

# FACCCCTS

## The Data Crisis Everyone's Talking About

A Closer Look at How  
Metrics, Mandates, and  
Misinformation Shape  
Higher Education Today

## Faculty Power in Action

From Membership to  
Movement

## Beyond the Classroom

Preparing for Retirement

**FACCC EI**  
**Welcomes Mt. SAC**





1823 11<sup>th</sup> Street  
Sacramento, CA 95811  
TEL 916.447.8555 | FAX 916.447.0726  
info@facc.org

FACCCCTS, Fall 2025, published by the Faculty Association of California Community Colleges, 1823 11<sup>th</sup> Street, Sacramento, CA 95811. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to FACCC, 1823 11<sup>th</sup> Street, Sacramento, CA 95811. Copyright 2025 by the Faculty Association of California Community Colleges and the Faculty Association of California Community Colleges Education Institute. All rights reserved.

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## MISSION

To inform, educate, empower, and advocate for faculty in service to students and the communities of California.

## VISION

An educational environment that is equitable, accessible, and appropriately funded led by a diverse and empowered faculty.

Every faculty a member, every member an advocate, every advocate informed.

## EDUCATION INSTITUTE MISSION

The policy institute that enhances teaching and learning through research, communication, and professional development opportunities for community college faculty.

## VALUES

We value the expertise, experience, and professionalism of all faculty, full-time and part-time, as the primary force for advancing the mission of California Community Colleges.

We value students and the significance of the student-faculty relationship and the opportunity to foster mutual growth and success.

We value diverse voices, perspectives, and cultures of both students and faculty in the quest for social justice and equity.

We value community colleges as a driving force for economic growth, social cohesion, and opportunities for personal advancement for all Californians.

We value collegiality and a working environment that recognizes the importance of all organizational and personal voices in serving students.

We value the growth and development of all faculty members as professionals in service of their communities, their institutions, and their students.

## FOR THE RECORD

It is FACCCCTS' policy to correct errors promptly. Please notify Content Director Ashley Hamilton of any errors at [ahamilton@facc.org](mailto:ahamilton@facc.org)

## FACCCCTS

Editor  
Ashley Hamilton  
ahamilton@facc.org

## FACCC STAFF

Stephanie Goldman  
Executive Director  
sgoldman@facc.org

Lidia Stoian  
Director of Program and Development  
lstoian@facc.org

Ashley Hamilton  
Content Director  
ahamilton@facc.org

Soni Huynh  
Operations Coordinator  
shuynh@facc.org

Martin Orea  
Communications Coordinator  
morea@facc.org

Wendy Brill-Wynkoop  
Membership Engagement Coordinator  
wbrillwynkoop@facc.org

## GENERAL INQUIRIES

EMAIL: info@facc.org

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# FACCCCTS

FALL 2025

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# FACCC as a Movement, Not Just a Membership

By Stephanie Goldman, FACCC Executive Director

**When people ask me what FACCC *does*, I can give a quick answer: We advocate. We educate. We collaborate. But what we *are*, that's something more profound.** FACCC is not just a professional association or advocacy organization. It's a faculty-powered movement working to ensure that California's community colleges remain places where quality public higher education, academic freedom, and shared governance still matter.

Membership is critical to sustaining this work. It keeps our programs running, supports staff and operations, and funds the strategic advocacy for which we're known in Sacramento and beyond. However, if we limit

our vision to simple transactions like joining, paying dues, and receiving benefits, we miss the mark of what FACCC is. A movement doesn't begin and end with a membership form. It grows when people step up and shape what comes next.

Behind the scenes, we are constantly working to build up the faculty's power. We do this by working with our student partners, labor organizations, and other stakeholders who share our values. Whether it's standing together on budget requests and legislation or sharing each other's campaigns on social media, we're stronger when we work in partnership.

We also ensure faculty voices play a key role in every public conversation relating to community colleges and higher education. Through our press releases, interviews, and publications, FACCC ensures that policymakers hear directly from educators.

As an organization, we don't want to be seen just as speaking on behalf of faculty; instead, we want to be the ones to grab the microphone.



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The most important part is our connection to you, the faculty in the trenches. Whether through town halls, campus visits, committee work, or informal check-ins, we’re building a powerful network. Faculty stories and experiences are imperative in advocacy and uplifting the profession.

