

I was fortunate to be able to attend the 4CS Classified Leadership conference last month. At the conference we were able to pass a resolution advocating for Classified Senate Inclusion in Title 5. The California Community Colleges Classified Senate (4CS) has adopted a resolution (June 2025) calling for amendments to Title 5 that would formally recognize local Classified Senates and delineate their areas of purview, comparable to Academic and Student Senates. Classified professionals comprise roughly **60 percent of the system's full-time workforce**, yet their representative governance body lacks regulatory standing. Formal inclusion will strengthen participatory governance, advance equity, and amplify staff expertise in decisions affecting student success.

This was supported by classified senates across the state and passed with 100% approval. I have included with my report the press release about the resolution as well as the resolution document we voted on.

In general, this resolution has been met with positive support from Academic Senates and Student Senates and the unions. However there have been a few CEO's who have raised questions about the potential overlap with labor unions. This proposal does **not** alter or conflict with collective bargaining rights or union representation. Rather, it complements union roles by ensuring that Classified professionals have an equal voice in participatory governance—just as Academic and Student Senates are recognized. Title 5 inclusion is about institutional governance, not employment terms and conditions.

- Education Code § 70902(b)(7) and Title 5 § 51023.5 require that staff have opportunities to participate effectively in governance. Title 5, however, does not currently recognize Classified Senates nor delineate their areas of purview, while it does so for Academic Senates (§ 53200) and Student Governments (§ 51023.7).

I am requesting board support for inclusion of Classified Senates in Title 5 of the California Code of Regulations.

My rationale for support is

1. **Equity and Inclusion** – Formal recognition affirms the critical roles of staff and aligns with the Board's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion.
2. **Improved Decision-Making** – Staff expertise leads to better-informed policy and resource allocation, ultimately benefiting students.
3. **Alignment with Vision 2030 & Board Goals** – Stronger staff voice advances statewide goals for transparency, accountability, and student success.

4. **Consistency in Governance** – Mirroring the standing already afforded to Academic and Student Senates creates coherence across participatory governance structures.

I do understand the rationale that inviting more people to the party can feel like its going to slow down the process and be cumbersome. Yet I feel this is the time, as we are growing and changing, to all come together to work for the collective good of our students.



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 27, 2025

Resolution Passed Advocating for Classified Senate Inclusion in Title 5: A Milestone Toward Equity and Voice in Governance

Sacramento, CA — The California Community Colleges Classified Senate (4CS) is proud to announce the passage of a historic resolution: *"Resolution to Advocate for the Inclusion of California Community Colleges Classified Senates in Title 5."* This resolution represents a bold step forward in strengthening participatory governance and ensuring equitable representation for Classified Professionals within the California Community Colleges system.

While Title 5 of the California Code of Regulations outlines areas of purview for both Academic Senates and Student Leadership, it currently lacks any reference to Classified Senates — despite the fact that Classified Professionals make up approximately 60% of the full-time workforce¹ in the system. The passage of this resolution seeks to change that by calling for the formal recognition of local Classified Senates and their areas of purview in Title 5, reinforcing the foundational principles of accountability, transparency, and inclusion.

"This resolution affirms what we already know — that Classified Professionals are essential to student success and institutional effectiveness," said Deborah Knowles, 4CS President. "It's time their voice in participatory governance is formally recognized, just as it is for faculty and students."

This resolution follows similar endorsements from the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges (ASCCC) and the Student Senate for California Community Colleges (SSCCC), signaling statewide support across stakeholder groups.

As 4CS advances its advocacy for Title 5 inclusion, the organization reaffirms its dedication to working in full partnership with labor unions and system stakeholders. This initiative is intended to complement, rather than duplicate or diminish, the vital role of collective bargaining—enhancing participatory governance by ensuring classified professionals have a meaningful voice in institutional planning, policy development and decision-making processes that shape their professional roles.

"We deeply value the essential role unions play in protecting Classified Professionals," added Amparo Medina, 4CS President-Elect. "This effort is about complementing those protections by establishing a formal voice for classified senate in college and district governance matters that affect Classified Professionals in their roles supporting student success."

4CS invites Classified, Academic, Administrative, and Union leaders across the state to join in this movement to institutionalize a culture of participatory governance that reflects the expertise, contributions, and leadership of all professionals.

¹ https://datamart.cccco.edu/Faculty-Staff/Staff_Annual.aspx

**Resolution to Advocate for the Inclusion of
California Community Colleges Classified Senates in Title 5
June 2025**

Whereas, Education Code §70902(b)(7) states that the Board of Governors shall “[e]stablish procedures that are consistent with minimum standards...to ensure faculty, staff, and students the opportunity to express their opinions at the campus level, to ensure that these opinions are given every reasonable consideration, to ensure the right to participate effectively in district and college governance,” and Title 5 §51023.5 states “staff shall be provided with opportunities to participate in the formulation and development of district and college policies and procedures, and in those processes for jointly developing recommendations for action by the governing board, that the governing board reasonably determines, in consultation with staff, have or will have a significant effect on staff,” but Title 5 does not recognize local classified senates, nor does it include classified staff areas of purview appropriate to classified professionals and analogous to those delineated for academic senates in §53200 and student leadership in §51023.7, leaving classified senates without a formalized position within the structure of local colleges and districts that could reinforce the principles of participatory, accountability, and inclusivity within California’s educational institutions;

Whereas, Local classified professionals make up 60% of the California Community Colleges system’s full-time workforce¹ but are often under recognized for their roles and responsibilities within participatory governance since they do not have a formally recognized representative body within the college governance structures;

Whereas, The California Community College Classified Senate represents all classified professionals and plays a vital role in promoting transparent, equitable, and effective governance by ensuring that the concerns and recommendations of classified professionals are considered in the decision-making processes of our colleges and system; and

Whereas, The inclusion of the California Community College Classified Senate in Title 5 along with a delineation of the purview of classified senates would bring consistency among participatory governance practices that are already institutionalized by the long-time existence of the Student Senate for California Community Colleges and the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges.

Resolved, That the California Community Colleges Classified Senate urge classified, academic and student leaders to advocate for a commitment to fostering a culture of participatory governance by ensuring that the insights and expertise of local classified senates are integrated into institutional participatory governance processes;

Resolved, That the California Community Colleges Classified Senate, in collaboration with system partners, advocate for the formal recognition of local classified senates in Title 5, including the designation of areas of purview explicitly acknowledged alongside those of academic senate and student leadership; and

Resolved, That the California Community Colleges Classified Senate, in collaboration with system partners, advocate for formal recognition of the California Community Colleges Classified Senate as the official voice of classified professionals in participatory governance at the state level to safeguard the interests of classified professionals and enhance the collaborative framework of the California Community Colleges system.

¹ https://datamart.cccco.edu/Faculty-Staff/Staff_Annual.aspx