



CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGES

S Y S T E M O F F I C E

For Immediate Release

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Community Colleges Thank Governor for Signing the Student Success Initiative

SACRAMENTO – California Community Colleges Chancellor Diane Woodruff today applauded Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger for signing legislation that provides more than \$33.1 million in state funding to help students succeed at community colleges, transfer to four-year universities and acquire the necessary skills to compete in high-demand careers in technical education.

“We are very pleased that Governor Schwarzenegger signed Assembly Bill 194, the *California Community Colleges Student Success Initiative*,” said Chancellor Woodruff. “This legislation provides the resources and framework to launch fundamental improvements in how community colleges help underprepared students acquire the math, English, and writing skills necessary to succeed in college, the workplace, and society. Helping improve the success rates of our students and providing leadership for this student success initiative is my highest priority this year.”

Chancellor Woodruff continued: “We would also like to express our gratitude for the bipartisan support of the California State Legislature as well as for our governor’s support. “Governor Schwarzenegger has yet again reinforced his commitment to addressing one of the highest priorities of the California Community Colleges.”

West Valley College President Phil Hartley echoed Chancellor Woodruff’s comments. “This is an important win for all of the community colleges in California because it will jump start much needed program improvement that will help students pursue their educational goals,” he said.

Pamela Burdman, a program officer of the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, recently commented to the press: “This \$33.1 million investment is an audacious initiative that is shining a spotlight on a problem that has historically seemed intractable: the large number of students who don’t succeed in college because they don’t complete remedial English or

math. To their credit, the California Community Colleges Board of Governors, together with the college administrators and faculty leaders, are rising to the occasion. Under the \$33 million initiative, each college would examine how or to serving under-prepared students stack up against the best research available, using a critical examination of students' progress to develop and implement campus action plans.”

The funding appropriated in AB 194 will be allocated to colleges to support improvements in basic skills and English as a Second Language instruction as well as in related student services. Funds will be expended for activities such as: program development and, curriculum planning; student assessment, advisement and counseling services; supplemental instruction and tutoring; as well as articulation, instructional materials, and equipment.

The faculty in California Community colleges is excited about the Student Success Initiative and the difference it can make for students. Barbara Illowsky, the statewide Project Director and Mathematics Professor at De Anza College, said, “I have never been involved in anything that is making as much a difference for students. Less than 10 percent of students who need developmental education and don't get it survive in college. Thus, we must help them be successful and this initiative does just that.” More than 1,200 faculty from all community colleges in the state have attended workshops to learn about basic skills. They are ready to go to work and start making needed changes.

San Diego Mesa College President Rita Cepeda observed, “The funds have the potential for transforming the entire system. Basic skills reform begins with assessment of the college's current capabilities in serving differentially prepared students so that we can design the type of instructional and student service delivery that addresses the needs of all students, and in particular ethnic and language minorities who are most underserved.”

San Diego Community College District Chancellor Constance Carroll added that this initiative represents a major investment in California students. “Transfer and employment opportunities both rely upon mastery of English, mathematics and other critical skills,” she said.

The California Community Colleges is the largest higher educational system in the nation comprised of 72 districts and 109 colleges with more than 2.5 million students per year. Community colleges supply workforce training and basic skills education, prepare students for transfer to four-year institutions and offer opportunities for personal enrichment and lifelong learning. The System Office provides leadership, advocacy and support under the direction of the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges. For more information about the community colleges system, please visit <http://www.cccco.edu>.

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