

COMMUNITY COLLEGE LEAGUE OF CALIFORNIA

2019 POLICY AGENDA

March 2019



Economic and Social Mobility for All Californians

California's Community colleges are an indispensable investment in our state's present and future prosperity. California's public Community Colleges constitute an accessible path to a better life for generations of low-income and working-class Californians. Our Community Colleges are driven by an enduring vision of equity, and their employees embrace their critical role in lifting the state's economy, closing achievement gaps, and offering quality higher education and workforce development for all Californians.

EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY AND QUALITY

- Provide Colleges with Funding Protections Afforded to Other Systems**

California Community Colleges have an inequitable fiscal burden when the State's property tax estimates are higher than actualized revenues. Colleges are forced to absorb the shortfalls at the expense of student academic services. Providing funding protections is not a new practice as K-12 has a mechanism to supplement shortfalls from property tax. We ask State leaders treat community colleges equally and automatically increase the general fund allocation to community colleges corresponding to any shortfalls in property taxes.

- Increase Formula Base Funding**

General operating dollars fund innovation on campuses. An investment in general resources through an increase to formula funding rates enable and support high functioning campuses. An ongoing cost-of-living adjustment is essential for district sustainability.

PROTECT AND STRENGTHEN COLLEGE INFRASTRUCTURE & LEARNING RESOURCES

- Invest in Deferred Maintenance & Instructional Equipment**

Colleges are grappling with aging infrastructure that will need to be replaced, renovated, or retrofitted, and the resources needed to tackle such projects compete with student supports and services. The absence of instructional equipment and deferred maintenance funds represent a threat to a college's ability to offer quality learning experiences on a safe, clean, and adequately equipped campus environment. Districts respectfully urge an allocation of deferred maintenance & instructional equipment dollars in the Legislative Budget. These resources are not only essential for student services and supports but also to protect California's infrastructure across all 114 campuses and 78 centers statewide.

BUILD FISCAL RESILIENCY

- Employees Deserve Certainty in Retirement - Address Unfunded Liabilities**

College employees deserve the certainty of a funded pension in retirement. Unfunded pension liabilities continue to represent a major fiscal burden for both the state government and local education agencies (LEAs) within California. These increasing costs are crowding out services intended for student success. We



Quality Public Community Colleges for All Californians

ask the Legislature to partner with LEAs and buy down pension liabilities. We strongly support the pay down of CalSTRS unfunded liability rate increases in 2019-20 and 2020-2021 for community colleges.

ESSENTIAL COLLEGE FACILITIES

- Honor Voters' Will and Fund the Backlog of Capital Outlay Projects**

In 2016, California voters approved a facilities bond providing a \$2 billion infrastructure investment in California's community colleges. The failure to fund all Board of Governors' approved and vetted facilities projects in the last two state budget cycles has resulted in an extensive backlog, and has substantially reduced the buying power of these voter-approved resources. This lack of action dismisses strong voter support for Proposition 51 and extensive facilities needs of \$42 billion over the next 10 years. Failing to fund all 19 continuing projects and 40 new projects represents a missed opportunity to create jobs, preempt substantial building cost increases, and to cultivate a skilled and educated workforce in communities throughout the state.

AFFORDABILITY, FOOD & HOUSING ACCESS

- Support AB 612 (Weber) to Helping Students Meet Their Basic Needs**

Help colleges reduce student food insecurity by removing legal barriers and the red tape colleges face in qualifying as CalFresh-approved vendors and increase student access to food financial aid. Districts and colleges have the potential to create more sustainable and effective partnerships to address students' food and housing access challenges.

FINANCIAL AID

- Equitably Fund Financial Aid for Community College Students**

As currently structured, Cal Grants continue to distribute less than 10% of its resources to California community college students despite the fact that our students comprise two-thirds of the higher education population. The lack of adequate financial aid leads students to take fewer classes, extends their time to graduation, makes college unaffordable, and makes a degree substantially more difficult to obtain. It's time to reform financial aid to cover community college student's total cost of attendance.

PROTECT AND EXPAND DUAL ENROLLMENT PATHWAYS

- Support Assembly Bill 30 (Holden) & Remove the Sunset on College and Career Access Pathways and Streamline the Process to Develop Dual Enrollment Partnerships**

All students deserve exposure to and the opportunity to pursue higher education. For first-generation students, participation in dual enrollment courses results in increased college-going rates and greater persistence in higher education. Key among the benefits of dual enrollment courses are: reduction of time-to-degree completion, increase in college attainment, and the reduction of achievement gaps for underrepresented students. Dual enrollment also strengthens connections between high schools and colleges. Community colleges expand the benefits of dual enrollment and to extent the sunset on the College and Career Access Pathways (CCAP) Act.

