



# ***THE LEAGUE LEGISLATIVE UPDATE***

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### **Assembly Committees Announced**

Assembly Speaker Bass announced Assembly Committees on January 23<sup>rd</sup>. Listed below are members of the Budget Subcommittee on Education Finance and the Committee on Higher Education. For a complete list of committees please go to:

<http://www.assembly.ca.gov/acs/acsframeset8text.asp>

#### **Budget Subcommittee #2 – Education Finance**

- Assemblymember Wilmer Carter, Chair
- Assemblymember Bill Berryhill
- Assemblymember Julia Brownley
- Assemblymember Wesley Chesbro
- Assemblymember Jean Fuller
- Assemblymember Sandré Swanson

#### **Higher Education**

- Assemblymember Anthony Portantino, Chair
- Assemblymember Connie Conway, Vice Chair
- Assemblymember Joel Anderson
- Assemblymember Marty Block
- Assemblymember Paul Cook
- Assemblymember Paul Fong
- Assemblymember Cathleen Galgiani
- Assemblymember Alyson Huber
- Assemblymember Fiona Ma
- Assemblymember Ira Ruskin

## **Bills of Interest**

For the latest League Bills of Interest, please click below.

<http://www.ccleague.org/files/public/BOI012609.pdf>

## **Budget Briefing**

Please go to the League's website for the latest budget briefing at:

<http://www.ccleague.org/files/public/BudgetBriefing09.pdf>

## **Fast Facts 2009**

The League's Fast Facts 2009, with information on comparative higher education fees and enrollments, as well as transfers both in and out of state, and degrees and certificates awarded during 2007-08, is now available on our website at:

<http://www.ccleague.org/files/public/FastFacts09.pdf>

## **PPIC Report – Californians and Their Government**

The Public Policy Institute of California (PPIC) released findings of their recent statewide survey on Californians and their government. Researchers found major changes in public opinion over those expressed in previous years. The majority of Californians support President Barack Obama's economic recovery plan and see it as important in meeting the state's infrastructure needs, according to a survey released on January 28th by the PPIC. The majority of Californians are giving a warm reception to President Obama and think that the new president and Congress will be able to work together and accomplish a lot in the next year. Conversely, most Californians disapprove of the Governor's and Legislature's handling of the state budget and economy. The overall approval ratings of the Governor and the Legislature are significantly lower than last year. Researchers noted a profound flip across the board in the attitude towards budget solutions and taxes. In addition, the majority favored budget reforms, including spending limits and lowering the two-thirds legislative requirement to pass a state budget. The majority of Californians want the state budget gap to be solved through a mix of spending cuts and tax increase. Over sixty percent of the public wanted K-12 education protected from spending cuts; with twelve percent wanting higher education protected from cuts. Please click on the following link for more information: [www.ppic.org](http://www.ppic.org)

## **California Forward to Study CCs**

California Forward (CF) is a group funded by seven major foundations whose mission is to "transform our state government through citizen-driven solutions to provide better representation, smarter budgeting and fiscal management, and high quality public services so all Californians have the opportunity to be safe, healthy and prosperous in the global economy....[Its vision] is to renew the governance of California so that elected officials and public agencies can forge the best possible solutions and provide the highest quality of services –

supporting the efforts of regions, organizations and individuals to thrive in this dynamic and competitive century.”

CF has chosen community colleges as the first group to come under its scrutiny, with a workshop scheduled for February 27th at Mc George School of Law in Sacramento on an invitation-only basis. Former Chancellor Diane Woodruff and Chancellor Jack Scott met with Jim Mayer, Executive Director of CF and attempted to have this session cancelled, so that CF could focus on its highest purpose – to support fiscal and budgetary reform. While they were not apprised of the precise form and topics of the workshop, we believe that the work of Nancy Shulock of the Institute of Higher Education Leadership and Policy (IHELP) at CSU Sacramento will be the major focus of the day. (Shulock is the author of several Hewlett-funded reports including *Rules of the Game* and *It Could Happen*. All of her studies generally criticize community colleges and assert that while we know the elements of success, we are unwilling or unable to modify our colleges to adopt these strategies.) Consultation Council has agreed that there should be a system response to the IHELP reports; it is in draft form and will have another review at this month’s Consultation Council, scheduled for February 19th.

### **Update on the Commission on the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Economy**

This commission will hold public hearings over the next three months and, by April 15th, hopes to suggest changes that will result in a revenue stream that is more stable and reflective of the California economy. Governor Schwarzenegger said he expects "big things" from the commission. "Unlike our diverse economy, our state's revenue system is the epitome of boom or bust and right now we are paying the price," Schwarzenegger said. "That is why I have worked with the legislative leaders to find a long-term solution to our revenue problem.... [by] creating a bipartisan Commission ...to study our revenue system and help California achieve the long-term fiscal stability our state needs and our people deserve."

The commission appears to be more unified on items such as expanding income and sales tax bases, perhaps by extending the latter to services, as a way of reducing the volatility of the current system, which is weighted heavily toward income taxes paid by a relative few high-income taxpayers. One percent of income tax returns generate nearly 50 percent of the system's revenues.

### **Commission Report Suggests Remedy to Declining Graduation Rates**

*Coming to Our Senses: Education and the American Future*, The College Board Commission on Access, Admissions and Success in Higher Education, January 2009.

<http://professionals.collegeboard.com/policy-advocacy/access/success>

This report cites the continual decline (from 21<sup>st</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup> among advanced nations) in high school graduation rates among young people in the U.S. It offers a list of 10 recommendations, which can be measured for accountability, to help correct course and restore our global competitive edge for the 21st century.

The commission set an ambitious goal of increasing the percentage of 25- to 34-year-olds in the U.S. who earn a two-or four-year degree from 40 percent now to 55 percent by 2025, or about 1

percent a year for the next 15 years. The 28-member commission — composed primarily of educators — considered every level of education before establishing 10 interdependent recommendations and quantifiable indicators that will track the annual progress made on each.

In addition to recommendations involving: establishing voluntary quality preschool programs which would be universally available to children from low-income families; improving middle and high school counseling; creating stronger dropout-prevention programs; introducing progressive teacher recruitment and retention programs; and aligning the K-12 education system with international standards and college admissions expectations, this report addresses the following collegiate issues:

- 1) Keep college affordable — by controlling college costs, using available aid and resources wisely, and insisting that state governments meet their obligations for funding higher education;
- 2) Streamline the college admissions process;
- 3) Provide more need-based grant aid while simplifying the process of applying for that aid;
- 4) Dramatically increase college completion rates — by reducing dropouts, easing transfer processes and using "data-based" approaches to improve completion rates at both two- and four-year institutions; and
- 5) Provide postsecondary opportunities as an essential element of adult education programs — by supplementing existing basic skills training with a new "honors GED" and through better coordination of existing adult education, veteran's benefits, outreach programs and student aid.

### **CEO Changes**

- Cindy Miles, president of the Hialeah Campus of Miami Dade College, will become chancellor of the Grossmont-Cuyamaca CCD on March 1. She will succeed Omero Suarez who has been chancellor for more than a decade and will work as a consultant for the district until June 30, when he officially retires.

### **Other Staffing Changes in Sacramento**

- Glen Thomas, a veteran educator and member of the UC Davis Graduate School of Education Board of Advisors, has been appointed Secretary of Education by Governor Schwarzenegger.
- Josh Golka will be replacing Steve Henderson as the primary contact for community colleges for the California School Employees Association.