



**COMMENTS OF CCCT AND CEOCCC
RELATED TO CALIFORNIA CITIZENS
COMMISSION ON HIGHER EDUCATION REPORT**

COMMUNITY COLLEGE LEAGUE OF CALIFORNIA

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In mid-July the California Citizens Commission on Higher Education, a citizens group which has been considering higher education issues for 18 months, released its report, *A State of Learning: California Higher Education in the Twenty-First Century*. This report includes an “action agenda” and a set of recommendations for carrying out this agenda. Following is a listing of the action agenda items, with the appropriate recommendations subsumed under each, and an analysis of the impact of each recommendation upon local community colleges. (The “numbered” items – 1 through 11 – constitute the action agenda; the bulleted items under them are the recommendations, with their text number in parentheses at the conclusion of each item.)

In evaluating the impact of these recommendations on community colleges, we were guided by three general principles:

Open access to quality postsecondary education is essential;

It is appropriate for community colleges to define outcomes for students to assure public accountability; and

Quality community college education benefits both the state and the local community, as well as the individual student.

The Citizens Commission Recommendations and Responses

To establish a firm foundation for this state of learning, the Commission recommends these actions:

A commitment to adopt strategies to smooth out the wide swings of support for the University of California, the California State University and the California Community Colleges by conserving resources when they are most available and transferring them to the times when they are needed most.

The State should create a “trust fund” called the California Higher Education Opportunity Fund, which would consist of:

Any amount above an annual increase of four percent in state general funds available to the UC and the CSU in any given year. (These funds would then be available to each segment during any year when the increase in state general funds falls below 4 percent, as a means of stabilizing their resources over the long-term (Rec. II-1-A).

Comments: No known impact on community colleges, except that stabilization for any segment of higher education is positive for all segments. However, we question the rationale for four percent — what if the cost-of-living exceeds that amount? Also, in its text accompanying this recommendation, the Commission notes that “considerable fiscal discipline” will be required to make this change. Given recent history in the Legislature, it is not clear that such discipline will be forthcoming.

Fifty percent of the increase in resident student fees one year after a “fiscal emergency” has come to an end. These funds would be used later to reduce the pressure to raise student tuition again during fiscal crises (Rec. II-1-B).

Comments: It is unclear whether the Commission is proposing an increase in community college fees since the action agenda item includes community colleges but the bulleted recommendation does not. If it does include community college fees, what is the rationale for using them for other segments of higher education?

We also are concerned about the possibility of community college fee increases because of their damaging effects upon access, especially for students most in need of quality low-cost education.

The Commission should define "fiscal emergency." From the text and recommendations, it is unclear when this recommendation would take effect.

State government should require that following such fiscal emergencies, 50 percent of the increased student fee level, above the normal adjustment, be placed in the California Higher Education Opportunity Fund as a cushion against future emergencies. The Legislature should be responsible for declaring when the fiscal emergency is over (Rec. I-2-4).

Comments: It is unclear whether community colleges are expected to participate in this portion of this recommendation, but if they are included, would their fees be used for UC and CSU? As in the previous recommendation, there is no definition of "fiscal emergency" so it is unclear when this recommendation would take effect.

A commitment by state government to stabilize long-term funding of the University of California and the California State University as a proportion of state appropriations and, above this level, to provide additional resources for new students through an approach which "shares responsibility" among state government, students and the public systems of higher education.

Stabilize state support for "base budgets in higher education by: appropriating annually to the University of California and the California State University no less than the percentage of total General Funds appropriated to each of these segments in the prior year (Rec. I-1-A).

Comments: No known direct impact, but to the extent that UC and CSU receive stable funding, they will be able to accommodate more transfer students and higher education as a whole will be healthier. Such stability would be assured by appropriating at least the same dollar amount, rather than the same percentage of total General Fund revenues.

The Commission does not provide information on what would occur if General Fund revenues are down.

Provide state support for additional enrollments only above certain thresholds:

The University of California should receive an additional appropriation only if annual enrollment growth exceeds 1.5 percent (Rec. I-2-A).

Comments: No known direct impact on community colleges. However, we question whether the push to increase UC enrollments would result in fewer transfer slots being available for community college transfer students.

The California State University should receive an additional appropriation only if annual enrollment growth exceeds 1.5 percent, except for enrollment increases in schools of education which should receive special funding and encouragement to expand (Rec. I-2-B).

