Executive Summary
The Merced Community College District ADA Title II ADA Self-evaluation and Transition Plan Executive Summary was prepared by Disability Access Consultants, LLC with the collaboration and assistance of Merced Community College District staff under the leadership of Sheila Flores and District staff. The study also incorporated the requirements of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. The Executive Summary provides overall findings and describes the focus of the study.

Purpose of the Evaluation
The purpose of this Merced Community College District Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Title II Self-evaluation and Transition Plan and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act is to document the results of the Merced Community College District’s review of access to campus sites, programs, services, activities and events by individuals with disabilities in order to determine if any discriminatory or potentially discriminatory practices, policies or procedures exist as required by the ADA and Section 504. This report contains findings and recommendations based on the review during 2013.

As evidenced by this study, the Merced Community College District is committed to complying with the tenets of Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and other federal and state statutes and regulations to provide public programs, services and activities accessible to persons with disabilities. The Merced Community College District has demonstrated a commitment from the highest level of leadership, coordination of compliance activities, involvement of persons with disabilities and methodologies for compliance procedures.

Prior ADA Self-Evaluation and Transition Plans
As required by Title II of the ADA, the Merced Community College District (District) conducted previous accessibility studies to identify physical and structural barriers that may be barriers for accessibility for individuals with disabilities. The current study conducted by Disability Access Consultants, LLC (DAC) updates and/or augments selected accessibility surveys and studies that were conducted previously.

Current ADA Self-evaluation and Transition Plan
To further the District’s commitment to provide programs, services and activities in a nondiscriminatory manner for individuals with disabilities, the District decided to conduct an updated Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Self-evaluation of campus buildings and facilities, programs, services, activities and events, and to update transition/barrier removal plans of selected facilities. The ADA Self-evaluation provides a current benchmark for accessibility efforts by the District and provides a framework for implementation of the plan addressed by the current findings.
Classification of the Merced Community College District

The Merced Community College District is classified as a “public entity” pursuant to Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act, which applies to state and local governments. A public entity covered by Title II is defined as 1) Any State or local government; or 2) Any department, agency, special purpose district, or other instrumentality of a State or local government.

As defined, the term "public entity" does not include the Federal Government. Title II, therefore, does not apply to the Federal Government, which is covered by sections 501 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Title II is intended to apply to all programs, activities, and services provided or operated by State and local governments. Currently, section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act applies to programs or activities receiving Federal financial assistance. Thus, the current study incorporated the review process for Section 504 that is similar.

Title II of the ADA covers programs, activities, and services of public entities. Title II is divided into two subtitles. This study focuses on subtitle A of Title II, which is implemented by the Department of Justice's Title II regulation. Subtitle B, covering public transportation, and the Department of Transportation's regulation implementing that subtitle, are not addressed in this study.

Subtitle A, the focus of the Merced Community College District self-evaluation, is intended to protect qualified individuals with disabilities from discrimination on the basis of disability in the services, programs, or activities of all State and local governments. It additionally extends the prohibition of discrimination on the basis of disability established by section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, to all activities of State and local governments, including those that do not receive Federal financial assistance. By law, the Department of Justice's title II regulation adopts the general prohibitions of discrimination established under section 504, and incorporates specific prohibitions of discrimination from the ADA.

Focus of Merced Community College District ADA Self-Evaluation, Section 504 and Transition Plan

The focus of the ADA Self-evaluation, Section 504 and Transition Plan (the study) is to identify barriers that may be discriminatory for persons with disabilities and identify methods and projected schedules (timelines) for barrier removal. Barriers that deny or limit access to programs, services or activities may be structural or nonstructural. Nonstructural barriers may be due to policies, practices or procedures that may inadvertently limit, segregate or discriminate against individuals with disabilities. Structural barriers may deny access due to the physical environment.

Structural barriers are referenced in detail for all campus buildings and facilities by site and are contained in detail in individualized Transition/Barrier Removal reports of sites inspected, and are available from the ADA Coordinator and in the DACTrak Accessibility Management System. It is important to note that some structural barriers may be addressed by using a programmatic methodology if they did not involve new construction or new remodeling and renovation. Findings, recommendations and other pertinent information from the study has been loaded into the web based DACTrak Accessibility
Management System developed by Disability Access Consultants, LLC (DAC) and licensed to the Merced Community College District.

