wide array of furniture and equipment to provide study or work possibilities, the library facilities are themselves a key element of student engagement and learning. These spaces are designed to encourage students to work together. Prior to the pandemic closures, combined gate counts for the libraries were over 300,000 annually.

The library encourages and supports participation in professional development. Both faculty and staff participate and present papers and workshops at local, national, and international conferences about teaching and learning, information literacy, open education, and student engagement.

The library is sufficiently staffed with highly qualified personnel to support the college mission. The library employs Circulation Supervisors at both campuses as well as full- and part-time technical services professionals; seven full-time tenured faculty librarians with MLIS degrees; and five part-time faculty librarians with MLIS degrees.

The library consistently evaluates its functions through department and staff meetings and action plans, including reference, instruction, technical services, and collection development. Action plans are evaluated each June. New plans are developed with reference to institutional priorities, student and employee needs, and library developments. Faculty librarians and staff incorporate institutional and individual goals into their annual Professional Growth and Development plans. Library faculty regularly review the collection and databases for both content and cost, making recommendations for improvement. Data are collected from gate counts, use/browse statistics of print resources, eBook and periodical database collections, reference desk transactions, library instruction sessions, the Employee Climate Survey, and student surveys such as the Community College Survey of Student Engagement. The collected information is systematically analyzed and used in planning, providing the library with regular opportunities to evaluate and continuously improve.

Standard 2.H.1 and ER 14 Evidence

**Evidence required for Standard 2.H.1 and ER 14*

[Library Main Page](#)

[Library Mission](#)

[Library Policies](#) *

[Library Online Catalog](#)

[Collection Development and Materials Selection Policy](#) *

[Library Diversity Statement](#)

[Library Resources for Faculty](#)

[Student Technology Loans](#)

[Library Personnel](#) *

2.I.1 LEARNING AND WORKING ENVIRONMENTS TO MEET MISSION

Consistent with its mission, the institution creates and maintains physical facilities that are accessible, safe, secure, and sufficient in quantity and quality to ensure healthful learning and working environments that support and sustain the institution's mission, academic programs, and services.

Eligibility Requirement (ER) 15 Physical and Technology Infrastructure: The institution provides the facilities, equipment, and information technology infrastructure necessary to fulfill and sustain its mission and maintain compliance with all federal and applicable state and local laws. The institution's planning includes emergency preparedness and contingency planning for continuity and recovery of operations should catastrophic events significantly interrupt normal institutional operations.

Facilities Infrastructure

Pierce College's Fort Steilacoom and Puyallup Campuses sit on 146-acre and 123-acre sites, respectively. Pierce occupies office spaces and shares classrooms maintained by the US Army in the consolidated education centers at Joint Base Lewis McCord. Classes are also taught in classrooms located at Graham-Kapowsin High School and Spanaway Lake High School. These instructional spaces are operated and maintained by the respective high schools.

The Fort Steilacoom campus is undergoing two significant renovations and opening a new building. June 2022 is the anticipated completion date of the Glacier Building. Glacier will offer 39,000 square feet of space to house our Dental Hygiene and Veterinarian Technician Programs. We are on target with completion of renovating 21,000 square feet of the first floor of the Cascade Building for the Emergency Medical Services program in June 2023. Finally, 38,800 square feet of the Olympic South Building will be renovated for Early Childhood Education, Fine Arts, and an Extension Program with Central Washington University.

For the Puyallup campus, a new 54,000 square feet Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) building is set for completion in December 2024. These new facilities demonstrate Pierce’s commitment and ability to offer quality learning environments to students and to enhance opportunities to meet Pierce’s mission.