Comments: No known direct impact on community colleges. As in the previous comment, we question whether the push to increase CSU enrollments would result in fewer transfer slots being available for community college transfer students.

A commitment by state government to stabilize the proportion of funds appropriated to the Community Colleges within the provisions of Proposition 98 and, above this level, to provide additional resources for new students through an approach which “shares responsibility” among the state government, students, and community colleges.

Stabilize state support for “base” budgets in higher education by fixing the community colleges’ share of overall revenues guaranteed to K-14 under Proposition 98 at least at 10.6% and using that ratio each year to determine their level of support (Rec. I-1-B).

Comments: This is a positive recommendation which would implement the agreement between K-12 and community colleges as negotiated in 1996 and contained in SB 1005 (McPherson), but vetoed by Governor Wilson. If implemented, this recommendation is likely to be seen as a fair split by both community college and K-12 representatives. It also retains the voters’ commitment on Proposition 98 and their recognition that strong, well-funded K-14 education is essential.

The California Community Colleges should receive an appropriation beyond their Proposition 98 guarantee for any year in which enrollment growth exceeds 1.5 percent (Rec. I-2-C).

Comments: This could be an improvement over the current system by rewarding community colleges for serving extra students, instead of forcing colleges to “gamble” (as they often do at present) on whether they will be paid after the year’s end for over-cap students. However, we question the use of the 1.5% threshold before additional funding is provided. Under this system, a college of 20,000 students could grow at the rate of one percent per year and over ten years grow by almost 2,100 students with no increase in state funding. This could result only in frustrating the Commission’s goal to “adopt a comprehensive plan to ensure enrollment for new students, while maintaining a quality education for all,” because it will not be possible to maintain quality while providing for such growth with no additional financial support.

This recommendation also is questionable in light of the significant underfunding of community colleges (\$2941 per full-time equivalent student) compared to UC (\$12,249) or CSU (\$8097) or to the national average for two-year public colleges (\$6,022) in 1993-94 (the last date for which all these data are available.) And, despite Proposition 13, California’s two-year colleges are significantly further behind the national average than they were in 1970-71, with California’s colleges having increased by 1% in revenue per student over that period while the national average increased 25%. Over that same time period, the California-to-national funding ratio has dropped from .72 to .59. With this level of serious underfunding, community colleges cannot be expected to accommodate an additional 1.5% growth before they receive additional funding.

If growth funding is provided only on this type of marginal basis, it results in a lower average level of funding support for the entire institution. This is not incentive to grow and provide the access necessary for the state to achieve its goal of ensuring places for new students. We recommend the Commission carefully consider the ramifications of such a policy and instead develop a concept that would provide strong incentives for institutions to grow and enable them to strengthen themselves rather than reduce their per-student funding and ultimately

weaken their institutions.

A commitment to annually adjust the amount paid by students in public institutions so that increases become gradual, moderate, predictable and equitable.

Require some annual growth in student charges and provide state appropriations for financial aid (Rec. I-3).

Require all students in the public segments to pay a slightly higher charge each year as the students' share of support for additional enrollments and increased educational costs (Rec. I-3-A).

Resident student "fees" in all public segments should be adjusted by the same percentage each year for five-year periods (Rec. II-2-1).

The annual change in resident student tuition should be an increase of 4.6 percent during the first five years of this policy (Rec. II-2-2).

Higher education governing boards should have the latitude to increase student fees during emergencies caused by serious declines in state appropriations (Rec. II-2-3).

Comments: We believe the state should adopt a commitment that student fee increases will be gradual, moderate, and predictable and that any increases in fees should be accompanied by an increase in available financial aid so that no deserving student is left out of higher education because of a lack of financial assistance. However, our data indicate that for every \$1 increase in fees, 10,000 fewer students enroll in community colleges. The greatest impact from fee increases has been on males of African-American descent — these and individuals from other historically-underrepresented groups, such as Latinos, are the very students we so desperately need to ensure are enrolled for the social and economic benefit of the state. We would like to see the Commission address this trend so that future policymakers do not overlook inadvertently the effects of even small fee increases on the financially disadvantaged of our state.

