September 22, 2023

The Honorable Gavin Newsom  
Governor of California  
State Capitol  
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Legislative Report

Dear Governor Newsom:

On behalf of the Board of Governors for the California Community Colleges, I am pleased to present to you the California Community Colleges report on Student Equity and Achievement. This report is written in response to Education Code 78221.

In this report, the California Community Colleges Chancellor’s Office presents a detailed summary on how Student Equity and Achievement funds have been expended throughout the system to advance achievement goals for all students, with an emphasis on traditionally underrepresented student groups.

Executive Vice Chancellor for the Equitable Student Learning, Experience and Impact Office Aisha Lowe may be contacted for questions and comments at ALowe@CCCCO.edu.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Chancellor

Enclosure: Report
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INTRODUCTION

In California’s 2018-19 budget package, the Student Equity and Achievement (SEA) Program was created by consolidating three separate funding streams that previously had supported the Basic Skills Initiative, the Student Equity program, and the Student Success and Support Program. These programs had similar goals: to increase equity and student success for disproportionally impacted students. However, they each used different strategies to achieve them. By combining these separate funding streams, districts are allowed greater flexibility in allocating funds in the way that best serves their students’ needs. In creating this program, the Legislature expressed its intent that the consolidated funding be used to support the California Community Colleges in advancing the systemwide goal to boost achievement for all students with an emphasis on eliminating achievement gaps for students from traditionally underrepresented groups.

Pursuant to Education Code §78222, this report will provide a summary detailing how SEA funding has been expended and for what specific purposes. Additionally, this report will assess the progress in advancing the following SEA Program goals required by this section of statute:

1. Implementing activities and practices pursuant to the California Community College Guided Pathways Grant Program.
2. Ensuring students complete their educational goals and a defined course of study.
3. Providing quality curriculum, instruction, and support services to students who enter college deficient in English and mathematics to ensure these students complete a course of study in a timely manner.

STUDENT EQUITY AND ACHIEVEMENT PROGRAM EXPENDITURES

The annual SEA Program budget for 2020-21 and 2021-22 is $474,031,950.

Districts report actual expenses in the following categories: salaries and benefits, operating expenses, supplies and materials, capital outlay, indirect expenses, and other. As shown in Figure 1, instructional and non-instructional salaries and benefits account for 91% of SEA Program expenditures with operating expenses accounting for about 5%, and all other categories (combined) at 4% over the three-year reporting period.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expenditure Category</th>
<th>Percentage of Total Expenditures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2018-19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salaries and Benefits (instructional &amp; non-instructional)</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operating Expenses</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supplies and Materials</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indirect Expenses</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capital Outlay</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Colleges also report which activities SEA Program expenditures supported, summarized in Figure 2 below. Counseling services remain as the top expenditure category consistently, accounting for more than one-third of all SEA funding uses every year since 2018-19. Districts reported a large percentage of expenditures (28% in 2019-20 and 2020-21) under the “other” category, indicating a need to expand the definitions of each category to provide appropriate transparency into the specific activities these dollars are funding.

**Figure 2: Percent of Spending per Category**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expenditure Category</th>
<th>Percentage of Total Expenditures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2018-19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic Needs</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counseling</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Embedded Tutoring</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emergency Financial Assistance</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Year experience</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orientation</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Development</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tutoring</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

With the flexibility built into the Education Code, SEA incentivizes colleges to engage in data-informed decision-making and continuous improvement processes to amplify and accelerate solutions towards closing achievement gaps experienced by underserved student populations in several ways.
• Encourages colleges and districts to use local data to establish benchmarks for success and empower local conversations and decision-making about what is working best.

• Broadens the expenditure guidelines to include all activities that advance student equity and achievement.

• Institutionalizes a new approach within Guided Pathways that connects planning to funding and shifts institutional focus from compliance to continuous improvement.

• Diverse activities enable colleges to meet the diverse needs of students.

Funding allocated to colleges is increasingly linked to institutional planning, goal setting, and outcomes, ensuring responsible stewardship of funds. Overall, the system is reaching a watershed, where these collective efforts have shifted from articulating a theory of change to executing a theory of action.