Table 1. Listing of Existing Pierce College Buildings by Name, Construction Year, and Size.
(Fort Steilacoom Campus (FS) and Puyallup Campus (PY))

Location	Building	Year of Construction	Gross Square Feet
FS	Maintenance Shop	1957	3,264
FS	Cascade	1973	249,384
FS	Health Education Facility	1973	45,539
FS	Barn	1974	900
FS	Olympic South	1976	38,800
FS	Large Animal Barn	1992	4,800
FS	Maintenance Shop	1992	5,900
FS	Sunrise	1998	11,700
FS	Olympic North	2000	25,160
FS	International House	2000	2,652
FS	Milgard Child Development Center	2005	9,900
FS	Rainier	2010	80,645
PY	Gaspard Administration	1990	41,500
PY	Brouillet Library Science Center	1997	55,000
PY	Maintenance Shop	1997	1,636
PY	Portable Facility	1999	2,688
PY	College Center	2004	57,000
PY	Garnero Child Development Center	2006	7,735
PY	Health Education Center	2008	16,636
PY	Arts & Allied Health	2010	61,597

Facilities Planning

The Facilities and Safety Council is charged with developing, reviewing, and evaluating facilities plans and policy recommendations; and setting direction for district wide facilities and safety in accordance with the vision, mission, values, Core Abilities, and strategic direction of the district.

The facilities master plans for Fort Steilacoom (completed October 2020) and Puyallup (Pending review and acceptance by the City of Puyallup) guide the planning for the renovation and construction of facilities. The plans represent strategic visioning to ensure that Pierce is planning, preserving and constructing facilities that support the mission, vision, values, and core themes of the institution.

Pierce maintains an Emergency Management Plan, a Continuity of Operations Plan, and COVID-19 Pandemic Safety Plan. Changes in personnel and addition of new buildings has prompted the Emergency Management and Continuity of Operations plans to be updated in 2022 and 2023, respectively.

Facilities Maintenance

The Facilities and Operations Department is responsible for maintenance and preservation of all physical resources. A computerized maintenance management system is used to monitor and assign routine and preventive maintenance work orders. Employees may submit online work requests as needed, and the Facilities and Operations Department tracks response time and work order completion rate.

Facilities and Operations Department staff are skilled with a wide range of technical abilities allowing Pierce to perform most maintenance and repairs. Some specialized maintenance and repair and servicing of specialized mechanical equipment such as elevator repairs, building controls upgrades, and annual inspections of fire detection and suppression systems is contracted.

Facilities Safety and Security

Pierce College makes provisions for the safety and security of students, employees and visitors and its property at all locations, including off-campus sites through campus resources and agreements with respective site managers.

The Director of Campus Safety supervises Campus Safety personnel and is also responsible for implementing the college's Emergency Management Plan. Campus Safety is staffed by a non-commissioned force of 14 full-time officers and approximately eight part-time officers, depending on specific needs for special events and activities. Campus Safety Officers are present on campus 24 hours per day, 365 days per year. Campus Security Officers are First Aid, CPR, AED, and emergency response trained.

The Behavioral Intervention and Threat Assessment Team (BITA) is responsible for assessing and responding to reports of concerning behaviors of students, employees or others that may affect the college community. BITA's primary focus is to provide support for individuals through referrals to internal and external resources while addressing threats to, and safety of, the college community.

In the event of an emergency, weather delays, and campus closure Pierce College sends communications using the emergency message system in classrooms and public spaces; posts information on the college's homepage; and messages through the opt-in Emergency Notification System that allows subscribers to receive emergency notifications via phone, email or text.

All campus safety and security incidents are tracked through the Report Exec record's management system. The college complies with sex offender notification procedures and reporting requirements of the Clery Act.

Occupational Health Safety

Safety Committee operations are outlined on the Occupational Safety and Health website. We have three campus-based Safety Committees that provide a forum for employees to bring occupational health and safety concerns to the attention of the college and to provide recommendations for abating workplace hazards.