We are concerned about the recommendation to allow governing boards latitude to increase student fees during emergencies; this is the worst time to increase fees on community college students. In general, more students seek out community colleges during bad fiscal times; if fees are increased, they will be discouraged from attending at the time when more education is needed most.

A commitment to provide students in need with adequate financial aid in both public and private institutions and to adjust this aid upward through appropriations whenever student charges in public institutions are increased.

Require the state government to appropriate financial aid for needy students who cannot afford these increased charges (Rec. I-3-B).

State government should assume responsibility for providing student aid sufficient to offset the financial need created by any increase in public sector student fees (Rec. II-3-A).

The State's annual Budget Act should be required to fund fully the statutory provisions of the State's Cal Grant program, including support for students at independent colleges and universities (Rec. II-3-B).

Comments: Although we are appreciative that the importance of financial aid was mentioned in these recommendations, there must be not only adequate, but also timely, financial aid, as both elements are crucial to student retention. Further, it is important to recognize that in recent years, financial aid has not been sufficient to slow the decline of community college students when fees are increased.

If state government does not adopt, or is unwilling to adhere to, a long-term tuition and financial-aid framework, the people of California should adopt such a framework through a ballot initiative whose provisions will not be subject to annual manipulation (Rec. II-4).

Comments: Ballot initiatives have succeeded primarily in tying up government in a "strait jacket" over recent years; and it is unlikely that a framework could be found "whose provisions will not be subject to annual manipulation."

As with the fees increases considered in recommendations under Agenda Item IV, any lag or insufficiency in financial aid does the most harm to African-Americans, Latinos and others whom our colleges most need to reach.

A commitment by state government to use capacity within the independent institutions of higher education as a way of accommodating a portion of the increase in student demand and to consider the impact on private institutions of any change in policies for public colleges and universities.

Comments: What is the meaning of "a commitment"? In considering this recommendation, it is important to balance the full report and its recommendations, rather than to look at them in piecemeal fashion. While on the surface, it would appear to be cost-effective to use available facilities space, these benefits may be more than offset by the increased state subsidies for the required increases in financial aid. Further, access is likely to be reduced because financial aid usually lags the financial needs of students and those from historically underrepresented groups are most reluctant to seek or accept financial aid and, effectively, their access is likely to be impacted negatively despite the best intentions of the Commission. While it may be appropriate to use the space available in independent institutions, this should not be done until all three public college systems are fully funded. If students are diverted to the independent institutions without consideration of financial aid and other related costs, and before the public institutions are fully funded, this recommendation may lead to significant damage to all three public systems. Finally, with so much financial aid pouring into private institutions to fill these spaces, it is unlikely that there will be sufficient financial aid to backfill community colleges and their students for even moderate, predictable fee increases.

A commitment by state government and the institutions of higher education to make extraordinary efforts to use existing facilities more extensively through sharing and through extended hours. Institutions should be given strong incentives to fill campuses that have unused capacity and to deliver more education without increased cost.

State government should provide fiscal incentives to all higher education (UC, CSU, CCC and independent institutions) for sharing facilities. These incentives should come through subsidies from a statewide fund and be provided to an institution when it demonstrates that its use of facilities in another institution will save publicly supported capital outlay (Rec. I-4-A).

State government should provide fiscal incentives to all higher education (UC, CSU, CCC and independent institutions) to encourage joint programs in the public interest (Rec. I-4-B).

State government should adopt a long-term policy to explore alternatives to new construction in the public segments and, if these alternatives represent savings, implement them before making commitments to large-scale, new construction for increasing enrollment capacity (Rec. I-4-C).

New construction for additional enrollment capacity should come only as a last resort (Rec. I-4-C-1).

Expansion of existing campuses should have a higher priority than adding new campuses built "from the ground up," since costs for new construction are lower on existing campuses with established infrastructures (Rec. I-4-C-2).

When new campuses are considered, the highest priority should be those geographic areas of California which are seriously underserved (Rec. I-4-C-3).

Regional cooperation with the purpose of reducing capital costs should be a high priority (Rec. I-4-C-4).

Comments: All of these proposals could benefit community colleges and their students in the long-run. When new campuses—especially UC campuses—are built, they require an immediate infusion of large amounts of capital for new infrastructure, which detracts greatly from the funds available to expand current campuses.

We also question the presumption of unused capacity. We believe that such capacity is quite limited and not easily accessible due to the limited mobility of students with families and jobs.