As part of receiving SEA funding, colleges are asked to disaggregate data for at least 14 student populations, target supports as necessary to close achievement gaps, and regularly examine progress. Colleges track progress for underserved student groups including African American, Latinx, Native American, Asian, disabled, economically disadvantaged, Filipino, foster youth, LGBT, native Hawaiian and veteran students. In addition, local governing boards can identify groups of students with particular needs in their communities and target SEA Program activities to support them. Please see Table 1 below for a list of activities highlighted by the colleges.

Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Administrative (program or activity office support)</th>
<th>Basic Needs Support (food, transportation, housing)</th>
<th>Bootcamps (intense, short courses or workshops)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bridge Courses (courses to help students transition successfully from high school)</td>
<td>Campus Climate (impacts to attitudes, behaviors, standards)</td>
<td>Classified (staffing, not management or faculty)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Co-requisite Courses</td>
<td>Communities of Practice (organizational learning)</td>
<td>Concurrent/dual enrollment (high school or other college)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counseling (related to any part of the student’s journey)</td>
<td>Cultural Awareness Events (related to specific DI groups or other groups)</td>
<td>Curriculum Development (research, design, planning, implementation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct Aid (financial)</td>
<td>Early Alert (programs or methods for intervention)</td>
<td>Embedded Tutoring (within a course or series of courses)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expanded Hours of Operation (special hours outside of college department’s norm)</td>
<td>Faculty (educators, not management or classified staff)</td>
<td>First Year Experience (equipping new students with skills, tools, knowledge)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flexible Course Scheduling (student-centered schedule design)</td>
<td>High-Touch Enrollment Case Management (proactive counseling and academic support)</td>
<td>Integrations with Mental Health and Wellness Services (psychological and physical supports)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Communities (interdisciplinary collaboration)</td>
<td>New Courses</td>
<td>Online Access to Student Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online Educational Plans (technology, course-mapping)</td>
<td>Orientation/Welcome Activities (geared toward new/newer students)</td>
<td>Outreach to K-12 and Community Partners (events, workshops, collaborations, communication)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedagogical Tools (resources to enhance, support, facilitate teaching/learning)</td>
<td>Peer Mentoring (student-to-student support)</td>
<td>Professional Development (events, workshops, training for staff and/or faculty)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Efforts (related to student equity/student success efforts, activities, goals)</td>
<td>Student Recruitment (searching for/engaging with prospective students)</td>
<td>Student Success Workshops (group sessions for students focused on habits, skills, etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Academic Competitions/Research/Conferences (hosting, promoting, supporting)</td>
<td>Student Portal (technology, communication)</td>
<td>Supplemental Instruction (non-traditional tutoring)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Targeted Promotional Print Material (related to events, programs, equity/success messaging, etc.)</td>
<td>Technology Access for Students (programs, systems, apps, hardware, devices)</td>
<td>Textbook Access</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation</td>
<td>Tutoring (traditional academic support services)</td>
<td>University Field Trips (group visits to other local colleges and universities)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SYSTEM PROGRESS IN ADVANCING SEA PROGRAM GOALS**

**GOAL 1: IMPLEMENTING ACTIVITIES AND PRACTICES PURSUANT TO THE CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGE GUIDED PATHWAYS PROGRAM**

Guided Pathways is the organizing framework for the system to organize programs, services, and degree pathways to advance the Vision for Success, which is our north star. To achieve
the desired equitable outcomes for our students, the system has contextualized Guided Pathways further by adopting the following four commitments:

1. Engaging in institutional change that improves student outcomes and closes achievement gaps;
2. Identifying and eliminating student friction points;
3. Assuming everything can and should change; and,
4. Working together to change student outcomes.

The SEA Program supports activities that focus all efforts on equity and student-centered design and redesign. As a result, and even in this endemic period, the California Community Colleges continues to make progress toward meeting its Vision for Success goals, established nearly five years ago to set a path to increase certificate and degree attainment, improve transfer and close equity gaps.

The system added momentum in exceeding its goal of increasing the number of students earning credentials each year by at least 20%. Since 2016-17, the number of students receiving credentials has increased by 27%.

