



# Office of Government Relations

COMMUNITY COLLEGE LEAGUE OF CALIFORNIA

## October 2015 Newsletter

### Upcoming Events:

Oct. 8

Consultation Council  
Sacramento, CA

Oct. 11

Last Day for Governor Brown  
to Sign or Veto Bills

Oct. 14-17

ACCT Leadership Congress  
Sand Diego, CA

Oct. 26-28

ACBO Fall Conference  
Redondo Beach, CA

Oct. 30

IEPI Workshop on Student  
Support (Re)defined in  
Action  
Allan Hancock College

Nov. 16-17

Board of Governors Meeting  
Mt. San Antonio College

Nov. 19-21

League Annual Convention  
Burlingame, CA

Have an event you would like  
to highlight? Send event info  
to [ryan@ccleague.org](mailto:ryan@ccleague.org) or  
[lizette@ccleague.org](mailto:lizette@ccleague.org).

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Follow Bills Tracked at:  
[www.ccleague.org/bills](http://www.ccleague.org/bills)

### California Leads Conversation on Affordable Tuition

Since the Master Plan for Higher Education was implemented in the 1960s, California has made it a priority to increase access to higher education by keeping the tuition at public institutions as low as possible. Community colleges form an important part of this policy by providing low cost higher education services throughout the state.

As a result, nearly 60% of community college students have their tuition waived by the Board of Governors' fee waiver and those who do pay have the lowest tuition/fees in the nation. This has permitted millions of people to achieve their educational goals and a path to the middle class that may otherwise have been closed to them.

This commitment to increasing college access and providing everyone an opportunity to receive a higher education was reflected in President Obama's "America's College Promise" – a proposal to offer free college tuition at community colleges nation wide.

Though students at California's community colleges pay relatively low or no tuition, they still face difficult financial circumstances that reduce their ability to take classes and ultimately be successful. For example, while two-thirds of higher education students in California are at a community college, only six percent of the financial aid distributed by Cal Grants is provided to community college students.

The League is encouraged by the national conversation on college affordability. While California's community colleges have been a national leader in keeping tuition low, it is important to consider the total cost of attending college. The League looks forward to continuing to work with the Governor, the state Legislature and our system partners to ensure that all Californians have access to higher education to improve their lives and California's economy.

## **Bond Measure Qualifies for November 2016 Ballot**

A ballot measure requesting voters to authorize the sale of general obligation bonds to build and renovate school facilities has qualified for the November 2016 ballot. Sponsored by the Coalition for Adequate School Housing (CASH), this measure would generate \$9 billion, including \$2 billion for community colleges.

With the last educational facilities bond measure approved in 2006, California's community colleges have been forced to build their facilities without state support. According to the state Chancellor's Office, the current estimate of unmet need for facilities' funding is \$35 billion over the next 10 years, about half of which should come from the state. The \$2 billion in revenues that this bond would generate will build new facilities and renovate existing ones on college campuses.

After many attempts to work with the state Legislature to authorize a bond, education advocates have been forced to turn to this ballot measure. Both Governor Brown and the state Legislature have policy disagreements on how bond funds are allocated at the K-12 level and Governor Brown has questioned whether the state should fund educational facilities at all. Therefore education advocates have used the initiative process to seek state revenues for educational facilities.

In addition to the education bond qualifying for the ballot, two measures have been proposed to extend income taxes implemented by Proposition 30. Both measures would generate about \$7 billion in revenue while allowing the current sales tax provisions of Proposition 30 to expire. One measure, sponsored by the California Teachers Association and other labor unions, would dedicate most of the revenue for schools and extend the income taxes for 12 years. The other, backed by healthcare interests, would make those taxes permanent and split the revenues equally between K-14 education and healthcare programs for children. This is very early in the initiative process and the League will continue to provide updates as soon as they are available on discussions relating to the extension of Proposition 30.

## **Board of Governors Approves System Budget Request**

On September 21<sup>st</sup> the Board of Governors approved the system budget request. It includes significant investments in student access, success and equity. To see a PDF of a PowerPoint crafted by Lizette Navarette, a legislative advocate for the League, click [here](#). To see the full request, click [here](#).

## **Key Deadline for Gubernatorial Actions**

Governor Brown has until October 11<sup>th</sup> to either sign or veto all legislation sent to his desk at the end of the legislative session. To date, he has not acted on any of the League's priority legislation. League staff will provide complete information on the Governor's actions as soon as they become available.

## **2016 League Legislative Conference -- Save the Date**

The League's 2016 Legislative Conference will be held at the Sheraton Grand Hotel in Sacramento on January 31 – February 1. League staff are securing informative speakers and developing solid breakout sessions to bring all conference attendees up-to-date on public policy issues impacting local districts, boards and staff. Any questions should be directed to either of the League's legislative advocates, Ryan McElhinney or Lizette Navarette, at (916) 444-8641.

## **California School Boards Association Files Lawsuit Over Prop 98 Funds**

Last week the California School Boards Association (CSBA) filed a lawsuit arguing that the inclusion of childcare within Proposition 98 funding violated the guarantee for spending on K-12 and community colleges. CSBA believes that Proposition 98 should have been "re-benched" to reflect the workload increase created by including some childcare provisions within Proposition 98 funds. If successful, CSBA estimates that school funding would be increased by about \$150 million. For more information, please see the following *Sacramento Bee* article:

<http://www.sacbee.com/news/politics-government/capitol-alert/article36966381.html>

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