Even without fiscal incentives, community colleges already are implementing a number of these recommendations; however, fiscal support would be a positive step toward helping colleges increase joint ventures.

A fundamental change in the structure and governance of the California community colleges to reduce the layers of decision making and state regulation, and to ensure they are governed as collegiate institutions.

The structure of the California Community Colleges should be changed from the current three-level "system" consisting of the statewide Chancellor's Office and Board of Governors, regional districts governed by elected trustees, and individual colleges, to a two-level system consisting of a statewide Chancellor's Office and Board of Trustees, and individual campuses with Governance Councils (Rec. III-1-A).

Comments: This recommendation would have the effect of de-annexing colleges from multi-campus districts and turning all of them into single-campus districts, each of which would be governed by a separate Governance Council.

Locally elected district boards of trustees should be replaced at each college with a governance council consisting of: (a) nine members appointed by locally elected officials; (b) four members appointed by the statewide board of trustees; (c) four members appointed by campus constituencies (administration, faculty, staff and students) (Rec. III-1-A-1).

Comments: Earlier this year, the League published a report entitled, Community College Governance: An Effective Bilateral Structure for a Diverse System, which makes a series of

findings and recommendations for strengthening the governance of community colleges. The most important of these are:

The bilateral governance structure of California's community colleges, with clearly defined responsibilities for locally-elected boards of trustees and the state Board of Governors, serves the needs of students and taxpayers.

Steps should be taken within the system to assess periodically the governance structure delineated in AB 1725.

The Board of Governors' ability to provide leadership and support should be strengthened, including granting the Chancellor's Office the ability to function independently of state agency status.

Local boards should be granted sufficient authority to meet local needs and serve state interests, including reducing the super majority (2/3) now required for approval of local bonds to a simple majority.

The system must continue to expand efforts to provide local communities, the state legislature and governor with data that demonstrate achievement at the colleges.

The state Board of Governors and the locally-elected governing boards should function as partners in their lay policy leadership roles.

In the light of the always changing challenges facing community college districts, boards should work to improve their functioning as policy boards.

If the League's recommendations were implemented, the elimination of all locally-elected boards of trustees, as called for in the Commission's recommendation, would be unnecessary and redundant.

Furthermore, the substitute proposed by the Commission for the trustees would be appointed bodies, with various local politicians and college-level constituencies appointing the members. We believe that this is not an acceptable alternative to locally-elected boards. It would be more likely to make the new "council members" beholden to those who appoint them rather than to the public. Further, the locally-elected officials who would have the power to make those appointments are not necessarily the best parties to determine who would make an appropriate council member for a college.

We also question the appropriateness of appointments made by representatives of the county in which a college is located. Many colleges serve multiple counties and the constituents in the other ("non-location" counties) would not be represented under this proposal.

Finally, we question the effectiveness and efficiency of a 17-member Governance Council, especially when the majority of each board will be political appointees.

We believe a better alternative than elimination of locally-elected boards would be for the Commission to encourage business and community leaders to seek election to their local governing boards as a means of public service. Too often, there is little interest in these positions except from those who may have a conflict of interest or a single-interest agenda. Instead, we need the expertise of community and business leaders with a record of success to govern our multi-million dollar institutions.

Each individual campus should become the locus of decision-making and fiscal responsibility for non-state funds (Rec. II-1-A-2).

Comments: This is the corollary to the recommendation that all campuses operate as single-campus entities. The total impact of this recommendation is unclear since there are relatively few non-state funds available to community colleges.

The statewide Board of Trustees should be responsible for establishing and maintaining California-wide standards for programs of statewide importance (e.g., academic transfer to four-year universities) and for approving the overall budget recommendations submitted by the Governance Councils (Rec. III-1-B).

Comments: This is an unrealistic recommendation – it would be very difficult for the statewide Board of Trustees to exercise this level of fiscal oversight over 107 community colleges.

All provisions of the Education Code concerning the California Community Colleges should sunset as part of this rearrangement and be replaced by a brief, concise and non-regulatory framework in statute – a framework oriented toward expectations and outcomes, not mandates (Rec. III-1-C).

