



# 2024 Fiscal and Policy Priorities

JANUARY 2024

While the estimated \$38 billion budget shortfall will limit state spending, we can maximize our advocacy with the following message:



**Gratitude:** Express appreciation to your lawmakers for their prior support and to the Governor for proposing to use a modest level of reserves in his budget to keep our finances whole amidst an overall revenue shortfall. The Administration's budget allows community colleges to build upon our successes from the past while positioning us to help weather the storm of declining tax revenue.



**Education:** Share the local story of your college and/or district, specifically, your successes in student completion, enrollment strategies, and workforce development. Use this opportunity to highlight student stories, particularly those of diverse communities and first-generation college-goers. Explain how state support has directly contributed to your college's and/or district's ability to serve your community.



**Flexibility:** When revenues have fallen, the state has historically looked to maximize its limited resources by removing barriers to local flexibility.

This year is ideal to amend the 1961-era Fifty Percent Law, found in Education Code Section 84362, which requires districts to spend at least half of their Current Expense of Education each fiscal year for salaries and benefits of classroom instructors. Since the law has not been updated to account for the role of counselors and librarians, or for the utilization of such technological innovations as online learning, its implementation can hinder, rather than promote, student success.

Share the experience of your district to this effect and explain that conversations are underway as to the best legislative approach to address this issue. The League's Government Relations Department will be following up with legislative offices on this issue.



# In addition to the Budget, the League will be advocating for the following items in 2024:

## Affordable Housing

- The League appreciates the state’s historic investment of \$1.1 billion to support affordable housing at community colleges across the state.
- The investment in affordable housing aligns with the findings of the CEO Affordability, Food & Housing Access Taskforce report from September 2023.
- The League awaits the development of the Administration’s new affordable housing proposal to ensure those needed accommodations are available as soon as possible.

## Cal Grant Reform

- The League urges funding Cal Grant reform in the budget.
- Cal Grant modernization will remove significant barriers for students to attend higher education, particularly community colleges, resulting in a stronger and more diverse workforce for California’s economy.

### Contact the League’s Government Relations Team

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## School Facilities Bond

- The League supports a school facilities bond, like AB 247 (Muratsuchi).
- The California Community College Chancellor’s Office’s 2022-23 Five-Year Capital Outlay Plan calls for \$23.2 billion in total spending split between \$9 billion in construction of new facilities and \$14.2 billion for modernization of existing ones.
- With the last of the bond funds being depleted, our colleges need a new school facilities bond on the November 2024 ballot.

## Baccalaureate Degrees in Nursing Pilot Program

- The League supports SB 895 (Roth), which authorizes a pilot program on Bachelor of Science in Nursing degrees at community colleges.
- According to the American Association of Colleges of Nursing, the capacity of four-year colleges and universities is a limiting factor in further progress.
- California is estimated to face a shortage of about 36,000 licensed nurses, according to the UC San Francisco Health Workforce Research Center on Long-Term Care.