



Office of Government Relations

COMMUNITY COLLEGE LEAGUE OF CALIFORNIA

March 2016 Newsletter

Upcoming Events:

CEO Symposium
March 13-15
Yosemite Valley

Consultation Council
March 17
Chancellor's Office
Sacramento, CA

**ASCCC Academic
Academy**
March 18-19
Sheraton Grand
Sacramento, CA

Board of Governors
March 21-22
Chancellor's Office
Sacramento, CA

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opportunities and news at
the League's [Budget and
Policy Center!](#)*

*Follow bills tracked at:
www.ccleague.org/bills*

A Legacy of Student Success



Since November of 2012, the California Community Colleges have had a strong and dedicated leader at the helm. Next month, Chancellor Brice Harris will retire after more than three years of leading the nation's largest system of higher education. Harris spent his career working to improve student success and access and he leaves behind a legacy of success and a system with many opportunities ahead.

During his tenure, the California Community Colleges experienced a renaissance. In November of 2012, the same month that Harris accepted the challenge to serve as system Chancellor, California voters approved Proposition 30, creating new hope and an opportunity to work with local colleges to rebuild the system from deep recession-era spending cuts. Chancellor Harris brought focus to the community colleges, making the implementation of the Student Success Initiative the key theme and priority for his work. In the pursuit of student success, he has worked with stakeholders to effectuate the Associates Degree for Transfer, launched the Strong Workforce Taskforce, and made the historic selection of 15 colleges to offer baccalaureate degrees at community colleges. He has also demonstrated infallible courage as the system explores accreditation options that meet the current and future needs of colleges.

Prior to being selected as Chancellor for the California Community Colleges, Harris served as the 16-year visionary chancellor of the Los Rios Community College District in Sacramento, president of Fresno College, and faculty member. As good friend and partner with the League, Brice Harris has worked collaboratively in our efforts for student equity, leadership development, and determined advocacy. We thank Chancellor Harris for his lifelong dedication to students!

League Releases Analysis of Budget Policy Proposals

Earlier this month the Department of Finance released the 2016-17 Budget Trailer Bill. This is the policy language needed to implement the proposals in the Governor's 2016-17 budget. In an effort to keep our colleges informed, we have posted a summary and analysis of the 2016-17 Budget Trailer Bill available [here](#). The League analysis includes full descriptions of the following proposals:

- **The Strong Workforce Program (Page 1)**
 - The \$200 million proposal by the Administration would create a regional structure for the planning and development of new or expanded programs and it would use that regional structure to distribute funds to colleges.
 - The League analysis highlights the need for a minimum allocation for college districts in order to address the high cost of CTE programs and adequately fund outreach efforts to increase awareness of the availability of workforce programs.
- **The Student Success for Basic Skills Program (Page 5)**
 - The proposal by the Administration sets minimum conditions for colleges in order to access new basic skills funds. These minimum conditions include: 1) resubmitting a basic skills plan, and 2) implementing multiple measures.
 - The League analysis addresses concerns about implementing a performance outcome funding mechanism on programs that serve vulnerable populations.
- **The Zero-Textbook-Cost Associate Degree Grant Program (Page 7)**
 - The program would distribute grants of up to \$500,000 for each zero-textbook-cost degree (Z-degree) a college develops.
- **The Awards for Innovation in Higher Education (Page 8)**
 - The proposal uses \$25 million in one-time funds to provide awards of at least \$4 million each to colleges that launch an initiative in one of six categories.
- **The Adult Education Block Grant (Page 9)**
 - The Trailer Bill amends a section of the Adult Education Block Grant that adds groups who's input should be considered during regional planning.

Last week, the Legislative Analyst's Office (LAO) also released its analysis of the Governor's 2016-17 Higher Education proposal. While the LAO agrees with the overall direction of the Governor's budget plan, the report is critical of the Strong Workforce Program and Student Success for Basic Skills Program proposals. The report is available [here](#). The LAO makes the following recommendations:

- Modifying the Strong Workforce Program proposal to address the high costs of certain CTE programs. The LAO agrees with the Governor in the value of creating a new workforce program, however, the analysis calls for a more effective structure. In addition, the report recommends consolidating planning processes to avoid duplication, as colleges are required to craft similar regional plans for adult education, CTE, and other workforce-related programs.
- Advises the Legislature to analyze the outcomes of the 2015-16 basic skills budget investments – the Basic Skills Transformation program and the Basic Skills Partnership Pilot program – before augmenting the Basic Skills Initiative. The LAO

states that the Legislature could redirect the proposed funding to allow more colleges to participate in one of the two grant programs created last year.

The state budget process is in early stages of discussions with members of the Senate and Assembly, as well as the Department of Finance. We encourage you to follow the budget as it unfolds at on the League's [Budget & Policy Center](#). For budget questions or ways to engage, please contact Lizette at lizette@cleague.org.

