



**TO:** Director Keely Bosley, California Department of Finance

**FROM:** Chancellor Eloy Ortiz Oakley

**CC:** Jeff Bell, California Department of Finance  
Chris Ferguson, California Department of Finance  
Lizette Navarette, Vice Chancellor, College Finance and Facilities Planning

**RE:** 2020-21 Revised State Budget Priorities

---

The development of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) as a public health emergency has drastically changed California's budget outlook. While the state goes into this period with significant budget reserves, we recognized a realignment of priorities is necessary. As state leaders prepare for the 2020-21 May Revision, a clear focus on California Community Colleges' fundamental needs is prudent and necessary. Below are the California Community Colleges priorities based on identified needs from student, faculty, staff, and college administrators. The resources requested align with colleges essential needs during this time of emergency and uncertainty. This focused budget approach can support our colleges through this health crisis while mitigating the disruption to instruction, our focus on equity, or momentum toward the *Vision for Success*.

## Ongoing Investments

**Foundational Resources** – This new economic reality requires a continued investment in and protection of the educational opportunities provided by California's community colleges. The California Community Colleges request \$199 million in foundational resources.

- **Cost of Living Adjustment and Base Resources:**

Across the system, there appears to be near-universal recognition of the insufficient level of funding provided to the California Community Colleges, even as faculty, staff, and other leaders work to do the vital work of preparing millions of students for active participation in our society and our economy under new and complex circumstances. To achieve the *Vision*, colleges must be able to access greater levels of resources.

This request would fund the costs of existing obligations, including by providing funding for the cost-of-living adjustments (COLA) and other workload adjustments. Foundational resources, including a COLA of 2.29% are critical to keep pace with growing costs without compromising the quality of education as we transition to online instruction.

**Online Education Ecosystem** - As California Community College (CCC) districts and colleges transition classes and student services online in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the California Virtual Campus - Online Education Initiative (CVC-OEI) is providing core online infrastructure to CCCs. In addition, CVC-OEI is providing colleges and faculty with ongoing training and resources. This suite of investments would provide a robust and equitable online infrastructure for all CCC students and faculty during the statewide emergency.

- **Expand Canvas Daytime Support to Colleges Without Daytime Coverage:**  
With a significant portion of faculty moving courses to Canvas, coupled with the fact that their students in remote instruction courses have the highest need, local daytime help desk resources are being overwhelmed. Additional daytime telephone Canvas support is necessary and can address this capacity gap.
- **Increase Access to Online Tutoring for to All CCCs:**  
CVC-OEI currently provides online tutoring service to 57 Consortium colleges. An additional 39 colleges have purchased tutoring services at a discount and installed it into their Canvas environments. Eighteen colleges do not currently have an online tutoring option available to students. Online tutoring services would provide 24x7 tutoring, including multi-lingual tutoring in core subjects such as English and math, and be integrated directly inside Canvas for students at these 18 colleges.
- **Extend Online Proctoring Platform to Unlimited Use for All CCCs:**  
Colleges are grappling with instructional continuity, and a core consideration is academic integrity of exams and student authentication of identity. CVC-OEI currently provides machine-based proctoring integrated into Canvas for 57 colleges. Given the current situation, online proctoring service use will be in higher demand than anticipated and all colleges would be provided with access.
- **Extend Counseling, Student Services, and Mental Health Delivery to Online Platforms for All CCCs:**  
Canvas includes a fully integrated platform for counseling and general student services use that is available at 57 colleges. This platform also provides a HIPAA-compliant method for mental health or telemedicine sessions. Without downloading any software, a student can have access to virtual drop-in or scheduled services with counselors, Financial Aid

staff, Admissions and Records staff, mental health services, tutors, and professors. As need for online student services grows, especially for students in remote locations, expansion of these platforms would provide a suite of services to all colleges.

- ADA/508 Compliant Remediation Support:**  
 Colleges and faculty are struggling with ensuring that courses and instructional materials converted to online instruction meet the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 508 compliance requirements. Many colleges have a single individual on campus tasked with assisting faculty with web accessibility and/or alternate media for students. A critical, yet often overlooked, way to support students and faculty is to enable an automated tool to detect non-accessible content and remediate it. This software would be available to all colleges and become integrated into Canvas to immediately index and convert uploaded content to accessible formats.

