

APPENDIX C: EQUITABLE BACCALAUREATE ATTAINMENT BUDGET REQUEST

One of Vision 2030's clear goals is to create seamless educational pathways from high school through community college, transfer, and finally, to baccalaureate degree completion. Strengthening this continuum through strategic investments will enable more seamless student pathways and help more Californians successfully complete a bachelor's degree.

California Early College Demonstration Initiative Phase II

The 2026 Budget Act included a \$10 million investment to launch the California Early College Demonstration Initiative (CECDI), a regional demonstration effort focused on designing, implementing, and evaluating comprehensive dual enrollment and early college systems through partnerships between local educational agencies and community college districts. While the initial investment supports a limited number of participating regions, the initiative is intended to generate practical lessons about the policies, structures, and supports needed to implement comprehensive early college pathways at scale.

CECDI builds on more than a decade of experience with College and Career Access Pathways (CCAP) partnerships and other successful dual enrollment models across California. Drawing from these efforts, the initiative seeks to identify and institutionalize promising practices, reduce unnecessary variation in implementation, and develop a more coherent statewide approach to dual enrollment and early college.

To support "Phase II" of CECDI and expand participation beyond the initial demonstration regions, we request **\$24 million one-time Proposition 98 General Fund**. Funding would support the planning, implementation, and expansion of comprehensive early college pathways; strengthen coordination between K-12 and community college partners; enhance student outreach, onboarding, advising, and academic support services; support faculty collaboration and pathway design; improve data collection and reporting capacity; and expand access to dual enrollment and early college opportunities for students. This investment would enable additional regions to implement and refine comprehensive early college models while building the evidence, capacity, and infrastructure needed for future statewide expansion.

The California Community Colleges have demonstrated a strong track record of successfully implementing major dual enrollment initiatives, including the CCAP program and other dual enrollment authorities. As participation has expanded statewide, so too have the responsibilities of the Chancellor's Office. Pursuant to Education Code Section 76004, every CCAP partnership agreement must be filed with the Chancellor's Office before implementation, and the Chancellor is authorized to void any agreement that does not comply with the intent and requirements of the statute. This responsibility creates an ongoing statewide obligation to review agreements, provide oversight, support compliance, identify implementation challenges, and promote effective practices across districts. Yet no state funding has ever been provided to support these implementation, oversight, technical assistance, accountability, and continuous improvement responsibilities.

Therefore, we request **\$1.5 million ongoing Proposition 98 General Fund** to support statewide implementation, technical assistance, evaluation, and professional learning. Funding would support implementation coaching, communities of practice, resource and toolkit development, dissemination of promising practices, cross-regional collaboration, evaluation activities, and coordination among participating districts and partners. These resources will help ensure consistent implementation across regions, document effective practices, and support the development of scalable models that can inform future statewide policy and investment decisions.

Transfer Success Initiative

For most Californians seeking a bachelor's degree, community college transfer is a primary pathway to economic opportunity. Yet a 2024 California State Auditor's report found that only about 21% of students who entered community college intending to transfer did so within four years. Among those who did not transfer, approximately 96% never applied to a California State University (CSU) or University of California (UC), even though nearly 131,000 had accumulated at least 60 transferable units and nearly 16,000 had earned an Associate Degree for Transfer (ADT).

California has invested significantly in transfer reform through the ADT, Common Course Numbering, Cal-GETC, and the Common Cloud Data Platform. The next step is making

these reforms work more effectively for students. We request **\$20 million one-time Proposition 98 General Fund** to establish the Transfer Success Initiative. Of this amount we request 5% be set aside to support Chancellor's Office coordination, implementation, data analysis, and evaluation, with \$19 million directed to colleges. The \$19 million would strengthen processes within existing Transfer Centers through smart technologies and AI capabilities that help identify transfer-intending students, track progress, flag critical milestones, and connect students with timely support. Funding would also strengthen existing transfer pathways and develop new pathways that expand opportunities for students to complete a bachelor's degree.

The goal is to use the infrastructure California has already built, strengthen the pathways available to students, and make transfer easier to navigate and complete.

Program Pathways Mapper

As students attend multiple colleges, pursue transfer, and balance education with work and family responsibilities, clear and connected academic pathways have become essential to student success. With nearly 45% of students enrolling at more than one college during their educational journey, information about degree requirements, transfer pathways, and career opportunities often remains fragmented across institutions and districts, making it difficult for students to identify the most efficient route to their educational goals. This complexity contributes to excess unit accumulation, delayed completion, and barriers to successful transfer. Program Pathways Mapper (PPM) addresses this critical challenge by serving as the community colleges' statewide, faculty-approved digital platform that connects programs, coursework, transfer opportunities, and career outcomes through a single student-centered experience.

PPM has served more than 1.3 million students cumulatively and nearly 80% of California Community Colleges, with growing participation from the CSU and UC. PPM supports Cal-GETC and Common Course Numbering, providing the digital infrastructure needed to connect California's transfer reforms into a seamless student experience. While the initial investment supported the design and establishment of the platform, ongoing resources are needed to complete statewide implementation, onboard the remaining colleges and university partners, maintain accurate pathway information, and continuously improve

the platform as educational policies and programs evolve. With a strong foundation already in place, the next phase is ensuring equitable statewide implementation.

We request **\$6.7 million one-time and \$6 million ongoing Proposition 98 General Fund** to sustain, expand, and modernize Program Pathways Mapper as California's statewide digital infrastructure for educational planning. The one-time investment will complete the phase-in stage across all public higher education segments, onboard the remaining institutions, and expand faculty-approved pathway maps to create a truly statewide student experience, while ongoing funding will ensure that pathways remain current as curriculum, transfer requirements, and degree programs evolve. By supporting continuous integration with statewide student-facing systems and providing the long-term operational capacity needed to maintain PPM as a reliable, state-owned platform, California will reduce reliance on proprietary commercial systems, ensuring that future policy reforms can be implemented efficiently across California's higher education ecosystem.