State Policy and Advocacy Update

(Provided by the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office. Information current as of December 6, 2024).

STATE ADVOCACY OVERVIEW

The Legislature convened for the first year of the 2025-26 Legislative Session on December 2, 2024. The new class of legislators includes a total of 24 Assemblymembers and 12 Senators that did not serve in that same role during the 2023-24 Legislative Session. Of these 36 new members, at least eight of them attended a California Community College, and eight of them have identified as a first-generation college student. At least five members have previously served as faculty, and 12 new members have identified higher education access and affordability as a top policy priority.

The 2025-26 Legislative Class also achieved a new record in gender equity in representation. Of the 120 legislative seats, women comprise 59 seats, or 49 percent. For the first time in the state's history, women will comprise a majority of the 40-member Senate. Democrats retained their supermajority in both the Assembly (60 Democrats-19 Republicans) and Senate (30 Democrats-9 Republicans). As part of the new session ceremonies, the Senate re-elected Mike McGuire (D-San Rafael) as President pro Tempore; the Assembly re-elected Robert Rivas (D-Salinas) as Speaker. As of this writing, legislative committee assignments have not been announced.

STATE LEGISLATION OVERVIEW

As of this writing, 138 Assembly Bills (AB) and Senate Bills (SB) have been introduced in the Legislature. Of those, the Chancellor's Office is tracking 14 that pertain to higher education; three of those have been flagged as Tier 1 and are most likely to have a direct impact on the community colleges, our faculty, and our students. The last day to introduce legislation is February 21, 2025. A full Legislative Matrix can be found by visiting the [State Relations page on the Chancellor's Office website](www.ccco.edu/About-Us/Chancellors-Office/Divisions/Government-Relations-Policy-in-Action/Policy-in-action/State-Relations/Tracked-Legislation) (www.ccco.edu/About-Us/Chancellors-Office/Divisions/Government-Relations-Policy-in-Action/Policy-in-action/State-Relations/Tracked-Legislation).

We have already begun our engagement with offices and partners to gain an early understanding of legislative interest and potential proposals in the next year. Some early signs point to interests in the continued expansion of dual enrollment opportunities, nonresident tuition exemptions, investments in basic needs, streamlining transfer pathways, inmate education, college affordability, and equitable placement.

HIGH-PRIORITY LEGISLATION UNDER REVIEW

AB 9 (Quirk-Silva) University of California: California State University: transfer students.

Would, by September 1, 2026, require the California State University (CSU) to establish specific goals for the adequate representation of community college transfer students in each discipline, program, or major at the system level, and request the University of California (UC) to establish a formal process for identifying the specific disciplines,

programs, or majors where capacity increases for community college transfer students at individual campuses would be most valuable.

Status: Pending referral in the Assembly.

AB 48 (Alvarez) College Health and Safety Bond Act of 2026.

This bond bill, if enacted by voters during an unspecified statewide primary election, would provide an unspecified amount for colleges and universities to construct and modernize educational facilities.

Status: Pending referral in the Assembly.

AB 65 (Aguiar-Curry) School and community college employees: paid disability and parental leave.

Would require school and community college districts to provide classified and academic employees up to 14 weeks of leave with full pay for pregnancy-related leaves of absence.

Status: Pending referral in the Assembly.

ADVOCATES

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