Our Accident Prevention Program implements the procedures necessary to carry out the Safety, Health and Accident Prevention policy, and to comply with both Washington State and federal safety regulations. Supplemental accident prevention plans, programs, and policies address occupational hazards that are specific to the workplace. When needed, a job hazard analysis is conducted to determine the type of supplemental accident prevention program needed. The Hazard Communication Program and the Confined Space Program are examples of supplemental programs that exist at Pierce College. The current version of the Pierce College District Accident Prevention Program and supplemental programs are available on the college's Occupational Safety and Health site.

Hazardous Waste Disposal

As stated in Pierce College's Hazardous Materials policy the use, storage, and disposal of hazardous materials (HAZMAT) is conducted in accordance with Washington Administrative Code (WAC) chapter 296-800 (Safety and Health Core Rules) and its sub-chapter 296-843 (Hazardous Waste Operations). The code outlines all regulations and procedures (federal and state) applicable to HAZMAT environments and employees working with or exposed to HAZMAT.

Pierce files annual reports for Fort Steilacoom and Puyallup campuses with the Washington State Department of Ecology that details compliance with regulations for the safe use, storage and disposal of hazardous or toxic materials. Both campuses participate in annual fire inspections during which storage and labeling issues surrounding hazardous materials are addressed.

Facilities Accessibility

At each campus we have an Access and Disability Services Office (ADS). Our inclusive learning spaces include student access to adaptive equipment such as adjustable chairs and tables, use of ADA compliant learning platforms and software, and access to assistive technology software.

Our facilities department is responsible for annual assessment and maintenance of building signage, and American with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessible doors, bathrooms, ramps, and other areas. ADA accommodations for classes and on-campus events are managed through our Access and Disability Services Office. If the request involves an adjustment to campus facilities, our Access and Disability Services Office works with the Director of Facilities and Operations and staff to ensure compliance.

Pierce's Human Resources Office (HR) works with supervisors and employees regarding employee-specific ergonomic issues or needs for temporary and permanent reasonable accommodations.

Information Technology (IT) Infrastructure

In alignment with the College mission, values, and core themes, the Information Technology (IT) department provides students, faculty, and staff a variety of technologies and comprehensive support to enrich student learning and success. The IT department is committed to supporting the college mission of becoming an anti-racist institution by creating an inclusive, equitable, and accessible technology environment for students, faculty, and staff, both on and off campus.

The IT department is organized into four core service areas:

1. Infrastructure Services: Wired and Wireless Networks, Telecommunications, Datacenter Power, Infrastructure, and Network Security.
2. Systems Administration and Customer Support: Cloud and On-Premises Server Administration, Data Backups, Enterprise Applications, Client Services, Help Desk.
3. Enterprise IT Services: Project Management, Web and Application Development, Database Management, Data and Systems Integrations, AV/Media, Print Shop Services, Software Licensing.
4. Office of the CIO: Budgeting, Purchasing, Switchboard/Call Center.

Network and Infrastructure

The Computer Information Systems Resources Policy guides network use for students, faculty, and staff.

Pierce has a 10 Gbps network backbone directly connected to the Washington State K-20 network and other enterprise providers like Comcast and Century Link/WINDSTREAM, providing internet access at all campus sites. Our current bandwidth is 1 Gbps at Fort Steilacoom (FS) and Puyallup (PY). These two sites are connected through a 500 MB fiber optic circuit. The ability to reach the internet from geographically separate but connected locations creates a redundant system that provides failover capabilities for all sites, ensuring students, faculty, and staff have access to their data. Our Joint Base Lewis McChord (JBLM) sites are connected via 500MB fiber connections and routers that allow secure access to our network.

Our network is secured through Next Generation Firewalls and other security devices based on Washington State Office of the Chief Information Officer security standards. This allows for secure Virtual Private Networking access for faculty and staff, which addresses the significantly increased demand for remote access brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Server and Cloud Administration

To support end-user computing environment, Pierce upgrades and enhances the datacenters at both FS and PY with a hybrid approach of combining traditional three-tier on-premises server infrastructure with cloud Software as a Service (SaaS) and Infrastructure as a Service (IaaS) models. This allows the virtualization of 160 virtual servers across eight physical machines. The multi-center hybrid approach improves speed and flexibility in deploying, accessing, and supporting current and future academic and support programs and operational functions.