As required by Title II of the ADA and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, comprehensive site inspections were conducted by DAC staff of all campus buildings and facilities. The scope of the inspections included the recording of actual on-site measurements and photographs. Additional requirements of a transition plan completed by the District include identification of the noncompliant item or element, the proposed method to remove the barrier and the designated overall person responsible to implement the plan. The fourth and final requirement of a transition plan is the addition of the projected schedule for barrier removal or date. The District is currently completing the projected schedule for barrier removal.

**Date of Self-Evaluation and Transition Plan**
The ADA self-evaluation and transition/barrier removal plans were prepared using information and input obtained during 2013.

**Self-Evaluation and Transition Plan Format**
This Self-evaluation is an on-going, dynamic document that will need periodic review and updating. In its’ continuing efforts to maintain compliance, the District has several mechanisms in place to provide for an ongoing update of the Self-evaluation. The District’s designated ADA Coordinator and Section 504 Coordinator is empowered with oversight responsibility for implementation of the requirements of the ADA.

Although the survey of programs, services and activities solicited comments from District staff it is anticipated that additional comments and input may be received on both the survey of programs and the survey of facilities. The District is currently reviewing methods to collect and incorporate additional applicable comments in the study or in the implementation plan.

**Location of Self-Evaluation**
The ADA Self-evaluation will be maintained and made available for public inspection by the District’s ADA Coordinator, Bob Lenz or Sheila Flores, Capital Planning and Events Manager. The ADA Self-evaluation is available in alternate formats, as requested.

**Designated ADA/504 Coordinator**
Bob Lenz is designated as the ADA/504 Coordinator for the Merced Community College District.

Requests for information from the ADA Coordinator can be sent by email, phone, mail, and fax. The ADA Coordinator currently does not have a direct TTY number. Information is available in alternate formats upon request.
Methodology for Self-Evaluation and Transition Plan
A Merced Community College District staff member was designated to provide oversight representation and direction regarding the accessibility study. Sheila Flores, Capital Planning and Events Manager was designated as the District staff member to serve as the District contact for the study. The accessibility study included a review of any potential or actual programmatic or physical barriers.

Transition/Barrier Removal Plan
The term “transition plan” comes from the terminology in the 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) that describes how public entities would be “transitioning” into compliance during the timelines of 1992 to 1995. The term barrier removal plan is used in addition to the term transition plan, as public entities are no longer transitioning into compliance during the three years set aside in the law. The transition/barrier removal plan identifies the noncompliant barrier that may deny access to goods and services, the proposed method to remove the barrier, the identity of the responsible person to oversee the implementation of the plan, and the projected schedule for barrier removal of “structural” barrier. The Self-evaluation, on the other hand focuses on programmatic barriers that may deny access to programs services and activities. The two plans work congruently to remove the structural and programmatic barriers.

Public entities, such as the Merced Community College District, are required to provide access to District programs, services and activities for the recipients of services. Thus, the District must provide access for individuals with disabilities and document areas of noncompliance. Documentation is incorporated into the plan as barriers are removed. Plans are updated, for example, as the District acquires additional properties, remodels facilities or removes properties from its inventory list. The Merced Community College District has completed these activities.

Findings
Services provided to Merced Community College District
Disability Access Consultants performed a detailed field survey in accordance with the accessibility standards and regulations for the ADA Standards and Title 24 of the California Building Code of all college owned sites including the following satellite campuses and locations:

- Merced Campus, 3600 M St, Merced
- Los Banos Campus, 22240 Highway 152, Los Banos
- Business Resource Center, 630 W 19th St, Merced

Survey findings were loaded into the web-based accessibility management program for use by the College to monitor, update and implement the transition plan, documenting the College’s compliance effort progress.

The surveys identify all campus barriers to access and include recommended methods for removing the barriers.

Merced Community College District is in the process of updating the transition plan using DACTrak to project dates of barrier removal.
Merced Community College District is also in the process of seeking additional input from the public regarding concerns for ADA accessibility at its campuses, as required by Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

The findings and recommendations for the District buildings and facilities inspected are contained in the web based DACTrak Accessibility Management Software. The DACTrak software program provides the District with a tool to update its plan, document progress, estimate costs and schedule barrier removal. Different report formats can be printed from the DACTrak Accessibility Management Software provided by Disability Access Consultants.