Comments: An Education Code Review Task Force is analyzing the Code at the present time; it should be allowed to complete its work, and can consider this recommendation within its deliberations. A corollary recommendation to this one would be for the Commission to recommend limitations on legislative “micro-management” and delegation of substantial authority over the system to the Board of Governors.

The financial resources and contractual commitments of the California Community Colleges should reflect the dual state-local nature of responsibility for their governance:

In addition to support from the state’s general fund under Proposition 98, each college should continue to receive property tax revenues based on its present proportion of total property taxes in the county where the college is located (Rec. III-1-D-1).

Comments: The continued connection between the colleges and local property taxes is appropriate and essential, but this recommendation does not address the issue of colleges that serve multiple counties.

Each college should be authorized to seek voter approval in cities, counties, or a special college district to support capital facilities or college operations through local taxes (Rec. III-1-D-2).

Comments: We agree that colleges should be able to seek local support for facilities or operations, but this recommendation should emphasize that the vote requirement for these funds should be lowered from two-thirds to a simple majority. Also, this recommendation does not address the process of obtaining voter approval beyond the county of location.

The Governance Council at each college should have fiduciary responsibility for funds obtained through local measures (Rec. III-1-D-3).

Comments: Of course, the controlling local governing body should have authority and fiduciary responsibility for local, as well as state, funds. However, there is a challenge to fiduciary responsibility if the Council composition includes four staff representing employees of the college who would benefit from some decisions of the Council. Also, voters should have the final authority for determining who should hold positions with fiduciary responsibility.

The system of collective bargaining within community colleges should be changed by either:

Implementing statewide collective bargaining, to be conducted by the statewide chancellor's office under the authority of the Board of Trustees, or

Requiring the statewide Board of Trustees to adopt general standards for contracts at each college and: (a) Providing the board with the authority to reject contracts which do not fit within those standards; (b) Requiring the statewide Board of Trustees to certify to the Legislature that the college has sufficient funds to meet the current and future obligations of all contracts (Rec. III-1-E).

Comments: Collective bargaining should continue to be a locally-determined matter between the locally-elected boards of trustees and the collective bargaining agents representing employees. This is a very complex matter; the Commission recommendation does not address how (under option 1 above) local groups would surface local issues that may not be included in the statewide agreement.

We also are concerned that statewide bargaining could result in a contract that is unmanageable in light of local issues and would render campus presidents and local boards incapable of providing leadership with creative, "win-win" solutions to employment concerns. This does not seem consistent with the overall recommendation that governance should be "simplified and changed to one more characteristic of collegiate institutions."

The complexity of statewide bargaining and the difficulty in convincing local union membership of the equity in regional variations render this recommendation more difficult to implement than the current system. In addition, if statewide bargaining were to break down, there is a possibility of a statewide strike which would paralyze our entire system and be a social and economic disaster for our state. We question the wisdom of placing that much power in the hands of a few union leaders.

A strengthened system of statewide coordination and regional cooperation among educational institutions to reduce barriers that lessen efficiency or impede student progress.

Comments: While the earlier portion of this report recommended that multi-campus districts be broken into single-college operations, this recommendation calls for a wider regional approach which, to some degree, multi-college districts are addressing by their multi-campus structure. Thus, we find this agenda item inconsistent with the earlier recommendation of the Commission.

Require the University of California and the State University to enroll all eligible undergraduate students (Rec. I-1-C).

Comments: It is unclear whether this refers to all eligible freshmen – both systems now claim that they already admit all eligible freshmen – or whether it also would refer to all community college transfer students as well. For the latter category, there is some debate regarding whether all eligible students are accepted. It also is unclear whether this recommendation, if adopted, would affect the timing for admission. For example, virtually all UC campuses closed Spring 1999 admissions by early Fall 1998. Would this be allowed if this recommendation were adopted?

Strengthen statewide coordination by changing the composition of the current coordinating agency and expanding its mandate:

The membership of the California Postsecondary Education Commission (CPEC) should be reduced from 17 to 9 members appointed by the Governor, the Assembly Speaker, and the Senate Rules Committee. No CPEC member should serve concurrently as a governing board member or an employee of any public or private institution of higher education (Rec. II-2-A).

Comments: We believe that the current coordination role is appropriate for CPEC. We see no rationale for expanding its mandate.