The truth is, we can’t do this work without you. You are partners in this movement. Whether you serve on a committee, bring FACCC to your campus, or attend a FACCC event, you’re co-creating our profession’s future. FACCC doesn’t belong to Sacramento. It belongs to you. The more we engage together, the stronger we become. Let’s keep building this movement, side by side. ■



“A movement doesn’t begin and end with a membership form. It grows when people step up, speak out, and shape what comes next.”



# How to Get More Involved with FACCC

## 1. Join a committee

We rely on faculty to guide our work. Whether you’re passionate about legislation, equity, or professional development, your voice is welcome and needed.

## 2. Host FACCC on your campus

Invite us to speak at a Senate meeting, union gathering, or campus event. We’re happy to come to you.

## 3. Follow and share

Stay connected via social media and through our weekly updates. Share our content so more faculty understand what’s at stake.

## 4. Run for a board position

FACCC’s board of directors is led by faculty from across the state. Consider running in next year’s elections or nominating a colleague for a position.

## 5. Attend our annual Advocacy & Policy Conference.

## 6. Become a FACCCtivist by signing up for our listserv at [www.faccc.org/listserv](http://www.faccc.org/listserv).

Visit [www.faccc.org](http://www.faccc.org) or email us at [info@faccc.org](mailto:info@faccc.org) to learn more about our services.



# Why We Should Care About Fraudulent Enrollments

By Sarah Thompson, FACCC Vice President,  
Las Positas College

Fraudulent enrollments are a growing problem in the California Community Colleges, but the system's response to this crisis has been uneven. While some districts actively pursue and remove fraudulent accounts, others largely ignore the issue. The California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office response seems tepid, despite the escalating severity of the problem over the past four years. It's only now, in response to legislative and congressional criticism, that a system-wide plan is being developed.

We intentionally use the term "fraudulent enrollments" instead of "fraudulent students" because the latter suggests individual students are enrolling under pretenses. This is not accurate. Organized criminals flood the system with fake applications solely to receive financial aid and defraud federal and state governments.

So why a halfhearted system response? Why the lack of urgency to address this issue?

## And Why Should We Care?

### 1. When governments are defrauded, taxpayers are cheated.

As public institutions, community colleges have a duty to ensure that they are good stewards of taxpayer money. They need to maintain community trust and demonstrate that how colleges report financial and enrollment data to the public is trustworthy.

### 2. Real students are being denied access to classes.

Fraudulent enrollments make it difficult for genuine students to register for the courses they need to progress toward degrees and certifications. Additionally, some students might lose access to financial aid if they can't maintain the required course load for eligibility.

### 3. It is a labor issue.

Full-time faculty often experience multiple last-minute class cancellations due to fraudulent student enrollment. To meet their load requirements, these faculty members may be reassigned to classes initially assigned to part-time faculty. These part-time faculty, already in a vulnerable position, then face the double burden of losing their courses to others. This situation pushes already at-risk faculty into even more precarious working conditions.



### 4. It corrupts our data.

Districts report financial and data enrollment information multiple times a year, including in their annual reports. Unless there is a mechanism to flag or remove fraudulent enrollments, the data is misleading. Since some districts monitor more aggressively than others, it is difficult to accurately identify growth and decline trends across the state.

### 5. It is a direct conflict of interest with our funding model to pursue enrollment fraud.

The Student Centered Funding Formula rewards districts for their enrollment numbers, enrollment growth, and the number of financial aid recipients. With

this model in mind, reporting fraudulent data can result in a loss of revenue for districts. This gap puts the system at risk.

### 6. It's worse than you think.

Consider this: over Memorial Day weekend, the Chabot-Las Positas College District, which aggressively tracks fraud, processed 600 new college applications. Of those, 300 were identified as fraudulent accounts.

This issue demands our full attention. Fraudulent enrollments hurt students, faculty, and the credibility of our institutions. ■



# From First Hire to Final Semester: What Faculty Need to Know About Retirement

By the FACCC Retirement Committee

**Are you 29 and starting to think about retirement? Are you 59 and starting to think about retirement? Regardless of your age, now is a good time to consider your plans.** Retirement isn't just about finances; it's about life goals. Whether retirement is just around the corner or still far off, there are important decisions to make. FACCC cannot provide financial advice, so use this as a starting point for conversations with your professional advisors.