**Recommendations**
The District should continue to utilize the results of the study to prioritize and remove barriers that have been identified in the study. The District’s Capital Planning Department plans to use the detailed and comprehensive results of the study to update and maintain a current plan, budget funds, schedule, implement, document, and monitor barrier removal activities.

The District is developing internal oversight procedures and methods to monitor new construction to verify that the work completed is compliant with accessibility standards.

Funds are being allocated for ADA projects and removal of ADA and Title 24 barriers to provide accessibility in accordance with the projected barrier removal schedule.

**Notice to the Public of the Self-Evaluation and Transition Plan**
Following the review of the draft plan by the District, the District plans to provide opportunities for input into the draft plan. Methods to meet the requirements of the public participation portion of the ADA have been discussed and may include notice and posting that an update to the study has been completed and inviting members of the public, staff and stakeholders to provide input into the plan and to assist with the prioritization. Another method discussed includes an on-line survey for the public, postings of notices in buildings on campus, and a notice in the District’s newsletter and in the local newspaper. As the ADA requires opportunities for input and access to the draft plan to provide comments, the District plans to post notice of the updated study and invite comments. The ADA Coordinator and designated staff will afford opportunities for input by discussing the results, providing access to pertinent portions of the plan and making accommodations for alternate accessible formats to increase access to the plan. The current draft plan is comprehensive and has over 1,000 pages, which would be cumbersome for the public to access. As the ADA requires opportunities for public input and does not require the posting of the actual plan, the District will provide access to the portion or portions of the plan requested for public input.

**Designation of ADA Coordinator**
The regulations implementing the ADA require any public entity with fifty or more employees to designate at least one employee to coordinate ADA compliance (28 CFR §35.107(a)).
Findings
The District has a designated ADA Coordinator and 504 Coordinator to oversee the development, implementation and monitoring of the ADA Self-evaluation and Transition Plan. The District has designated Bob Lenz, as the ADA and Section 504 Coordinator.

The District has posted the identity of the ADA and Section 504 Coordinator on the District website.

Recommendations
Information regarding the identity of the District’s ADA Coordinator should continue to be provided to staff, posted at all District locations, incorporated into new employee orientation packets, and placed in frequently used publications, on the website and in staff and public directories.

It is recommended that the District continue to publish the name, address, e-mail address and phone numbers of the Merced Community College District ADA Coordinator in appropriate public notices, brochures, pamphlets and other documents frequently distributed to the general public. Publications should also include the TDD/TYY and/or the California relay phone number.

Posting of Identity of ADA Coordinator and Notice of Rights
Federal regulations require public entities to make available to interested persons the name, office address and telephone number of the ADA coordinator (28 CFR §35.107(a)).

In addition, Section 35.106 requires a public entity to disseminate sufficient information to applicants, participants, beneficiaries and other interested persons to inform them of the rights and protections afforded by the ADA. Furthermore, in providing for notice, the District must comply with the requirements for effective communication in Section 35.160.

Findings
The identity of the ADA Coordinator and the notice of the rights afforded individuals with disabilities were posted and noticed. The identity of the ADA and Section 504 Coordinator, address, phone number, fax number were noticed and posted.

The District also has a nondiscrimination policy and provides contact information.

Recommendations
The District should provide ongoing notice of the identity of the Merced Community College District ADA Coordinator on its website and in frequently used publications or documents accessed by the general public and by recipients of programs, services and activities.

The notice may also be provided in newspaper advertisements, on applications, at program sites, in program handbooks, in regular mailings, on legal notices, on radio announcements, in requests for proposals/qualifications, on facility use agreements, and in contracts.

The notice should include the name, title, address and phone numbers of the ADA Coordinator. The notice should include a TDD/TYY number and/or California Relay number to ensure equally effective communication. Although not required, it is recommended that the notice include the e-mail address for the ADA Coordinator.
Notices should be posted in conspicuous locations on a regular basis.

Information regarding the requirement to post the identity of the ADA Coordinator, notice of rights in accordance with the ADA and related information, should be sent to each department by the ADA Coordinator or other appropriate official. A standard notice should be given as an example. Each department could add specific information applicable to the provision of programs, services and activities.

Posting and notice requirements should be updated if the identity of the ADA Coordinator changes or if more than one ADA Coordinator is designated.