Information Technology Planning

Pierce's 2015 – 2020 Technology Strategy Plan ensures effective technology is infused throughout the district to support efforts in meeting mission. With the onset of COVID-19 and the announced retirement of then CIO, updating the technology strategy plan was extended in order to prioritize the support of students, faculty, and staff with day-to-day technology needs, modality shifts, and core infrastructure modifications to support a fully remote teaching, learning, and administrative environment.

The 2023-2028 Technology Strategy Plan is under development with the first focus on examining the charge, purpose, scope, and membership of the Technology Council. The council has updated its purpose and scope to be more purposeful in addressing and removing areas of racial inequity with our information technology policies and practices.

Accessibility Information Technology

Our Accessible Technology Policy is designed to provide an inclusive and equitable environment for students and employees by specifying the procurement, development, and implementation of accessible software and hardware. One of the Technology Council's work plan items for 2022 is reviewing this policy and creating in-depth procedures for continuing to infuse accessibility using technology throughout the college.

Cyber Security

To support our Computer Information Systems Resources Policy, the IT Security team is responsible for monitoring and mitigating cyber threats; communicating and educating the campus community on how to avoid compromising their computer systems from malware; supplying product and information updates; and seeking ways to improve service.

Resiliency and Continuity of Operations

Currently, the IT department's data backup plan consists of several layers of redundancy that uses a combination of fast local disk storage, physical tape, and cloud storage to achieve comprehensive protection from data loss. This multi-layered approach ensures data recovery windows are as short as possible while still having significant backup data retention. On-campus fast disk backup repositories allow for quick recovery of individual files, folders, or entire virtual servers. Offline physical tape storage prevents malicious or accidental alteration, deletion, or corruption of the backups. Physical tape allows us to maintain at least two years' worth of data retention. Cloud storage provides real-time disaster recovery in the event of a major catastrophe.

Equipment Replacement

IT maintains and replaces technology based on current industry standards while planning for future needs and capabilities. The Pierce IT replacement plan is based on the WAOCIO standards and best practices; and the Washington State Equipment Guide that aligns with the State Administrative & Accounting Manual 30.50. Hardware assets are replaced on a predefined recurring cycle that is annually reviewed as part of the budget planning process. Resources are routinely reviewed and reallocated to ensure that the network remains sufficiently robust to serve the needs of students, faculty, and staff.

Made possible through the generosity of students, computers in all labs are replaced on our standard replacement schedule of four years using Student Technology Fee funds. Over the past three years, students have allocated approximately \$2.8 million towards computer replacements and modern technology equipment that supports student access and success.

Information Technology User Support

IT currently supports over 4,000 computing devices across all business units, 95 student computer labs or spaces with five or more computers, and 123 smart/enhanced classrooms including classrooms at two satellite campus locations. To support these users, the IT department staffs a Help Desk an average of 13 hours per workday to serve as a single point of contact for technology needs.

The Help Desk supports the Student Technology Assistance Team (STAT), the student-focused technology support team who help students with accessing and using technology to be successful in their coursework. STAT members are available to assist students in building computer skills and troubleshoot common questions involving, but not limited to, Canvas, student email, ctcLink, and Wi-Fi. STAT members can assist students over the phone, and virtually through video conferencing and email, in addition to our physical computer labs, which are open to students who may not have access to technology, software, or reliable internet to ensure all students can be successful in their coursework. STAT works closely with other departments around the college to provide embedded classroom support and expertise when requested.