When planning for retirement, it's helpful to begin with your life goals and financial obligations. Your goals will shape your financial needs, whether that's traveling, pursuing a hobby, or continuing to teach. For some, retirement is a chance to rest and reclaim the sleep and quality time lost to long nights of grading. Others may see it as an opportunity

to pursue big (and expensive) dreams. Perhaps you'll continue teaching part-time after retirement.

Additionally, consider the expenses you'll still carry after you retire, such as a mortgage, children's tuition, or health care. Retiree health benefits are rare in California, so check with your Human Resources (HR) department to see what, if anything, is available to you and your dependents. Create a list of your goals and anticipated expenses (don't forget to account for inflation), and use it as a basis for conversations with your advisors.

Before any real planning can begin, you'll need to find out which retirement plan you're enrolled in. Many community college faculty members don't realize that, by law, they must be placed into a

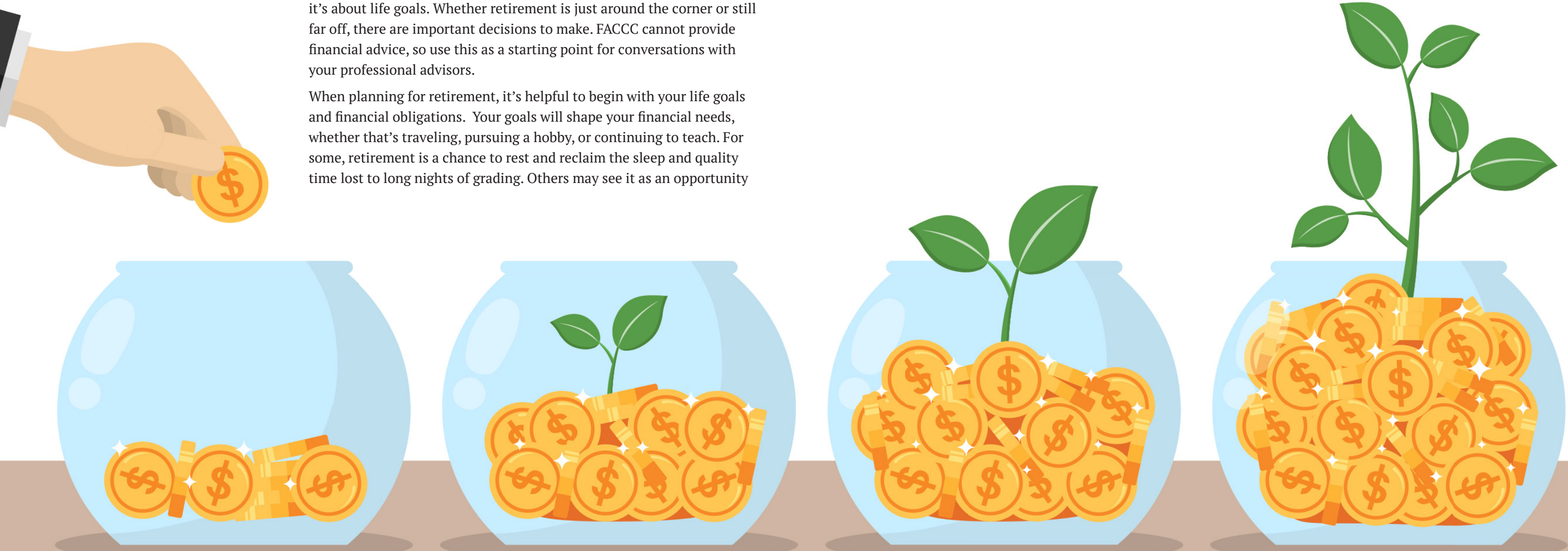
retirement plan when they are first hired. Among the paperwork you fill out when visiting your college's HR department is a document relating to your retirement choices. Ask yourself:

- Do I know which retirement plan I'm in?
- Do I understand the differences between plans?

If your answers are "no," you're not alone. This is the most crucial financial element, directly related to your retirement, especially for part-time faculty. Different districts often have different retirement plan options for part-time faculty, so if you work across a variety of colleges, review your paperwork carefully.

Most full-time faculty are placed into the CalSTRS Defined Benefit (DB) Plan, and all part-time faculty

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# Mt. San Antonio College Faculty Association and FACCC:

## Building a New Partnership for Advocacy and Equity

### Mt. SAC Faculty Association Becomes FACCC’s Newest Contract District

The Mt. San Antonio College (SAC) Faculty Association is FACCC Education Institute’s (EI) newest contract district, and we couldn’t be more excited about this partnership. What began as a trial in the 2024–2025 academic year transitioned to a full contract as of July 2025, demonstrating the power of collaboration between local unions and members of the FACCC Board of Governors and FACCC EI Board of Directors.