**Statement of Accommodations on Public Notices**

Statements of accommodations should continue to be available on public notices and agendas. The District is required to provide Title II information in alternative formats to ensure that that information is accessible to people with disabilities.

**Recommendations**

Another sample may include the following statement with the phone and TDD/TTY numbers:

> “Individuals who need auxiliary aids and or services for effective communication or accommodations to participate in programs and services of Merced Community College District are invited to make their needs and preferences known to the ADA Coordinator or the alternate Contact Person. This notice is available in accessible alternate formats from the ADA Coordinator.”

**Statement of Nondiscrimination**

All public entities are required to provide information to applicants, participants, beneficiaries, employees and other interested persons of the rights and protections afforded by Title II of the ADA (26 CFR §35.106).

**Findings**

Publications containing statements of nondiscrimination in regards to access to programs, services and activities were found. Statements of nondiscrimination were also found in the District’s Civil Assurances.

**Recommendations**

Nondiscrimination statements should be posted on frequently used publications for the public.

**Input into the Self-Evaluation Process**

The regulations which implement the ADA require public entities to provide an opportunity to interested persons and organizations to participate in the Self-evaluation process. For three years after completion of the Self-evaluation, the public entity must keep records of any problems identified. (28 CFR §35.105)
**Findings**
The Merced Community College District is planning to use different methodologies to solicit input into the District plan.

**Recommendations**
The District should incorporate the public input into the overall implementation of the plan.

**Grievance/Uniform Complaint Procedures**
A public entity that employs fifty or more people must adopt and publish grievance procedures which provide for the prompt and equitable resolution of complaints alleging any action that would be prohibited by the ADA (28 CFR §35.107(b)).

**Findings**
The District has a grievance/complaint procedure that provides for prompt resolution of complaints and additional opportunities for input. The grievance/complaint procedure is available to employees and readily available for members of the public via the website and the ADA Coordinator. Information regarding the complaint process is available on the District’s website.

**Recommendations**
The District should continue to make efforts to inform staff and the public of the existence of the District’s ADA Coordinator, grievance procedures, the steps for handling grievances, and the District policies for remediation of grievances.

Information regarding complaint procedures should be readily available to members of the public in addition to employees and applicants. Procedures should outline the steps needed to resolve a complaint.

Grievance procedures should be a part of the new employee orientation packet.

Grievance procedures should be available in accessible alternate formats.

A method to collect data and collect a profile of complaints should be developed. The status of the complaint and the time from complaint to resolution should be documented to assist with interventions and staff development to reduce or eliminate repeated complaints.

Complaint procedures and forms should be available at all District buildings and in all departments.

The District might consider the centralization of complaint handling to assist with the tracking of complaint resolution. A centralized database and analysis of types and locations of complaints may also assist with developing profiles to assist with targeting quality control and training measures. Centralized record keeping of such information will help the District to regularly update its compliance efforts, and plan for additional compliance implementation for training and budget considerations.

The ADA Coordinator or designated staff can develop updated reports based on a profile of concerns or complaints to determine the needs for proposed training materials, agenda items, and proposed budget expenditures.
Procedures should continue to be developed, implemented and institutionalized to provide consistency for complaint resolution and record keeping.

Grievance procedures should also provide an alternate point of contact other than the ADA and 504 Coordinator.

**Access to Programs, Services and Activities**

A public entity may not adopt official policies that are discriminatory or engage in practices that are discriminatory. This prohibition applies to policies that are explicitly exclusionary and to those which appear to be neutral but have a discriminatory effect (28 CFR §35.130(b)(3)).

**Findings**

District programs, services and activities were reviewed and none were found to be discriminatory.

**Recommendations**

The ADA Coordinator should continue to monitor and receive information regarding concerns or issues about access to programs, services and activities and take the appropriate action regarding any potential discriminatory practices for persons with disabilities.

**District Policies**

**Findings**

District policies, procedures and practices were reviewed and none were found to be discriminatory.

**Recommendations**

The District should continue to provide accessible programs, services and activities that allow for the inclusion of individuals with disabilities for students, staff and members of the public.

The ADA Coordinator should continue to monitor programmatic access.

Additional and ongoing training should be provided regarding the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act and accommodations that provide equal access to programs, services and activities.

Meetings and events open to the public should be held in buildings that meet accessibility requirements, or in the accessible portion of the building with accessible elements that serve the area where the meeting or event is held.