Legislation to Reform Cal Grants for CTE Students Introduced

Earlier this month Assemblymember Jose Medina introduced AB 1892 (Medina), legislation that will reform Cal Grants for community college students enrolled in a CTE program. It would provide more financial resources to help our students pay for living expenses while attending school. As a result, CTE community college students work less, take more classes and increase their chance of academic success.

Currently CTE community college students are only eligible for a Cal Grant C Access grant of \$548, while students at for-profit private schools are eligible for up to \$2,462 for tuition and fees. AB 1892 (Medina) would fix this inequity by increasing the access grant to \$3,000 and permitting it to be used for all living expenses while attending college. Additionally it will create an entitlement Cal Grant C program for community college students who are in a CTE program less than one year in length.

This legislation is part of the California Promise package that the League is co-sponsoring with the Chancellor's Office. AB 1892 (Medina), along with AB 1721 (Medina) both make targeted investments in financial aid that will make college more affordable for financially needy students.

In addition to sponsoring legislation, community college districts from around the state are working to create their own Promise programs, increasing financial aid to students in their local community. For more information on the California Promise, please go to www.calcollegepromise.org. If you have any questions regarding California Promise legislation please contact Ryan McElhinney at ryan@cleague.org or (916) 245-5039.

Must Reads

Expectations Meet Reality: The Underprepared Student and Community Colleges. Center for Student Engagement. The University of Texas at Austin. (2016)

This survey-study focuses on the importance of improving college readiness as essential for improvement in college completion. It reviews numerous studies and much data on the wide variety of initiatives which help prepare underprepared students more quickly for college level work. These activities include: multiple measures assessment, co-requisite courses, redesigned math, accelerated developmental courses, computer-assisted developmental math, developmental education paired with workplace skills, preparation for placement tests, and high school partnerships (dual/concurrent enrollment.)

This report also compares students' perceptions with their realities, in terms of their readiness for college-level courses, their expected completion, and their lack of preparation for placement tests. Finally, the report provides a set of issues and questions raised to help guide colleges in responding to the challenges surrounding assessment, placement, and developmental education.

Read the full report at: http://www.ccsse.org/docs/Underprepared_Student.pdf

Helping Community College Students Cope with Financial Emergencies Lessons from the Dreamkeepers and Angel Fund Emergency Financial Aid Programs.

By Christian Geckeler, MDRC (2008)

(Although the following report is from 2008, it is summarized here due to its potential importance for California in providing an additional avenue of emergency financial aid for needy community college students.)

MDRC's study of the financial needs of community college students revealed that many of them face unexpected financial emergencies – caused by the loss of a job; a health crisis; an unexpected increase in rent, utilities, or child care costs; or a fire or natural disaster. For students with few resources and who live in areas where public transportation is scarce, not having the money to fill the gas tank, repair a broken clutch, or replace a stolen bicycle can mean the difference between attending class and dropping out. Research and common sense suggest that financial crises contribute to high rates of attrition among community college students. Even short-term setbacks can impact college completion rates.

Lumina Foundation for Education created the Dreamkeepers and Angel Fund Emergency Financial Aid Programs to assist community college students who are at risk of dropping out due to unexpected financial crises. Both programs are multiyear pilot projects that are administered by Scholarship America and the American Indian College Fund, respectively. Eleven community colleges participate in Dreamkeepers.

Each Dreamkeepers college receives up to \$100,000 over three years; is responsible for designing its program and raising funds, both to sustain its program and to continue receiving matching funds from the initiative. Lumina asked MDRC to evaluate these programs during their first two years of program design and implementation. The key findings include:

- The Dreamkeepers and Angel Fund programs awarded over \$845,000 in emergency financial aid to more than 2,400 students. Students at the Dreamkeepers colleges most frequently asked for help with housing expenses, transportation and books.
- The Dreamkeepers program set general parameters but gave colleges freedom to customize their programs; consequently, their designs vary considerably. Most colleges award grants; some offer loans.
- Dreamkeepers aid recipients are more likely than other students at their colleges to be older, parents, first-year students, enrolled full time, enrolled in vocational study, and recipients of financial aid. They are also more likely to take and complete more credits.

- Data show that aid recipients reenroll at rates roughly comparable to that of the average student on their campuses. Aid recipients may also benefit by becoming better connected to on- and off-campus supportive services.
- Nearly all the colleges met or exceeded their fundraising goals.
- This report suggests several key challenges for colleges interested in starting this program: the definition of a financial emergency, building a flexible administrative structure that safeguards funds yet quickly responds to student needs, ensuring that all eligible students are aware of the program and have equal opportunities to access funds, finding funding sources, and using data to evaluate programs.

Read the full report at: <http://www.mdrc.org/project/dreamkeepers-and-angel-fund-emergency-financial-aid#overviewMDRC>

CEO Changes and Retirements

Each month League staff provides information about the movement of CEOs between colleges or toward retirement.

- Cheryl Marshall was appointed Chancellor of the North Orange County Community College District.
- Paul Parnell was appointed to Chancellor of State Center Community College District.

For more information, contact the League's Government Relations staff:

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