Joshua Christ, vice president of the Mt. SAC Faculty Association, emphasized the importance of FACCC’s advocacy in securing faculty rights and focusing resources on student success. “FACCC’s tireless efforts have been instrumental in ensuring that faculty have a voice through shared governance and collective bargaining rights in the California Community Colleges. As we navigate an era of increasing administrative hiring, we look

to FACCC to help us cut through bureaucratic excess and focus our limited educational funding on classrooms, where it can make the greatest impact on our students and their outcomes.”

In July 2024, during negotiations over the prior year’s Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA), FACCC stepped up to support the Mt. SAC Faculty Association. We issued an action alert, notified legislators, and rallied faculty to attend the local board meeting. Senator Josh Newman’s office (District 29) responded to these efforts by sending a deputy to the board meeting with an official statement. Thanks to these combined efforts, the board returned to the next negotiation session, offering the full COLA, which proved just how strong this partnership can be.

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Faculty Association showing its pride and colors at the Mt. SAC Fall FLEX day (first in person since COVID) 2024.



Mt. SAC faculty met with Assemblymember Blanca Rubio at Founders Hall to discuss legislative priorities affecting California’s community colleges.



# Voices of FACCC: Meet our Members

## Q&A with FACCC Member and Board of Governor, Leslie Banta

**Discipline:** Mathematics  
**Years of Service:** 20 years

**College:** Mendocino College  
**Committee:** Legislation & Budget

**Q: What inspired you to become a teacher?**

**A:** I was inspired to teach after helping in my children's classrooms. I was often out in charge of the math table and helping one particular student (a young immigrant learning English) made me realize that I could love teaching as a profession. After that, teaching in higher ed became a dream and, finally, a reality.

**Q: Do you have a personal quote that inspires you?**

**A:** One person can make a difference and everyone should try. - Jacqueline Kennedy writing about her husband's beliefs

**Q: What was your original career aspiration?**

**A:** I wanted to be a translator at the United Nations. I thought it would be fascinating to be in a place where nations came together to work on shared interests. As a result, I took both Spanish and French in high school and sign language in college.

**Q: If you could change one thing for faculty and staff, what would it be?**

**A:** It's difficult to pick one thing but, given where we are in this moment, I'd choose for all faculty and staff to have no-cost health insurance.

**Q: What's a memorable teaching moment that stands out to you?**

**A:** I suppose it would be with a student who told me she had such math trauma in her past that she would sit out in her car and cry before coming to class and had to convince herself to get out of the car. But, eventually, that went away. By the end of the semester, having passed the class, she felt like she could do anything (and she was right).

**Q: What are some of your hobbies outside of teaching?**

**A:** I enjoy trail walks, boating on the lake near my home, travel, watching the birds that visit my yard, and tending my vegetable garden.

**Q: What is something new you'd like to learn?**

**A:** I would learn how to draw and paint with watercolors. My grandmother was a painter and her work is beautiful. I plan to take up learning to draw and paint when I retire.

**Q: What is something about you that might surprise people?**

**A:** One thing that I didn't expect is that I enjoy faculty leadership and I love advocacy. It is empowering when you can lend your voice to something bigger than yourself. I spent a lot of my early years feeling that my voice was not something that was of value. It took me a long time to get to the place where I understood that my voice is a gift that I am meant to use. There are still people, I am sure, that would prefer I pushed down this part of who I am, but I've found a place where I can be true to myself and use my voice for things that matter.

**Q: What's the most memorable place you've traveled to?**

**A:** St. John in the U.S. Virgin Islands. It is beautiful, seeing wild donkeys outside my door was a lovely way to begin the day, the snorkeling was amazing, and the beaches are unmatched.

**Q: What advice would you give to new community college faculty?**

**A:** Being a community college professor is one of the best jobs in the world! You have amazing



students and colleagues and you get to truly make a difference in the lives of others. One piece of advice - keep growing and try new things. When you get into a routine, teaching can feel like any other job, but when you challenge yourself and stretch yourself, you learn right alongside your students and that creates amazing experiences.