Students and faculty have access to technology support related to our learning management system, Canvas. During normal business hours, they can communicate with eLearning staff via phone, email, or web meeting tools. After hours, Pierce leverages resources by joining a SBCTC contract that enables students and faculty to receive nearly 24/7 response to technology inquiries about Canvas.

Classroom Information Technology

All classroom instructional desks are equipped with a computing device, document camera, media player, and high-definition projector that support the teaching and learning environment. This allows for visual presentations, web browsing, video streaming, viewing optical media content, and other methods to deliver education effectively. All campuses have several HyFlex classrooms that provide tools for students and faculty to connect and collaborate physically and virtually.

Student Access to Information Technology

Students have access to computer labs and the ability to checkout technology, including a large fleet of Windows based laptops, Chromebooks, wireless hotspots, and calculators from the library, funded by the Student Technology Loan Program.

The Student Technology Loan Program began in 2016 as a pilot that outfitted each library with 10 laptops for short-term checkout. Exponential growth in demand for off-campus Internet and computer access led to the funding of over 90 Chromebooks and 60 Wi-Fi hotspots for our quarterly borrowing program. As we tracked the usage of the program, the demand far outpaced the number of devices available, so we continued to add more Chromebooks and wireless hotspots to the checkout fleet. In spring 2020, during the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the push for remote learning, along with exacerbated financial and systemic barriers to technology access, necessitated a drastic increase in the available devices. Through the pandemic, the student loan fleet grew to well over 500 devices, including the addition of 150 Windows based laptops to support student learning in academic fields that use specialized software that is not supported by Chromebooks, older computers, or mobile devices. As we have continued through the pandemic and as students returned to campus for in-person learning and support, demand for devices has not decreased. For the upcoming 2022-2023 academic year, the library has requested another \$235,000 to increase and continue supporting the Student Technology Loan Program.

On campus students have access to approximately 1,971 computers located in key areas throughout the district. General purpose computer labs, classrooms, and libraries provide access to a basic suite of general computer software applications. Specialized software is provided and supported by IT for many instructional programs such as Computer Network Engineering, Digital Design, Astronomy, and Business Information Technology.

Open computer labs are available to students 62 hours a week in Puyallup and 83.5 hours per week at Fort Steilacoom. The computer labs and design studios offer a wide variety of services and instruction. During open hours, lab personnel provide students with individualized assistance. Prior to the COVID pandemic, student lab usage across the district averaged upwards of 30,000 users throughout an academic year.

Standard 2.I.1 and ER 15 Evidence:

**Evidence required for Standard 2.I.1 and ER 15*

Facilities Master Plan

[Fort Steilacoom Master Building Plan](#) *

[Pierce College Puyallup Master Building Plan](#) * and [SR 161 Safety Analysis](#) *

[Technology Plan 2015-2020](#) *

[Equipment \(Technology\) Replacement Plan](#) *

[State Administrative and Accounting Manual \(SAAM\)](#)

Policies and Procedures for Accessible, Safe, and Secure Facilities

[Accessible Technology Policy](#) *

[Access and Disability Services website](#) *

[Annual Security and Fire Safety Report and Daily Crime/Fire Log](#) *

[Behavioral Intervention and Threat Assessment \(BITA\)](#) *

[Continuity of Operations Procedure \(COOP\)](#) *

[COVID-19 Planning and Information](#) *

[Emergency Response Plan](#) *

[Emergency Notification System](#) *

[Human Resources Workplace Accommodations Website Copy](#) *

[Occupational Safety and Health Website Copy](#) *

[Safety, Health and Accident Prevention Policy](#) *

[Safety and Security Awareness/Crime Prevention Programs](#) *

[Sex Offender Notification Procedure](#) *

Use, Storage, and Disposal of Hazardous Waste

[Hazardous Materials Policy](#) *

[WAC 296-800 Safety and Health Core Rules](#)

[WAC 296-843 Safety Standards for Hazardous Waste](#)

Additional Evidence

[Computer Information Systems Resources Policy](#)