Information regarding the facility should include information regarding accessible features and elements of the site. For example, accessible parking, accessible restrooms and other items and elements should be indicated on documents and on the website. Indicating accessible paths of travel and accessible entrances also provides valuable information for individuals with disabilities. A contact number and email address should be provided for additional assistance.
Eligibility Criteria
Public entities cannot use eligibility criteria that tend to exclude or screen out persons with disabilities (28 CFR §35.130(b)(8)).

Findings
No discriminatory practices were noted regarding eligibility criteria for program access.

Recommendations
Program eligibility criteria should be reviewed as they are drafted or modified to ensure that eligibility criteria do not put additional burdens or requirements on individuals with disabilities.

The District should continue to ensure that all eligibility criteria allow for accommodations for individuals with disabilities.

Accommodations to Access Programs, Services and Activities
The ADA prohibits public entities from excluding persons with disabilities from programs, activities or services offered by the public entity. The law allows a public entity to use both structural and nonstructural methods to achieve accessibility to programs, services and activities (28 CFR §35.150(a)(1); (b)(1)).

Findings
The District has a process and procedures to provide accommodations to afford individuals with disabilities the opportunity to have equal access to programs, services and activities.

Recommendations
Information about how to request accommodations should appear on all public notices, announcements and agendas. Information should be disseminated to all departments and divisions regarding the statement for accommodations requirement.

The District should provide training for staff and volunteers regarding accommodations for individuals with disabilities. All staff, and in particular frontline staff such as receptionists and staff with high public contact, should receive training on interacting and accommodating individuals with disabilities.

Additional training materials and videos should be purchased or developed to assist with training efforts.

The District should assist departments with planning and budgeting for selected accommodations, such as large print, cassettes, CD-ROMs, Braille materials, etc.

A centralized method for producing alternate formats may provide a cost savings and reduce the timelines for the production of alternate formats.

Equally Effective Communication
Public entities must ensure that applicants, participants and members of the public with disabilities have communication access that is equally effective as that provided to persons without disabilities (28 CFR §35.160(a)).
Findings
No discriminatory practices were noted regarding auxiliary aids or services, interpreters, website or other methods for equally effective communication.

Recommendations
The District should provide staff training and information regarding auxiliary aids and effective communication to employees and volunteers.

The District could purchase a portable indoor-outdoor assistive listening system that could be checked out from the ADA Coordinator on an as-needed basis to augment fixed assistive listening systems. Information should be sent to departments regarding the availability of assistive listening systems.

Terminology
District publications should be reviewed to see if the word “handicapped” is used. The words “individuals with disabilities” or “persons with disabilities” should replace “handicapped”. The term “disabled person” should also be avoided. Information regarding acceptable terminology in “people first language” should also be provided to District staff. Publications should be updated as they are reprinted.

It is recommended that the ADA Coordinator disseminate information regarding acceptable terminology to be utilized by departments and agencies.

Staff Training
On-going compliance with the ADA can only be achieved if District staff and officials receive ongoing and updated training about the rights of persons with disabilities and the obligations of public employees under the ADA. Although training is not required by the ADA, training regarding the requirements of the ADA is recommended.

Distribution and Location of Publications
Publications, documents and brochures are required to be accessible for individuals with disabilities in terms of location and accessible formats.

Findings
Most publications, brochures and documents were displayed in departments and areas that were accessible for individuals with disabilities. In some cases, publications and brochures were located in literature racks that were either mounted too high to be reached from a wheelchair, or in areas that were partially blocked. Displays should also allow for retrieval of the information without utilizing a tight pinching or grasping motion and be within a compliant reach range.

Recommendations
Provide information to departments regarding the placement of brochures, pamphlets and information in accessible locations and in accessible containers or displays for individuals with disabilities. Requirements for reach ranges and clear floor space to access publications would be helpful.
Counters and areas that are lowered for access by individuals with disabilities should be maintained and kept clear of display and work items.

**Fees and Surcharges**
Public entities may not charge a fee or add a surcharge to a fee to cover the cost of making its facilities, programs, services or activities accessible to persons with disabilities. (28 CFR §35.130(f)).

**Findings**
There was no evidence of fees charged to individuals with disabilities that were not charged to individuals without disabilities to access programs, services and activities.