**Q: If you could have dinner with anyone, who would it be?**

**A:** I'd have dinner with my dad, who is no longer with us. It would be a big family affair where my kids could see him again and my six grandchildren could meet him. But you probably mean a historical figure that I'm not related to. In that case, it would like to have dinner with Eleanor Roosevelt and Audre Lorde. These are women who used their voices for causes they cared about, particularly related to women and their place in this world. I wonder what they would think of where we are today and how we should use the power of our collective voice to defend women's rights.

**Q: What's your go-to beverage?**

**A:** Chai latte, if you please (but I also like tequila).



**Q: What's your educational background?**

**A:** MS from Dominican University (Fun fact: I'm currently finishing up an Associate's in Ethnic Studies at my own college. Never stop learning!)

**Final Thoughts:**

**A:** The work that FACCC is doing on behalf of community college faculty and our students is nothing short of amazing. Community college educators and FACCC staff join together as advocates and there is power in our collective voice. With FACCC, there is a place for anyone who is called to service and advocacy. If anyone out there is looking for a place where they can be part of making a difference at the legislative level, this is where you belong.



# California Great Teachers Seminar

This year, FACCC hosted two California Great Teachers Seminars: one in San Diego and the other in Monterey. Both sold-out events were celebrations of collective knowledge, shared experiences, and lifelong learning. We are grateful to our attendees for their openness, collaboration, and fresh ideas, and to our facilitators for thoughtfully planning and guiding the seminars. We look forward to carrying this energy into next year's seminars! Keep an eye out for scholarship opportunities.



## Hartnell College Hosts Successful Mini Great Teachers Seminar

In May, we welcomed faculty from Hartnell College and other nearby institutions to our Mini Great Teachers Seminar. We are grateful to Hartnell College for hosting such an energizing and impactful event, and to each faculty member who attended for making it an inspiring afternoon.

If your college campus is interested in hosting a Mini Great Teachers Seminar, please contact Director of Program and Development, Lidia Stoian at [Istoian@facc.org](mailto:Istoian@facc.org).



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have the option to enroll in it. The CalSTRS DB plan is a proper pension plan that provides a guaranteed benefit each month for the rest of your life, based on your age at retirement, your accrued number of years of service in the system, and your final salary.

The details are essential in estimating your income as a retiree under this plan. It is important to understand that you must have the equivalent of five full years of service before you “vest” and become qualified for the ongoing pension payout. Once you choose CalSTRS DB, you cannot change to a different retirement plan. Suppose you accrue less than the equivalent of five full years of service and you decide to stop CalSTRS-eligible employment. In that case, you are eligible to receive your contributions plus interest on those contributions.

Most full-time faculty stay in the system long enough to earn the five years of service credit needed for vesting in the DB plan, but part-time faculty face unique challenges. For example, if a part-time faculty member is assigned 40% of a full-time load each year at a single college, it would take 12.5 years to accumulate five years of service credit. Part-time faculty members who have assignments at multiple districts and regularly receive assignments over intersessions may reach the vesting requirement sooner, but the unpredictability makes planning especially important.

If you’re enrolled in the DB plan, you and the State of California both contribute just over 10% of your salary, while your district contributes a little over 19%. If you work more than a “full-time” load in any given year, the contributions go into a Defined Benefit Supplemental account, which provides additional guaranteed income in

retirement. There are two different benefit structures within the DB plan: STRS 2% at age 60 and STRS 2% at age 62. Make sure you understand which one applies to you.

In the DB plan, three factors determine the monthly payment you receive in retirement:

