Guided Pathways Expenditure Guidelines

The 2017-18 California State Budget provided $150 million in one-time grants to seed the expansion of the Guided Pathways framework across the California Community Colleges over five years. This investment supported an intensive five-year planning and implementation process at each participating college. The $150 million grant ended at the completion of the 2021-22 fiscal year.

For the fiscal year 2021-22, $47.5 million one-time funds were allocated to California Community Colleges to support the continued implementation of a guided pathways program. The 2021-22 $47.5 million funds can be expended up until June 30, 2026.

Using the Guided Pathways framework, colleges will continue to rethink and redesign programs and services into cohesive, campus-wide strategies to achieve the outcomes expected by the state, our system, and our students. Guided Pathways allocations are to be used to directly support the implementation of the Guided Pathways framework.

Reasonable and Justifiable

All expenditures should be reasonable and justifiable. “Reasonable” means expenditures are prudent and every effort is made to utilize funds efficiently. “Justifiable” means expenditures are consistent with goals and activities related to Guided Pathways implementation. Colleges are strongly urged to develop policies and procedures to document and justify Guided Pathways expenditures. Developing written documentation prior to the time of expenditure is recommended. This documentation should clearly establish the link between a given expenditure and Guided Pathways goals and objectives.

Ultimate Responsibility

Colleges and districts are ultimately responsible for expenditure decisions. This responsibility cannot be delegated. It is expected that district-contracted auditors annually audit expenditures. Audits may also be conducted by the California Bureau of State Audits, the Chancellor's Office, or other government agencies with a lawful interest in the expenditure of funds.

Non-Allowable Expenditures

The Chancellor’s Office has identified the following non-allowable expenditures:

1. Gifts -- Public funds may not be used for gifts or monetary awards of any kind. Expenditures for a public purpose are not considered a gift of public funds.

2. Stipends for students -- funds cannot be used to pay stipends to students for participation in program or classroom activities.
3. Political Contributions.
4. Courses -- funds may not be used to pay for the delivery of courses that generate FTES.
5. Supplanting – Any funds spent on these programs should supplement, not replace, general or state categorical (restricted) district funds expended on similar program activities prior to the availability of program funding. This restriction applies to categorical programs and any other federal, state, and county programs.

In general, the Chancellor’s Office will not provide an exhaustive list of allowable and non-allowable expenditures, as decisions for each expenditure must be made locally according to program objectives and activities, and the “reasonable and justifiable” criteria as outlined above.