**Recommendations**
The ADA Coordinator should continue to randomly review policies and practices to ensure that fees and surcharges are not charged to individuals with disabilities that are not charged to individuals without disabilities.

**Emergency Evacuation Procedures**
The District is required to plan to meet the needs of persons with disabilities in an emergency and provide access to emergency shelter services.

**Findings**
The Merced Community College District has Civil Defense and Disaster Plan (Board Policy 3505). In addition, the District website contains Emergency Preparedness information and plans for a variety of natural and human caused disasters. Information regarding each plan is available on the website or from District staff.

Emergency evacuation routes were posted at the majority of the sites inspected.

**Recommendations**
The District should continue to provide additional training and information regarding emergency evacuation procedures, particularly with regard to the evacuation of persons with disabilities.

The District should make sure that evacuation routes and procedures continue to be posted at all District sites in accordance with ADA regulations.

All staff should be made aware of the location of the posted evacuation routes within their facilities.

The District should develop procedures and a mechanism to monitor the posting of emergency evacuation routes and procedures.

The District should consider the development of a voluntary registry for individuals that may need additional assistance.

Shelters should be surveyed to determine that they are accessible for individuals with disabilities prior to be designated as an evacuation shelter. Noncompliant findings for
designated shelters can be found in the Merced Community College District ADA Transition/Barrier Removal Plan.

Designated evacuation shelter sites should also be inspected on a regular basis to determine that the shelter continues to be accessible for persons with disabilities.

**Policies for the Use of District Facilities**

**Findings**
The District has an application and agreement for the use of District facilities and conference rooms. The application includes procedures for use of District facilities and special events.

**Recommendations**
The District should consider the inclusion of a nondiscrimination clause in such a policy. The inclusion of non-discriminating language in policy and on forms would help ensure that outside groups and organizations would agree to abide by all applicable local, state and federal laws and District policy regarding nondiscriminatory practices during the utilization of District facilities.

**Selection of Contractors and Contracted Services**

Public entities cannot use contract procurement criteria that discriminate against persons with disabilities (28 CFR 35.130(b)(5)). Contractors should be held to the same nondiscrimination rules that apply to District employees.

**Findings**
No discriminatory or exclusionary practices were evident in the selection of contractors and contracted services.

**Recommendations**
The District should continue to monitor use of standard agreements and leases by all District departments.

**Maintenance of Accessible Features**
The ADA requires 35.133 public entities to maintain their accessible features and elements.

**Findings**
No formal policies or procedures to maintain accessible features were found. There is evidence, however, of maintenance of some accessible features at District sites.

**Recommendations**
The District should consider developing procedures or policies to maintain accessible features that require general maintenance. A few examples include re-striping of parking, vegetation or items that interfere with sidewalks, elevators and paths of travel.

**Planning and Budgeting for Accessibility**

There is not a specific requirement in the ADA for planning and budgeting for barrier removal. There is a requirement for public entities to incorporate a projected schedule for
barrier removal into the transition/barrier Removal plan. A District that is budgeting or seeking funds to use for ADA barrier removal and to improve access to programs, services and activities shows intent to implement the barrier removal/transition plan.

Findings
There is evidence that the Merced Community College District is incorporating the removal of barriers to accessibility on an ongoing basis and plans to remove additional barriers to District programs, services and activities.

Recommendations
The District should develop a method to maintain an ongoing barrier removal implementation plan and document the District’s progress, initiatives and funds expended.

It is recommended that the District contract for an independent review of plans, remodeling efforts and new construction for accessibility requirements for the Americans with Disabilities Act Standard and Title 24 of the California Building Code. It is important and required that the accessibility barrier removal efforts meet federal and state accessibility codes.

The ADA Coordinator, or designated staff, should be empowered with the authority to make recommendations and monitor the current Merced Community College District ADA Self-Evaluation and Transition Plan.

Implementing Compliance Recommendations
The Merced Community College District has demonstrated an ongoing commitment to provide equal access to its programs, services and activities to maintain and enhance compliance with the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act. The District continues to embrace a concept of full and equal access for all of the people it serves.

As further evidence of its efforts for compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and related accessibility legislation, the Merced Community College District has continued to prioritize and develop funding projections for implementation of the ADA Self-evaluation and barrier removal/transition plan.

Implementation of the recommendations in the Self-evaluation will continue to require planning, resources, staff training, interdepartmental coordination and collaboration throughout the organizational structure and the public.