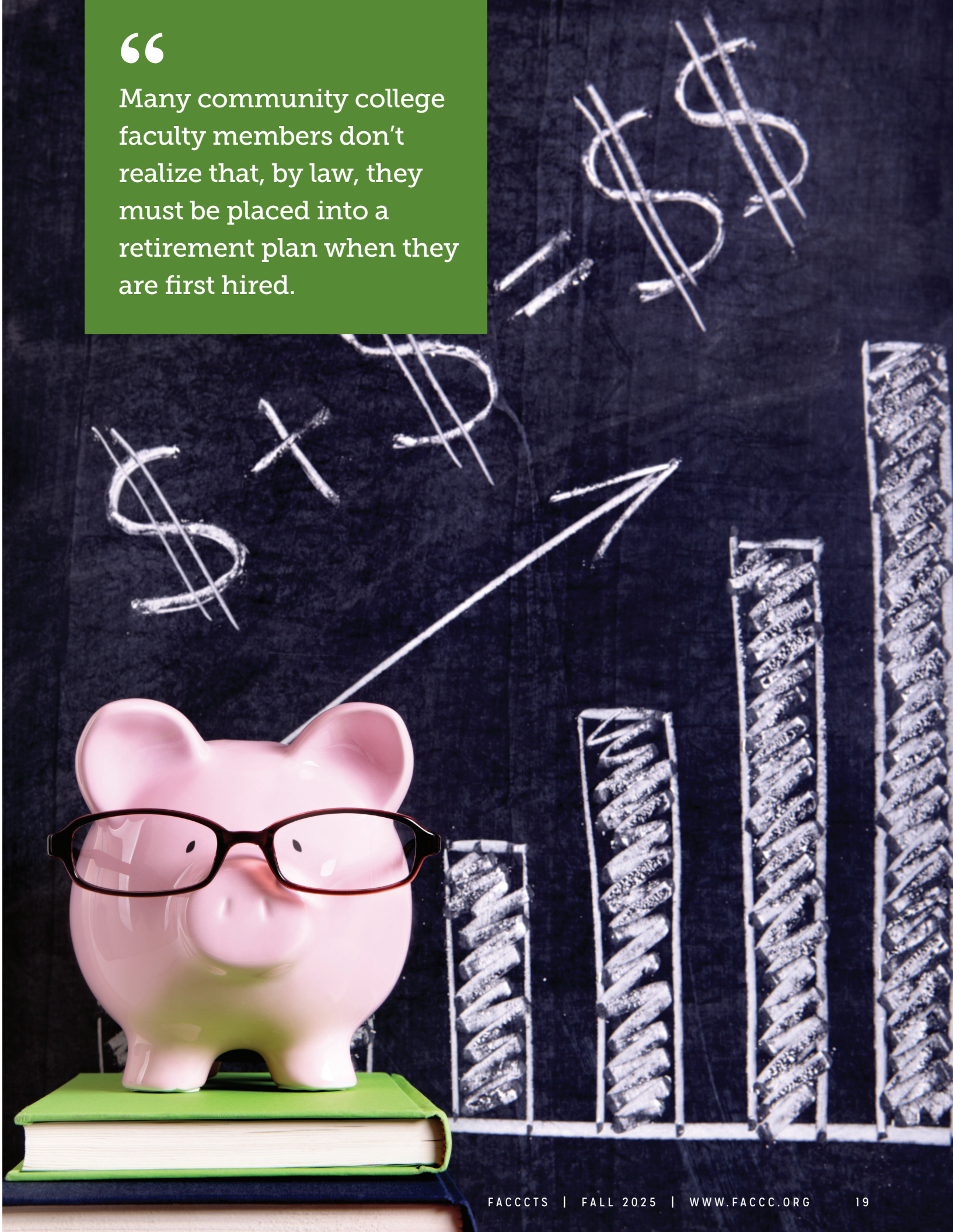
- **Age:** A number between 1.1 and 2.4 that gets larger depending on your CalSTRS retirement age.
- **Service credit:** A value for the number of years (or fractions of years) that you worked and contributed to the DB Plan. It can also include unused sick leave, so be sure each district reports your unused sick leave to CalSTRS upon retirement.
- **Final compensation:** This is the highest average salary over 36 consecutive months (or 12 if you’re in the 2% tier at age 60 with 25 years of service credit). For part-time faculty, this may be calculated across multiple districts, which can make the math complicated and, in some cases, reduce your benefit if lower-paid assignments are included. The CalSTRS website and handbook have several example calculations, so we encourage you to review them.

In many districts, part-time faculty are offered two or more retirement plan options during the hiring process. In addition to the DB plan, districts may provide other options, such as Social Security benefits, the CalSTRS Cash Balance plan, or another pre-tax cash-saving plan such as “Apple” or “PARS”. Depending on your career goals, each may present some advantages and disadvantages.

For part-time faculty who don’t expect to accumulate enough service credit in the DB plan, the CalSTRS Cash Balance (CB) plan, if available, may be a better option. In the CB plan, the member and the district each contribute 4% of the employee’s gross salary

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“Many community college faculty members don’t realize that, by law, they must be placed into a retirement plan when they are first hired.”