Transfer to California State University and the University of California increased by 4% from 2019 though the increase in the number of transfer-prepared community college students continues to outpace growth in the number of students who are admitted to, and enroll in, a CSU or UC. The number of students earning an Associate Degree for Transfer increased 7.6% in 2019, and the five-year increase stands at 74%.

Progress toward the goal of reducing the units students accumulate before receiving their associate degree and the goal of increasing the number of students who get jobs in their field of study continued to show steady improvements.

While there has been improvement in outcomes for all students over the timeframe of the Vision for Success, equity and regional gaps remain and, in some cases, have widened. COVID-19 affected students through school closures and class cancellations, a suspension of access to public events and public spaces, and the limiting of access to equitable resources both on and off their community college campuses. The transition to online instruction during the pandemic exacerbated inequities for students lacking access to technology, facing a reduction of income, or who may experience housing and/or food insecurity. Additionally, community college students are more likely to come from a low-income background or be students of color, two demographics that were disproportionately impacted by nearly all facets of the COVID-19 pandemic.

**GOAL 2: ENSURING STUDENTS COMPLETE THEIR EDUCATIONAL GOALS AND A DEFINED COURSE OF STUDY.**

The number of students that earned credentials and transferred increased across all ethnicities, as shown in Figure 2. The number of students who identify as American Indian/Alaskan Native showed the largest growth of 5%, with all others growing in the 1-3% range. While progress has been made with the support of SEA Program activities, equity gaps...
To make meaningful progress on closing equity gaps, SEA Program funding must be leveraged with additional funding sources such as the California College Promise (AB19) funds, Enrollment and Retention funds, or specific categorical funding to address inequities for students of color, undocumented students, and others; and SEA Program funded activities should align with relevant student success and affinity programs.

**GOAL 3: PROVIDING QUALITY CURRICULUM, INSTRUCTION, AND SUPPORT SERVICES TO STUDENTS WHO ENTER COLLEGE DEFICIENT IN ENGLISH AND MATHEMATICS TO ENSURE THESE STUDENTS COMPLETE A COURSE OF STUDY IN A TIMELY MANNER.**

Data overwhelmingly demonstrates that equitable placement efforts, signified by the passage and implementation of Assembly Bill (AB) 705 (Irwin, 2017) and AB 1705 (Irwin, 2022), have significantly closed the equity gaps for students who are completing transfer level English and Math classes. As shown in Figure 3, prior to the passage of AB 705, only 30% of African American students had direct access to transfer level English, a rate which increased to 97% in 2021-22. By contrast, nearly 60% of White students, double that of African American students, had direct access to transfer level before AB 705, which has since increased to 98% –
thus effectively eliminating the equity gap between Black and White students in this area. For Math, gaps continue to exist but have narrowed significantly, with access for Black students going from 15% to 77%, while White students increased from 49% to 88%. Eliminating this and all other equity gaps in not just accessing, but succeeding in, transfer-level coursework remains a top priority of the California Community Colleges, one which SEA funds will continue to support.

Figure 4: Direct enrollment in transfer-level English and math has increased across all racial/ethnic groups, substantially narrowing equity gaps.
CONCLUSION

SEA funded activities has been shown to decrease equity gaps by implementing activities that support Guided Pathways and ensuring students complete their educational goals by providing curriculum and support to students placed directly into transfer-level English and mathematics courses. While equity gaps persist, the SEA Program has help usher in needed improvements.

As reported, colleges utilized 90% of SEA funding on instructional and non-instructional salaries and benefits. Counseling services remain as the top expenditure category consistently, accounting for more than one-third of all SEA funding uses every year since 2018-19 with emergency financial assistance as the next highest expenditure category.

The following is a list of SEA Program continuous improvement priorities:

1. **Continued support in implementing system equity reforms such as equitable placement.** Given the clear impact equitable placement efforts have had on closing equity gaps, the Chancellor’s Office is committed to double down on these efforts and we continue to implement and evaluate the implementation of this transformational reform. The passing of legislation provides the necessary compliance mechanism for the system, but as we move into the next phase, our focus will shift from compliance to full implementation and to ensure students’ entrance into, support in, and successful completion of these courses is maximized.
2. **Explicit and accountable professional development focused on equity.** Ninety percent of SEA Program funds are spent on the salaries and benefits of the counselors and classified staff, so pairing high expectations with high support for this group of professionals is an important strategy to maximize the impact of SEA program. The Chancellor’s Office plans to invest in and support professional development activities for counselors and classified staff who engage directly with students to support the scaling of evidence-based practices that clearly close equity gaps. The Chancellor’s Office will continue to seed local innovations by encouraging colleges to lean into continuous improvement principles and leverage local data to engage in the student-centered design and redesign process to minimize and remove student friction points.