[Student Technology Assistance Team \(STAT\)](#)

[Student Technology Loan Program](#)

[Technology Council Purpose and Scope](#)

MOVING FORWARD

A critical focus of our continued work as we prepare for Year 7 and our accreditation visit is to build an anti-racist institution through bravery, care, and purpose, to address areas of inequity and dismantle barriers for students, employees, and community members. Focal points for dismantling barriers to equity include:

- Reviewing, re-envisioning, and restructuring the tenure and post-tenure processes, applying principles learned from our participation in the Racial Equity Leadership Academy.
- Implementing and scaling inclusive pedagogy work (currently underway through our Achieving the Dream work, the Equitable Teaching and Learning Essentials (ETLE) program, and Targeted Skills Training (TST)) (see standards 2.F.2 and 2.G.1 for more information).
- Redesigning organizational structures to un-silo and to ensure our work centers and supports Black and Brown student excellence.
- Re-envisioning a process, intake form, and new student guide that 1) supports students, specifically Black and Brown students as they begin their journey at Pierce College; 2) uses disaggregated data to learn more about our incoming students and their needs; and 3) provides students resources they can use throughout their journey at the college.

Extensive use of data is a key tool in implementing system changes that dismantle and remove barriers to student success. It has been our practice to disaggregate and widely share data across the district for decision-making and allocation of resources. Our enterprise data conversion to ctcLink, which uses PeopleSoft data systems, has negatively impacted the ease of access to data. As we expand our knowledge and refine our use of PeopleSoft, we can once again expand our data set, including quantitative and qualitative data to focus on our marginalized and minoritized students such as Black males and single parents where data reveals equity gaps.

Another important tool to support our equity work is Guided Pathways, which we call Career Pathways, which is rooted in equitable and antiracist practices. Guided Pathways, as originally envisioned, is largely an equity-driven model, to clarify pathways, get students on a pathway, keep them on a pathway, and ensure student learning.

Similarly, over the last several years, our learning and program/discipline assessments have been evolving to ensure that equity and antiracism are embedded in the fabric of our assessment processes. This work will be carried forward as we go into our Year Seven reporting, visit, and beyond.

Last, our change management strategies will continue. Over the course of the last three years, Pierce College has experienced several major changes in our Executive Team membership:

- Two new presidents in 2018 and 2019
- Departure of our chief information officer (CIO) and the arrival of a new CIO
- Departure of our vice president for administrative services and finance (VPAS) and the arrival of our new VPAS.
- Retirement of a vice president of learning and student success (VPLSS) at Fort Steilacoom and the arrival of our new VPLSS at Fort Steilacoom
- The departure of the Puyallup president and appointment of both an interim President and an interim VPLSS at Puyallup.
- The upcoming retirement of our chancellor and CEO and an eventual incoming chancellor and CEO.

In addition to key personnel changes, we experienced a major shift in the administrative systems in which we work. In addition to the implementation of PeopleSoft (the administrative software that supports students, faculty, and staff in a variety of ways from registration to maintaining human resources and payroll information), we have implemented Starfish (a student success program that is used to build customized educational plans and connect students to the resources needed to support their success), Curriculog (a curriculum management program), and Acalog (a catalog management program). Each of these shifts took place, in great part, during the pandemic. Though the shifts to Curriculog and Acalog are complete and fully-scaled, we are still navigating complexities created by our shift to PeopleSoft and working to leverage the tools to best support our students and staff. Similarly, we are refining the use of Starfish to best support our students, particularly our Black and Brown students.

Amidst continual change, including a global health pandemic and long-overdue racial reckoning, we have pivoted as we strive to center equity and build an antiracist institution. Ultimately, our commitment to becoming an antiracist institution, striving for racial equity by eliminating areas of inequity, scaling, holistic student advising and inclusive pedagogies, and celebrating all students with a focus on Black and Brown excellence is foundational to meeting mission.