In addition to its present responsibilities, CPEC should be given the mandate to:

Serve as prime advisor to the Department of Finance, the Governor, and the Legislature on how well the principles of the Master Plan for Higher Education are being accomplished and financed, for both public and private higher education; and

Serve as an agency to distribute special funds created to promote cooperation, efficiency and resource sharing among all public and private higher education institutions and K-12 (Rec. III-2-B).

Comments: CPEC may be an appropriate agency to advise the Governor, Department of Finance and the Legislature on how well Master Plan principles are being accomplished. However, we question why another state agency, such as CPEC, should make recommendations or have authority to distribute funds, especially given the Commission's avowed intention to give more authority to the Board of Governors. This seems like another layer of unnecessary bureaucracy and administrative costs, without commensurate benefits for the colleges.

The state should encourage "regional associations" to improve cooperation among all institutions of higher education by:

Encouraging program coordination within regions (Rec. III-3-A).

Fostering greater acceptance of course credits among more institutions (better articulation) (Rec. III-3-B).

Encouraging arrangements for sharing facilities and equipment (Rec. III-3-C).

Providing a central location for inter-institutional data (Rec. III-3-D).

Generating information about institutions in the region (Rec. III-3-E).

Comments: Many of these cooperative arrangements already are in place; additional encouragement could be very useful and valuable for higher education institutions, the state, and students. We question, though, whether there really is a significant amount of unused space on campuses. Also, the Commission seems to be making an unstated assumption that students can be "redirected" rather easily; this often is difficult due to family and work responsibilities.

These kinds of cooperative arrangements are in effect in a number of urban areas – under the rubric of "multi-campus community college districts." This recommendation seems incongruous with the recommendation to abolish those very same multi-campus districts that share resources to meet regional needs.

A commitment to use new strategies for preserving education opportunities and ensuring that student bodies reflect the diversity of California.

State government should explicitly reaffirm its long-standing commitment to the goals of equal educational opportunity and diversity in higher education and redirect resources to those programs in the public segments that have demonstrated success in improving college-going rates and baccalaureate degree completion rates for students from groups underrepresented in higher education (Rec. IV-1).

Comments: This recommendation could be an important mechanism for assuring that students from groups traditionally underrepresented in higher education are admitted and assisted in being successful; however, we are somewhat concerned about the intention to "redirect resources" as this could involve rewarding individual colleges at the expense of students from other institutions who may be equally or more needy.

Among the most effective programs for increasing diversity are those which target students at early ages in the public schools; we hope the Commission will support them as part of this recommendation.

The four-year institutions of public higher education should undertake new initiatives to diversify their student bodies while maintaining high standards (Rec. IV-4).

Comments: The community colleges continue to undertake new diversity initiatives; we believe this recommendation could be more effective by focusing on ways that the four-year colleges can diversify by accepting more community college transfer students.

The University of California Regents should guarantee eligibility to 4 percent of the graduating seniors (roughly one-third of its current eligibility pool) from each California high school if they meet the knowledge and skills requirements specified by UC. The rest of the applicant pool should be selected from criteria applied statewide (Rec. IV-4-A).

Comments: The impact of this recommendation, both on community colleges and on UC, should be studied further to determine its impact prior to any comment.

The CSU Trustees should seriously consider the benefits and consequences of a policy that would grant eligibility to a certain percentage of graduating seniors from each high school if they meet the course requirements and knowledge areas specified by CSU (Rec. IV-4-B).

Comments: The impact of this recommendation, both on community colleges and on CSU, should be studied further to determine its impact prior to any comment.

All public universities in California should annually provide extensive information on the record of students from each high school (Rec. IV-4-C).

Comments: We support this recommendation.

A substantial increase in the links between higher education and the K-12 schools to the mutual benefit of students in both sectors. These links should be a central priority for all educational institutions as they strive to increase the states' college-going and graduation rates.

The State should make the institutions of higher education explicitly accountable for improving the quality and effectiveness of K-12 and of teacher education. Fiscal incentives should be provided for doing so (Rec. V-1).

A Teacher Improvement and Development Fund should be established from Proposition 98 funds and a matching amount from higher education to encourage more collaboration between higher education institutions and public school teachers. Academic departments throughout each higher education campus should be involved in working with the K-12 sector and efforts to improve teacher training (Rec. V-1-A).

Higher education institutions should participate extensively in community-school partnerships to serve the needs of low-income students and those most at risk of dropping out of K-12 (Rec. V-1-B).