3. **Increased activities to transform classroom environments.** Current SEA program expenditures indicate more is spent on student support activities outside of the classroom. The Guided Pathways framework and activities that support innovations in teaching and learning (e.g., distance education, embedded tutoring, bridge & co-requisite courses) are imperative for achieving the Vision for Success goals. With the critical need of embedding equity in everything we do, activities inside and outside the classrooms need to be merged to ensure a seamless student experience.

4. **Connecting the dots between program activities, expenditures and impact and Student Equity Plans, which occurs in a three-year cycle and are separate from the SEA Program.** Transformative change takes time. Closing equity gaps that have existed for decades will not happen overnight and not without continuous planning and collaboration across college campuses. SEA Prog Annual Report relies heavily on colleges’ Student Equity Plans, updated every three years. Aligning expenditure reporting with equity plan reporting provides a coordinated and streamlined reporting process to see the collective impact. The Chancellor’s Office would like the State Legislature to consider adjusting the annual reporting requirement to every three years, coinciding with the equity plan period.
APPENDIX 1 - STUDENT EQUITY PLAN – EXECUTIVE SUMMARIES
Listed below are links to the Student Equity Plan Executive Summary for each college. Each executive summary includes, at a minimum, the student groups for whom goals have been set, the goals, the initiatives that the community college or community college district will undertake to achieve these goals, the resources that have been budgeted for that purpose, and the community college district official to contact for further information.

Allan Hancock College
American River College
Antelope Valley College
Bakersfield College
Barstow College
Berkeley City College
Butte College
Cabrillo College
Canada College
Cerritos College
Cerro Coso Community College
Chabot College
Chaffey College
Citrus College
City College of San Francisco
Clovis Community College
Coastline Community College
College of Alameda
College of Marin
College of San Mateo
College of the Canyons
College of the Desert
College of the Redwoods
College of the Sequoias
College of the Siskiyous
Compton College
Contra Costa College
Copper Mountain College
Cosumnes River College
Crafton Hills College
Cuesta College
Cuyamaca College
Cypress College
De Anza College
Diablo Valley College
East Los Angeles College
El Camino College
Evergreen Valley College
Foothill College
Fresno City College
Fullerton College
Gavilan College
Glendale Community College
Golden West College
Grossmont College
Hartnell College
Imperial Valley College
Irvine Valley College
Lake Tahoe Community College
Laney College
Las Positas College
Lassen College
Long Beach City College
Los Angeles City College
Los Angeles Harbor College
Los Angeles Mission College
Los Angeles Pierce College
Los Angeles Southwest College
Los Angeles Trade-Technical College
Los Angeles Valley College
Los Medanos College
Madera Community College
Mendocino College
Merced College
Merritt College
MiraCosta College
Mission College
Modesto Junior College
Monterey Peninsula College
Moorpark College
Moreno Valley College
Mt. San Antonio College
Mt. San Jacinto College
Napa Valley College
Norco College
Ohlone College
Orange Coast College
Oxnard College
Palo Verde College
Palomar College
Pasadena City College
Porterville College
Reedley College
Rio Hondo College
Riverside City College
Sacramento City College
Saddleback College
San Bernardino Valley College
San Diego City College
San Diego Mesa College
San Diego Miramar College
San Joaquin Delta College
San Jose City College
Santa Ana College
Santa Barbara City College
Santa Monica College
Santa Rosa Junior College
Santiago Canyon College
Shasta College
Sierra College
Skyline College
Solano Community College
Southwestern College
Taft College
Ventura College
Victor Valley College
West Hills College Coalinga
West Hills College Lemoore
West Los Angeles College
West Valley College
Woodland Community College
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