**Support for Part-Time Faculty** – California Community Colleges requests \$5 million ongoing to support programs for part-time faculty, which will help these faculty be included in college efforts to implement the Guided Pathways framework and achieve the goals of the *Vision*. Part-time faculty are key to the success of California 2.1 million community college students. In order to be fully effective in helping students reach their goals, “must be included more fully in all aspects of institutional work and the faculty/student support network” (FACCC, 2018). The proposal requests \$5 million to fund part-time office hours.

<b>PROPOSALS</b>	
<b>Ongoing</b>	
Provide 2.29% COLA for Student Centered Funding Formula and Base Resources	\$ 199.1
Online Education Ecosystem	10
Support for Part-Time Faculty	5
<b>Subtotal Ongoing Proposal</b>	<b>\$ 214.1</b>

## **Budget Neutral**

**California Community Colleges System Support Program** - The Chancellor’s Office requests and supports continued inclusion of the Governor’s 2020-21 proposal to consolidate \$125 million in funding from existing categorical set-asides and statewide programs to a new CCC System Support Program. The Chancellor’s Office is required by statute to support several statewide support and accountability activities for the California Community Colleges, including:

- Statewide and regional professional development training
- Systemwide technology services
- Oversight and evaluation for certain categorical programs
- Statewide outreach campaigns supporting student recruitment
- Technical assistance for colleges and districts

Currently, the state funds many of these statewide activities through direct local assistance appropriations or through set-asides in various categorical programs. In general, those funds are administered through contracts and grants between the Board of Governors and particular community college districts. Further, the Chancellor’s Office administers several programs that are for statewide purposes—often with goals that are similar to the goals of the set-asides. Since programs were established independently of each other and at different times, they lack consistency in administration and fiscal oversight methods, and are not always well aligned with current district needs or the Vision for Success. The System Support Program proposal addresses this concern by establishing the new program. This proposal would require the Board of Governors to annually adopt a budget for the new program and report on expenditures for the prior fiscal year. The System Support Program should result in savings from economies of scale and the elimination of duplicated administrative fees.

<b>PROPOSALS</b>	
<b>Net Neutral Proposals</b>	
California Community Colleges System Support Program	\$ 125
<b>Subtotal Net Neutral Proposals</b>	<b>\$ 125</b>

## **One-Time Investments**

**Basic Needs and Emergency Supports** – The rapid but necessary transition to online education to complete the academic year has resulted in additional hardship for many California Community College students. One of the biggest challenges facing colleges as they try to support students through the COVID-19 crisis is the fact that many students lack access to laptops, internet, or other basic needs key to succeeding academically in this new environment. To address this issue while also advancing student equity and success, the California Community Colleges propose one-time Basic Need and Emergency Supports grants. This investment would help colleges provide supports, equipment, or retention grants for students as they transition to learning in an online environment, especially noncredit, CTE, and undocumented students who

were not included in counts for federal resources. Such investment can prevent students from dropping out as a consequence of the public health crisis.

**Transition to Quality Online Instruction and Maintenance/Sanitation Block Grant** - In response to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, colleges throughout the state have rapidly converted face-to-face courses to online or alternative formats. Although learning looks different across California Community Colleges, our core principles remain the same and student success continues to be at the center of everything we do. However, online classes, from the way they are designed to how they are taught, are vastly different from in-person classes. Much work and professional development is still necessary to ensure courses are high caliber and can meet the learning needs of all students. As colleges transition to instruction in new ways, many will also turn to promising education models such as competency-based education. Competency-based education provides an innovative model that enables colleges to value what potential enrollees already know and to accelerate their time to degree completion. Such a model allows college to respond to the needs of a growing population of post-traditional students, particularly individuals most acutely affected by growing unemployment trends. The use of competency-based education models can complement colleges' efforts to transition to quality online education. California Community Colleges request a block grant investment for purposes of transitioning to quality online instruction and costs associated with addressing the COVID-19 pandemic, including conversion to online class delivery, scaling of innovating education models, professional development of faculty and staff, and facilities sanitation and disinfecting. These resources will enable continuity of education, assist colleges in support students through their education path, and allow college to play a critical role in our state's recovery.

**Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion: Pilot Fellowship Program for Diverse Hiring** - Improving faculty and staff diversity is vital to ensure students can identify with faculty and staff, and faculty and staff can connect with students from diverse backgrounds to help them succeed. California Community Colleges continue to support the creation and implementation, on a pilot basis, of a fellowship for current and recent graduate students. The purpose of the fellowship program is to improve faculty diversity at community colleges through recruitment and mentorship. Funds would be used for supporting a portion of the fellows' salary, faculty mentorship, and professional support, and development activities.

**Recompense Student Enrollment Fees** - In the face of uncertainty and challenges, community college districts are making great efforts to fulfill their mission to provide for continuity of education for over 2.1 million students. Despite the admirable efforts being made by both students and community college districts to meet the challenges posed by the statewide state of

emergency, some students must nevertheless withdraw from one or more of their courses. The sudden withdrawal of hundreds of students is expected to have a drastic and negative impact on enrollment fee revenue collected by colleges. To mitigate this loss of resources from eroding educational quality, California Community Colleges seek reimbursement of enrollment fees refunded as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

<b>PROPOSALS</b>	
<b>One-Time</b>	
Basic Needs and Emergency Student Supports Block Grant	\$15
Transition to Quality Online, Instructional Equipment, Deferred Maintenance	25
Statewide Pilot Fellowship Program for Diverse Hiring	10
Recompense Student Enrollment Fees	40
<b>Subtotal One-Time Policy Adjustments</b>	<b>\$ 90</b>

## **Re-Appropriation of Critical Investments**

**Funding Re-Appropriation** – An estimated \$36 million in Proposition 98 General fund appropriations from fiscal years 2017-18 and 2018-19 are expected to revert to the General Fund on June 30, 2020. Many of these resources are designed to support critical categorical programs such as the Disables Services and Programs for Students (DSPS) and technology resources. The Chancellor’s Office seeks a re-appropriation of these funds to the 2020-21 fiscal year.

## **Non-Proposition 98 Investments**

**Cal Grant Reform** - California’s community colleges offer one of the least expensive tuition rates in the country. Still, students face significant challenges as costs of living in California rise. While about half of CCC students have their tuition waived, few qualify for financial aid to cover their living expenses such as transportation and textbooks.

The current structural design of the Cal Grant program – which is tuition-centric – falls short of advancing affordability for an increasing number of students, particularly low-income Californians. The state has attempted to address this inequity in the structure of the Cal Grant program overtime, but it has resulted in what is now an overly complicated patchwork of

eligibility requirements and programs that block post-traditional learners from accessing the financial aid they need.

A March 2020 set of recommendations by the California Student Aid Commission (CSAC) present an opportunity to intentionally target Cal Grants to low and targets non-tuition aid to students with the highest need. The recommendations propose to simplify and streamline Cal Grant programs, remove eligibility barriers, and most importantly—include tuition, fees and non-tuition costs in determining the total “cost of attendance” (COA) for Cal Grant awards. These policy changes would significantly increase access to Cal Grants among low-income community college students. Now more than ever it is critical to modernize Cal Grants to provide need-based financial aid to help community college students cover non-tuition costs of attending college. Taking such action would reduce student loan debt, reduce excessive work obligations, and allow students to attend full-time and accelerate program completion.

Across the state, community college leaders support a meaningful commitment to community college student affordability and request the approval of a new Cal Grant framework which focuses resources on our most financially vulnerable students. California Community Colleges request and strongly support Cal Grant reform aligned to the following principles:

- Promote Cal Grant reforms that base aid on the total cost of attendance, not just tuition, including costs for room and board, transportation, textbooks, and total available aid.
- Focus implementation resources on serving students with the greatest financial need, including our lowest income students with a zero EFC.
- Aid should be based on student need, not the institution the student is attending.