

# 2020 POLICY AGENDA

January 2020



## *Opportunity and Social Mobility for All Californians*

*California's Community colleges are an indispensable investment in our state's present and future prosperity. California's public Community Colleges constitute an accessible path to a better life for generations of low-income and working-class Californians. Our Community Colleges are driven by an enduring vision of equity, and their employees embrace their critical role in lifting the state's economy, closing achievement gaps, and offering quality higher education and workforce development for all Californians.*

## **EDUCATIONAL QUALITY THROUGH HIGHER PER-STUDENT FUNDING**

### **• Support Greater Investment in Per-Student Funding and General Operations**

There is a critical nexus between per-student funding and educational quality. Sufficient resources encourage innovation and promote fiscal stability for districts confronting rapidly growing pension, instructional, and energy costs. Our highest priority is to protect quality public higher education opportunities for Californians by securing a robust investment in California's community colleges. We respectfully request State leaders automatically increase the California Community College General

System	Per-Student Funding
UC	\$33,569
CSU	\$18,445
K-12	\$12,018
CCC	\$8,306

Fund allocation to backfill any shortfalls in apportionments and property taxes, and appreciably increase the investment in base funding for all colleges. The 21<sup>st</sup> Century labor market necessitates some postsecondary education. This economic reality requires a continued investment in and protection of the educational opportunities provided by California's community colleges.

## **EQUITY & AFFORDABILITY: RE-ENVISION FINANCIAL AID**

### **• Equitably Fund Financial Aid for Community College Students**

As currently structured, Cal Grants continue to distribute less than 10% of its resources to California community college students despite the fact that our students comprise two-thirds of the higher education population. State financial aid design perpetuates inequities by unjustly limiting community college students' access to financial aid. Reform our state's financial aid system to cover community college students' total cost of attendance, and make a significant investment in students' total cost of education.

## **PROTECT COLLEGE INFRASTRUCTURE & LEARNING RESOURCES**

### **• Fund Deferred Maintenance & Instructional Equipment**

Colleges are grappling with aging infrastructure that requires replacement, renovation, or retrofitting. In the status quo, the resources needed to tackle such projects compete with student supports and services. We respectfully request a 2020-21 budget that includes a robust investment

in deferred maintenance. Insufficient deferred maintenance and instructional equipment funds constitute a significant threat to a college's ability to offer quality learning experiences on a safe, clean, and adequately equipped campus environment.

## **BUILD FISCAL RESILIENCY**

### **• Employees Deserve Certainty in Retirement - Address Unfunded Liabilities**

College employees deserve the certainty of a funded pension in retirement. Unfunded pension liabilities continue to represent a major fiscal burden for both the state government and local education agencies (LEAs) within California. These increasing costs are crowding out services intended for student success. We ask the Legislature to partner with LEAs and pay down CalSTRS and CalPERS' unfunded liability rate increases for community colleges.

## **FUNDING TO SUPPORT STUDENTS NEEDS**

### **• Provide Ongoing Funding from the Mental Health Services Act**

We greatly appreciate the one-time funding from the Mental Health Services Act (Proposition 63) provided by the Legislature in recent budgets. We also recognize that this funding has not met the demand for mental health services across our system. Sufficient and ongoing funding from Proposition 63 would greatly assist our colleges in providing mental health services to support our students and ensure successful completion of their educational goals.

## **CLOSE THE GROWING BACCALAUREATE DEGREE GAP**

### **• Continuation and Expansion of Baccalaureate Degrees at CCCs**

According to the PPIC, if current trends continue, California will face a skills gap of 1.1 million workers with bachelor's degrees by 2030. Failure to keep up with the demand for skilled workers will curtail economic growth, limit economic mobility, and increase inequality. The result will be a less productive California economy, limited social mobility, and lower incomes and tax revenue. We strongly urge continuation and expansion of the Baccalaureate degree programs at community colleges.

## **SUPPORTING STATEWIDE COLLABORATION & EFFICIENCY**

### **• Fund Efforts that Increase Coordination such as an Integrated Library System**

A systemwide Integrated Library System (ILS) will allow every student in California's community colleges to access a cloud-based library catalog that can be retrieved through a variety of means, including mobile devices. Greater coordination of systemwide services and supports increases collaboration and cost-savings among colleges while enabling transparency and long-term planning.

*Quality Public Community Colleges for All Californians*

