Importance of Advocacy
Importance of Advocacy

Why be an advocate?

• Crucial decisions impacting your institutions and students are made in Sacramento.

• Due to Propositions 13 and 98 bulk of funding for community college goes through Sacramento.

• Legislature sets state policy goals for community college districts.
Legislators

Want

Local

Context

• How are these resources helping your students?

• What impact will the bill have on individual students in the legislator’s district?

• What successful efforts have these funds or policies allowed your college to launch?

• Give specific program examples.

Share Your District’s Success Stories!
Policy Briefs:

• **Background**
  – Brief outlines the background of the policy area using clear examples.

• **Significance**
  – Brief highlights the importance of the policy and/or case selection to the US policy concerns.

• **Recommendations**
  – Recommendations are clear, concise, and directly link to the specific policy issue.

• **Audience**
  – Consider who the intended reader of the brief is.
  – Easy to understand language.
  – Present data in a manageable way.

• **Expected Outcomes**
  – Outcomes are examined using reliable evidence. They directly relate to the recommendations.
    • Economic Implications
    • Policy Implications
    • Security Implications
Importance of Advocacy

Three Areas of Advocacy

State Budget
State Legislation
Federal Issues
Federal Issues
Higher Education Act

Setting Federal Higher Education Policy

• Expired in 2013

• Goal is to periodically update and review federal higher education policy.

• Theoretically primary vehicle behind federal higher education policy.

• Opportunity to pass legislation closing.
### Appropriations Process

#### “Conventional” Appropriations Process:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>November – February: Executive Branch</th>
<th>Office of Management and Budget crafts proposals into a budget.</th>
<th>President proposes budget in February.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Federal agencies prepare budget proposals.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>March – August: Legislative Process</th>
<th>Appropriations committees craft spending bills.</th>
<th>Full House and Senate vote on spending bills.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Budget committees set overall spending levels.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>August – October: Spending Levels Finalized</th>
<th>Fiscal year starts October 1st.</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>President signs or vetos spending bills.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Lawmakers often ignore process.
- If no agreement, generally a resolution authorizing programs funded at current levels to be continued.
- Most community college funding contained in HHS – Education - Labor spending bill.
Department of Education: Policymaking by Regulation

• Lack of congressional action on Higher Education Act has led to increased Department of Education regulatory action.

• Practice under both the Obama and Trump administrations.

• Focused on providing more flexibility for institutions.

• Particular focus on making it easier for for-profit colleges to operate.
Financial Aid

• The federal government by far the biggest provider of financial aid to students.

• Pell Grants – Direct Grants to Low Income Students
  – In California 100% of Pell Grant goes directly to the student.

• Department of Education – The “Bank” of the Federal Government
  – Administers over $1.5 trillion in student loan debt.
  – 6% of California community college graduates have federal loans.
MAJOR FINANCIAL AID PROGRAMS

- California - Cal Grant B: 6%
- Proposition 98 - California Promise Grants: 30%
- Proposition 98 - Student Success and Support Grants: 3%
- Federal Government - Pell: 61%
Deferred Action for Childhood Arrival:
• Permits students brought to US as children to obtain work permits.
• President Trump has proposed rescinding the program.
• Supreme Court to determine legality of revocation in 2020 term.

DREAM ACT:
• Would provide a path to citizenship for undocumented students.
• Permit undocumented students to be eligible for federal financial aid.

Current Services:
• AB 540 Centers
• Undocumented Student Action Week
• Legal services
Undocumented Students:
Undocumented Student Action Week

Advocacy Framework:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
<th>Friday</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Week Long Activities</strong></td>
<td><strong>1.DREAM2Action.</strong> An email and social media campaign urging the California Congressional Delegation to take immediate legislative action. This campaign will use an online tool for sending emails and tweets to your representatives.</td>
<td><strong>Question of the day.</strong> At 12:00 p.m. on each day of Undocumented Student Action Week the Community College League of California will tweet a new question centered around undocumented students. Each day will address a new topic. You can engage in the discussion on Twitter.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Advocacy for Undocumented Students</strong></td>
<td><strong>Share Your Story</strong></td>
<td><strong>Convene With Others</strong></td>
<td><strong>Meet With Your Representative</strong></td>
<td><strong>Speak Your Mind</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Suggested Actions for Advocacy</strong></td>
<td>Share your immigration story with this image + caption campaign to demonstrate that everyone has a unique migrant story.</td>
<td>Host a townhall on your campus. This is an opportunity to invite members of your community to discuss legislative policies statewide. Consider inviting your representative and their staff. Or host a “Know Your Rights” or “Know Your Resources” Workshop.</td>
<td>Schedule a district office meeting with your legislative leaders urging them to take action on federal issues and increased financial support for services.</td>
<td>Host a phone banking party to urge your congressional representative to take issues on that impact undocumented students.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Legislative Landscape
Legislative Update:
2019-20 Legislative Session

• Democrats achieved super (duper) majorities.

• Supermajority derived from legislators elected in moderate to conservative districts.

• Effectively three political parties:
  – Conservative Republicans
  – Moderate Democrats
  – Liberal Democrats

• Due to revised term limits, this is the most experienced state legislature since the early 2000s.
Budget Update
Total State Funds
Total $214 Billion

- Health and Human Services: 31.2%
- K thru 12 Education: 28.4%
- Higher Education: 8.5%
- Transportation: 7.4%
- Natural Resources: 3.1%
- Legislative, Judicial, and Executive: 3.8%
- Labor and Workforce Development: 0.4%
- Business, Consumer Services, and Housing: 2.1%
- Corrections and Rehabilitation: 7.4%
- Environmental Protection: 2.0%
- General Government: 5.0%
- Government Operations: 0.8%
2019 Budget Act

- University of California: 22.3%
- Board of Governors of Community Colleges: 36.3%
- Student Aid Commission: 9.6%
- Other: 8.6%
- California State University: 23.2%
Where does a college’s money come from?

FUNDING SOURCE

- Federal: 1%
- State: 56%
- Local: 43%
• Community colleges receive the lowest per-pupil funding of any system in the state.

• Very small amount of discretionary dollars available to achieve state goals.

• Colleges must make hard choices.

• Reduction in quality of education for students.
Inequitable Per Pupil Funding

- Despite making up two-thirds of the higher education students in the state, community college students receive 7% of the funding.

- Once total cost of attendance is taken into account, it is more expensive for a low income community college student to attend a community college than a UC or CSU.

- If a low-income student is able to access all available financial aid, they would likely need to work at least 20 or more hours a week to address living costs.
Inherent conflict between the philosophies of local control and Sacramento based decisions:

• The League believes that communities are best equipped to make decisions in their best interest.
• Centralization of funding creates an incentive in Sacramento to make decisions that may seem to make sense to lawmakers.
• With 73 districts, 2.1 million students it is difficult to find a “one-size fits all” solution.

Example: AB 302 (Berman), which would have mandated that community colleges open up parking lots for homeless students to sleep overnight in.

Pros:
• Understandable reaction to state’s housing crisis.
• Students are already sleeping in their cars – why not somewhere safe on campus?

Cons:
• Most community colleges are not equipped to provide a safe space to camp overnight.
• Funds required to implement legislation could be better used to support this population.
Thank You

Gerson Liahut-Sanchez  
Fellow  
Community College League of California  
fellow@ccleague.org

Ryan McElhinney  
Legislative Advocate  
Community College League of California  
ryan@ccleague.org