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## L.A. Community College District selects new leader

March 13, 2014 | By Jason Song

The Los Angeles Community College District has selected a veteran educator to be its next chancellor, officials said Thursday.

Francisco Rodriguez, 51, has been president and superintendent of the MiraCosta Community College District in north San Diego County for the last five years. He replaces Daniel LaVista, who announced his resignation in early 2013.

Adriana Barrera has served as interim chancellor since last summer while Los Angeles district officials conducted a search for a permanent executive.

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### FOR THE RECORD:

**L.A. Community College District numbers:** An article in the March 14 LATEXtra about the new chancellor of the Los Angeles Community College District said the district had its funding cut by nearly \$1 billion during the recession and saw enrollment drop by more than 500,000 students. Those figures are for California community colleges overall, not the Los Angeles district. The city district lost about 49,000 students between 2008 and 2013 and saw its budget drop by about \$100 million between 2009 and 2013.

Rodriguez said he was first approached by the Los Angeles district's search committee over the summer and again during the winter. He had two formal interviews and several informational conversations before being offered the job. The district's Board of Trustees unanimously approved a contract for Rodriguez during a closed session Wednesday night.

Rodriguez, 51, has also worked at UC Davis and Woodland Community College in Yolo County. He was also the president of Cosumnes Community College in Sacramento for six years.

The Los Angeles Board of Trustees is scheduled to formally approve Rodriguez at its next meeting on March 26, and he would begin his new job in June. The district will release Rodriguez's contract details after he is approved and Barrera will return to her previous position of deputy chancellor.

LaVista made \$370,000 annually at the time of his resignation.

MiraCosta College is the only school in its district and has about 18,000 students. The Los Angeles district is the nation's largest, serving about 250,000 students at its nine campuses.

"It's an extraordinary leadership opportunity," Rodriguez said.

Since Rodriguez has been president of MiraCosta, enrollment increased by nearly 25% and the number of military veterans and active-duty students has doubled, according to a district news release.

"We thank him for his incredible leadership in driving us forward to increasing access and success for students, while maintaining financial discipline," said MiraCosta College Board of Trustees President David Broad in a statement.

Rodriguez said his top priority in Los Angeles will be to improve the district's finances. "The biggest challenge might be to ensure there is sufficient and adequate funding to deliver the academic funding that L.A. County deserve and expects," he said.

Although the economic outlook has improved recently, the district had its funding cut by nearly \$1 billion during the recession and saw enrollment drop by more than 500,000 students.

The district came under tougher scrutiny after a 2011 Times investigation uncovered poor planning, questionable spending and other flaws in a \$6-billion campus rebuilding project.

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