

**CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGES  
CHANCELLOR'S OFFICE**

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October 23, 2009

**TO:** Chief Executive Officers  
Chief Student Services Officers  
Chief Instructional Officers

**Cc:** Academic Senate Presidents  
Matriculation Coordinators

**FROM:** Jack Scott, Chancellor

**SUBJECT:** Senate Bill 946 and California Community College Implementation of the  
Early Assessment Program

Last fall, Governor Schwarzenegger signed Senate Bill (SB) 946 to enable California's community college system to implement the foundation for an Early Assessment Program (EAP) as one strategy for community colleges to work more closely with high schools to improve college readiness. As the author of SB 946, I would like to share with you the importance that this legislation has for state and local efforts to prepare California's high school students for college and encourage you to consider how you will participate in our implementation efforts.

As you are aware, each year the California Community Colleges (CCC) and California State University (CSU) report that increasing numbers of recent high school graduates begin their postsecondary studies unprepared for college-level work. Data reveal that more than 70 percent of first-time community college students require basic skills instruction. At CSU, an estimated 50 percent of first-time freshmen are assessed as needing remedial math or English. The EAP assesses a student's readiness for college as part of the standardized testing process in the 11<sup>th</sup> grade and provides students an opportunity to use their senior year of high school productively to prepare for college.

**Implementation Status and Actions for Colleges to Consider**

We have received a groundswell of support and enthusiasm from many CSU campuses and K-12 districts eager to partner with community colleges in this effort. A statewide EAP Advisory Committee has been convened and my staff is working with the CSU Office of the Chancellor, the State Department of Education, Educational Testing Service and other partners to expand the existing CSU EAP program to include community college-bound students for the Spring 2010 testing cycle.

There are two levels of EAP participation for you to consider.

1. All districts should consider whether they will use student EAP results for placement of those students who demonstrate college-readiness in English and/or math on the EAP. Districts can choose

to use student EAP results now; there is no application process for this level of participation. We are currently reviewing the results of a recent content analysis of the EAP as a measure of college readiness in math and English and will share that analysis with your Matriculation and assessment staff for consideration in making this decision.

In a time when community college budgets are stretched to provide the wide array of instruction and student services our students need, the use of EAP results as a waiver to some local college assessments for students demonstrating college readiness presents an opportunity for districts to focus assessment resources on students who test below college ready. Already, several community colleges have opted to use EAP test results this way. In response to parent, student, and high school counselor inquiries, we will soon survey colleges to identify those that are accepting student EAP results (for those demonstrating college readiness) and will post a list on the Chancellor's Office website.

2. Colleges that are prepared to identify an EAP coordinator to work with local high school and CSU representatives may apply for designation as a first-year EAP Program Site. Information on what this entails, including additional criteria and benefits, such as access to high school student EAP data and availability of this information to support outreach efforts, will soon be sent to all colleges.

In early November, Vice Chancellor Linda Michalowski will release an application to identify colleges interested in becoming a CCC EAP Program Site. Successful applicants will be notified in January 2010. We are seeking grant funding to support CCC EAP implementation efforts; if successful, the colleges identified as EAP Program Sites will be candidates for this funding.

By building upon the EAP foundation established by the CSU system, we believe SB 946 is a very positive step forward for California's community colleges to work collaboratively with the CSU and K-12 segments to improve the academic preparedness of high school students for college-level work.

For additional information, please refer to the attached *EAP Fact Sheet* and *SB 946 Highlights*, or click [here](#) to access the full text of SB 946. You can also find information about the CSU EAP at <http://calstate.edu/eap>. If you have any questions regarding EAP implementation, please feel free to contact the Chancellor's Office EAP Coordinator, Sonia Ortiz-Mercado at (916) 322-6817 or via email at [sortiz@cccoco.edu](mailto:sortiz@cccoco.edu).

Thank you for helping to make this important program a success so that more students can begin arriving at our doors ready to do college-level work.