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Beyond retirement, it is crucial to consider additional savings. Retirement plans alone rarely provide enough income to maintain your standard of living.

into an account that works like a savings account. The account earns a guaranteed interest rate based on a 12-month average of the 30-year U.S. Treasury rate, along with additional interest determined by the general CalSTRS fund performance. The faculty member vests immediately. All of the money belongs to the account holder. Upon retirement, the retiree can withdraw the balance or convert it to a monthly annuity if the balance is at least \$3,500.

As an alternative to the CB plan (or other pre-tax cash savings plans), some districts may offer Social Security to part-time faculty. With Social Security, the member and the college district each contribute 6.2% of the employee’s gross salary, and the individual becomes vested after reaching 40 quarter-years (10 years) in the system. Once vested, Social Security functions like a defined benefit plan, offering a guaranteed monthly benefit based on a formula that uses one’s average annual earnings. If you don’t meet that threshold, you won’t receive a refund of your contributions. These options can be good alternatives if you don’t expect to reach the CalSTRS DB vesting requirement, but the differences between them are significant, so review them carefully.

If you are a new full-time faculty member who previously worked in a CalPERS (California Public Employees’ Retirement

System)-eligible position, such as a classified professional or a CSU employee, you may qualify to remain in CalPERS if you meet certain criteria. There is a short window to make this selection, so check quickly.

Beyond retirement, it is crucial to consider additional savings. Retirement plans alone rarely provide enough income to maintain your standard of living. Options like 403(b) or 457 accounts (pre-tax) or Roth IRAs (after-tax) can help diversify your retirement savings. Even small contributions add up over time.

As you near retirement, consider both timing and your family’s needs. Retiring too early may leave you short on resources in the long run; waiting too long could limit the time you have to enjoy your retirement goals. Review your beneficiary designations, wills, and healthcare directives to ensure your wishes are clear. Don’t forget that unused sick leave can boost your service credit. Also, consult with your local Human Resources (HR) department or a union representative to determine whether your district offers any post-retirement benefits that you might be unaware of. Entering retirement is a significant transition, but with early planning, you can establish a secure foundation. Utilize the resources you have available to you: HR, financial advisors, colleagues, your local union, and FACCC. ■



# Lights, Camera, Advocacy

Teaching and Learning in the Digital Age

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Learn more at [www.FACCC.org/EVENTS](http://www.FACCC.org/EVENTS)





By joining forces with FACCC, local unions can amplify their voices and more effectively advocate for their members' interests at both the local and state levels.

FACCC also facilitated meetings between the Mt. SAC Faculty Association and several state legislators, including Assemblymembers Blanca Rubio, Michelle Rodriguez, Lisa Calderon, and Mike Fong, as well as Senator Bob Archuleta and former Senator Josh Newman. These interactions provided valuable opportunities for faculty to discuss their issues and share their concerns directly with policymakers, helping to shape statewide policies that better support community college faculty and students.

Mt. SAC Faculty Association's experience highlights the benefits of becoming an FACCC contract district, including greater advocacy and support during local negotiations, increased visibility and influence with state legislators, access to FACCC's extensive network and resources, and opportunities for professional development and leadership growth. By joining forces with FACCC, local unions can amplify their voices and more effectively advocate for their members' interests at both the local and state levels.



Mt. SAC Faculty Association showing its thanks for all the hard work our faculty do for their students by giving them a cup of coffee in the 2nd week of Fall Semester 2025.

Together, we create a stronger, more unified voice for community college faculty across California. Let's continue to build partnerships that empower faculty and advance the mission of our community colleges. ■



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## CALIFORNIA GREAT TEACHERS SEMINAR

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Faculty Association of California Community Colleges Education Institute

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Join us in San Diego, Sunday - Thursday, June 7-11, or  
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This is a high-energy, transformative summer retreat that brings faculty together to rediscover the joy of teaching and learning. The Great Teachers Seminar is built on the belief that faculty are the experts, and learn best from one another.



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Realistic Problem Solving  
Professional & Personal Renewal

*Early enrollment is encouraged.*

*Apply now! FACCC, in collaboration with the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office, is offering 30 scholarships for new (full- and part-time, teaching less than five years) and current part-time faculty. Scholarships cover registration, materials, four nights' lodging, and all meals.*

Visit [www.FACCC.org/events](http://www.FACCC.org/events) to learn more!