The California State University should place the highest priority on, and redirect resources to, its schools of education (Rec. V-2).

The institutions of higher education should be clear about the standards and competencies needed to succeed at the college level and should adjust their own admissions criteria accordingly (Rec. V-3).

The public segments should insist that high school graduates who seek admission have the knowledge and skills necessary to succeed in college-level work, whether in academic or occupational programs (Rec. V-3-A).

The faculties and governing boards in California should be leaders in reshaping higher education admission policies to support standards and competency-based school reform (Rec. V-3-B).

The K-12 sector should be accountable for equipping students with the knowledge of and skills necessary to succeed in college-level vocational and academic programs (Rec. V-4).

Comments: While these recommendations do not impact community colleges directly, if they are effective they certainly would benefit community colleges by reducing the numbers of graduating high school seniors in need of remedial education. Although this would reduce the need for remediation at community colleges, it would not eliminate it because the majority of community college remedial education students do not come directly out of high school.

Other:

A high priority should be placed on increasing the number of community college transfer students to four-year institutions, especially from those community colleges that have few students transferring now (Rec. IV-2).

Comments: This is an important recommendation and we support it. However, we believe that there must be recognition that all colleges should not be expected to have significant numbers of transfer students. Those colleges which have strong transfer programs attract more freshmen interested in transfer, even if the college is not necessarily their "home" campus. And, many students, knowing of the reputation of some community college

campuses for their articulation agreements with UC and CSU, attend convenient campuses for most of their coursework and transfer to campuses with excellent articulation agreements for their final semester(s). When the numbers of transfers are tallied, the last campus of record receives full credit for the transfer student.

Another reason for all community colleges not transferring equivalent percentages of students is that a major variable of importance is proximity to a CSU or UC campus.

Given these anomalies, we believe that every community college owes its citizens and its students a basic education. Beyond that, local boards of trustees must weigh the options for providing transfer, vocational and other classes within the community college mission and make the determination of the best balance among them.

State government should increase the funding rate for instructional priorities such as transfer and vocational courses (Rec. IV-2-A).

Comments: Both transfer and vocational education courses could use such an infusion of funds, since vocational education courses, in particular, can be quite costly.

UC and CSU should expand their contacts with the Community Colleges by increasing the number of classes offered on Community College campuses for regularly enrolled UC and CSU students (Rec. IV-2-B).

Comments: We support this recommendation as an extra benefit for students, that would allow more of them to remain in their local communities while securing a baccalaureate degree.

With regard to the transfer and award of credit, maximum consideration and extensive information should be given to the individual student who has transferred between institutions, while maintaining the principle that each institution is responsible for determining its own policies (Rec. IV-2-C).

Comments: The implications of this recommendation are unclear. The principle of allowing each institution to be responsible for determining its own policies is consistent with academic freedom, but may not be the most helpful to students attempting to transfer.

State government should provide some financial incentives to increase the number of courses completed, students who transfer successfully and degrees granted (Rec. IV-3).

Comments: We support this recommendation, as long as the incentives are in addition to the base appropriations, rather than in lieu of them. This recommendation could be quite consistent with Partnership for Excellence.

A portion of the current amount of state appropriation per FTE should be awarded only when students complete courses and receive credit (Rec. IV-3-A).

Comments: This is an ill-advised recommendation. There are many reasons why students may not complete courses; we do not believe colleges should be held accountable for situations beyond their control or scope of authority.

An additional amount should be provided for each academic degree or vocational certificate granted (Rec. IV-3-B).

Comments: We support this recommendation, as long as the funding is in addition to the regular apportionment. We believe that colleges should receive incentives to help fund extra efforts – which can be quite costly — toward assisting students in course and degree completion.

An additional amount should be provided to the Community Colleges and four-year institutions for students who receive a baccalaureate degree and have attended both segments (Rec. IV-3-C).

Comments: We support this recommendation since it is likely to encourage further collaboration between segments. It also will reward CSU immediately, since the majority of CSU graduates each year are community college transfer students. We wonder how this proposal could be implemented for community colleges since so many of our students transfer from one community college to another during their academic career and many students spend the bulk of their community college years at one college and only transfer to another with strong articulation agreements in their final semester or year prior to transfer to a four-year institution.