Summary of Findings and Recommendations
The process of conducting the study to update the District’s ADA and Section 504 plan demonstrate not only the commitment by the District to provide access to District buildings, facilities, programs, services and activities, but the overall compliance by the Merced Community College District to meet the requirements of the ADA and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.

Noncompliant findings regarding physical barriers that may deny access for persons with disabilities are documented in the updated District ADA Transition/Barrier Removal Plan that is documented in the DACTrak Accessibility Management Program.
About Disability Access Consultants, LLC  
Expertise, Experience and Understanding of Applicable Laws

Disability Access Consultants, LLC (DAC) provides specialized services to educational institutions to enhance or achieve compliance with Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. As one of the nation’s largest consulting firms specializing in ADA compliance for public entities, DAC has earned a reputation for providing low cost, effective solutions to the educational community in an easy to manage web based software format called DACTrak.

DAC stands out in the public entity arena due to proven performance in a wide range of services, from programmatic and policy reviews, facility inspections, transition plans, consultation, claims resolution, plan reviews and expert witness services. We excel at providing a comprehensive assessment of our clients’ current status by preparing a study of all areas related to accessibility in different departments to document ongoing compliance and collaboratively developing a realistic, cost effective remedial plan. In addition, DAC provides a powerful tool called DACTrak to update, manage and document the ADA plan.

DAC has sixteen years of extensive experience assisting the educational community with compliance of Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and related civil rights laws and regulations. DAC has a dedicated team of professionals with experience in developing more than three thousand transition plans and hundreds of self-evaluations for educational institutions. The team is staffed by individuals who have served the educational system in leadership roles and by team members that have been involved with the building and construction industry. In addition, our founder, Barbara Thorpe has worked in the educational environment as an ADA/504 coordinator for 19 years prior to founding DAC in 1998.

DAC provides a full continuum of professional services that include, but are not limited to:

- Facility inspections
- Self-evaluations for ADA and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act
- Policy review and development
- Transition plans
- Public rights-of-way surveys
- Consultation
- Accessibility compliance intake and management software – DACTrak
- DACTrak training to conduct your own inspections
- Expert witness services
- Plan reviews
- ADA Plan implementation assistance and consultation
- Outdoor developed and recreational areas (pools, parks, trails, camping areas)
- NPSI playground safety inspections
- ADA Playground inspections
DAC is knowledgeable and has an understanding of the American Disabilities Act along with any other related code and regulations. DAC utilizes the appropriate standard(s) for the inspection that may include, but is not limited to:

- ADA 2010 Standards California Building Code
- UFAS
- ANSI
- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act
- Outdoor developed and recreational standards
- National Playground Safety Institute (NPSI) standards
- PROWAG – Federal Public Rights-of-way Guidelines
- Federal Highway Administration’s Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD)

DAC has extensive knowledge and experience during the past 16 years with public entities and has developed tools to enhance ADA projects and streamline the scope of work in a cost effective manner. DACTrak provides an easy to use web based tool to manage the ADA project and document progress. DAC sets itself aside from other service providers based upon a full continuum of extensive experience with public sector clients, knowledge and its accessibility management software called DACTrak.

DAC has extensive experience in the evaluation of program and facility accessibility and provides a full continuum of Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and accessibility services for public entities. Founded as a woman owned California Corporation in 1998, DAC has provided services for the past 16 years to assist public entities to comply and implement accessibility requirements in accordance with the ADA, Title 24 of the California Building Code, Section 504 and related federal, state and local disability-related nondiscrimination laws and regulation.

As our founder, Barbara Thorpe, worked with a public entity for 19 years as the ADA Coordinator, 504 Coordinator, and Director of Planning and Compliance, she has extensive experience working with individuals with disabilities and organizations representing individuals with disabilities. In addition, she has collaborated with individuals with disabilities and organizations that represent individuals with disabilities in a facilitative manner.

DAC’s team includes CASp certified inspectors, dedicated to assisting public entities with ADA compliance. DAC has a comprehensive understanding of applicable standards, regulations and requirement under Title II of the ADA, California Building Code and related state accessibility standards.

This ADA Self-evaluation and Transition Plan Executive Summary was prepared by Disability Access Consultants, LLC (DAC) in collaboration with Merced Community College District with the leadership of Sheila Flores, Capital Planning and Events Manager.

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